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Labour Movement's Demands for the Second Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration

Consolidated version, January 2025

INTRODUCTION

The BWI and IDWF, representing millions of workers worldwide, reaffirms its commitment to a rights-based, gender transformative, and people-centred governance of labour migration, and calls for a transformative approach to migration governance. The second International Migration Review Forum in 2026 is a critical opportunity to ensure that the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) delivers on its promises. This document reflects the shared challenges and aspirations of migrant workers across regions and consolidates the key labour movement's demands for a fair and sustainable migration governance, rooted in equity, dignity, and agency of migrant workers.

KEY LABOUR DEMANDS

1. Enhance National Implementation and Monitoring of GCM Objective

The GCM represents a historic opportunity to address the urgent need for a fair, coherent, rights-based migration governance, in light of the unprecedented scale of human displacement during recent years, and the raising xenophobia and spread of racial hatred in communities and in societies. The success of the GCM relies on effective national implementation, follow-up, and review process. However, progress is hindered in many countries by the lack of inclusive monitoring systems and limited engagement with non-state actors. Strengthening these processes is essential for ensuring accountability and real impact. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Use the new GCM indicators framework to monitor progress and integrate the GCM objectives into national frameworks.
- ▶ Involve non-state actors, including trade unions, migrant workers organizations, and civil society organisations, in implementation and review processes.
- ▶ Commit to transparent and accountable reporting and publishing at local, national, and regional levels

2. Address Root Causes of Forced Migration

Migration should be a choice, not a necessity driven by crises, or lack of opportunity. Yet millions are forced to leave their homes due to poverty, climate disasters, inequality, and conflicts. Unaddressed root causes compel workers into unsafe migration pathways and precarious jobs, where they face exploitation, forced labour and abuse. Addressing these systemic drivers is fundamental to ensuring safe, orderly, and regular migration. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Implement Just Transition measures to ensure decent work in low-carbon economies and strengthen resilience in frontline communities.
- ▶ Allocate public funds for climate adaptation, disaster recovery, and resilience building.
- ▶ Invest in quality, universal public services and quality education and rebuild the social organisation of care to reduce vulnerabilities
- ▶ Combat corruption, improve governance, and achieve universal social protection.
- ▶ Ensure development aid is not used to tighten borders or enforce forced returns, undermining human rights.

3. Ensure Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining

The ability to organize and collectively bargain is essential for workers to address inequality, exploitation, and unsafe conditions. Yet, many migrant workers are denied these fundamental rights due to restrictive laws, abusive employer practices, or fear of retaliation. Guaranteeing these rights enables migrant workers to advance their rights and protect their interests, to counter workplace power imbalances, and reverse entrenched patterns of discrimination, while also strengthening economies and democratic institutions. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Ratify and implement ILO Conventions 87 on Freedom of Association, C98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, and migration-specific instruments such as C97 Migration for Employment and C143 Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions).
- ▶ Remove formal and informal barriers preventing migrant workers from joining trade unions and from bargaining collectively.
- ▶ Integrate the ILO's tripartite structure of consultations (between governments and workers' and employers' representatives) as a central governance mechanism for global labour migration policy at national and regional levels. Promote migrants inclusive social dialogues and decision-making in migration laws and policies.
- ▶ End discrimination of migrant domestic workers from joining and forming the union in both countries of origin and destination.
- ▶ More platform for social dialogue and include migrant workers in all levels of decision making

4. Establish Rights-Based Migration Pathways

- ▶ Restrictive migration policies push workers into informal economies where exploitation thrives. Rights-based migration pathways that integrate workers into formal labour markets are essential for ensuring dignity and economic security. Regularization programs and inclusive policies can unlock migrant workers' contributions to host economies while safeguarding their rights and wellbeing. We call on Governments to:
- ▶ Promote rights-based and free regularisation programs to replace exploitative temporary or circular migration models and bring undocumented migrants into formal labour markets, enhancing their rights and economic contributions.
- ▶ End employer-tied visa schemes and ensure the right to choose and change employment, worker mobility, family reunification, and pathways to permanent residency and citizenship, particularly for low-income migrant workers.
- ▶ Scale up regular and gender-sensitive migration channels and humanitarian resettlement for climate-displaced persons.
- ▶ Recognize refugee resettlement as an integral part of safe migration frameworks.
- ▶ Ensure migrant workers' access to information on safe migration, including pre-departure , on-arrival and post arrival orientation.

5. Achieve Fair and Ethical Recruitment

Unethical recruitment practices trap many migrant workers in debt and exploitation, often leading to forced labour. Recruitment fees and predatory intermediaries disproportionately harm the most vulnerable workers. Ensuring fair recruitment practices is crucial to safeguarding the dignity and rights of migrant workers globally, especially the most vulnerable who are disproportionally harmed by these practices. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Ban recruitment fees and related costs, and enforce employer-paid recruitment costs.
- ▶ Regulate recruitment agencies and temporary employment agencies through enforceable mechanisms aligned with the ILO's General Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment.
- ▶ Impose strict penalties for unethical recruitment practices and ensure accountability for violations
- ▶ Facilitate and provide resources for direct hiring mechanisms, easy, and accessible for all migrant workers.
- ▶ Enhance government's support and services on recruitment processes, including government to government (G to G) recruitment arrangement, placement services for direct hiring.

6. Guarantee Universal Social Protection and Decent Work (Objectives 6 and 7)

Social protections and decent work are pillars of fair migration governance, yet millions of migrant workers are excluded from basic rights and access to essential services, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation. Ensuring decent working conditions and universal coverage of social protection systems can reduce these vulnerabilities and foster inclusive growth. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Include migrant and domestic workers in labour laws and ratify ILO convention 189 on Decent Work for domestic workers and 102 on social protection.
- ▶ Ensure all migrant workers, regardless of migration status and employment sectors, are covered by universal social protection systems and floors.
- ▶ Remove barriers to migrants' access to social security and ensure portability of benefits across borders.
- ▶ Guarantee access to quality public services, including healthcare and education, without discrimination or fear of deportation-
- ▶ Ensure equal pay for equal work principle and address widespread wage theft for migrant workers through robust grievance mechanisms and employer accountability.
- ▶ Eliminating unsafe working conditions and protecting workers from employer retaliation and intimidation.

7. Promote Gender Equality and Combat Discrimination

Women and marginalized groups face unique challenges in migration, often working in undervalued and precarious sectors like domestic and care work. Discrimination, gender-based violence, and unequal pay exacerbate these vulnerabilities. Gender-responsive migration policies are essential for ensuring equity and uplifting women's agency. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Address gendered vulnerabilities, particularly in the care economy, by investing in decent jobs free from violence and harassment.
- ▶ Implement gender-transformative policies that ensure equal pay, access to employment, and social protections for women and marginalized groups.
- ▶ Combat racism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination against migrant workers.
- ▶ Remove discriminatory immigration policies based on profession, gender, race and profession, including the right to access to citizenship limitations of work and stay permits.

8. Enhance Skills Recognition and Lifelong Learning

Migrant workers often face underemployment or deskilling due to lack of recognition for their qualifications. Facilitating skills, knowledge and competences recognition and access to training enhances their economic contributions and promotes integration into host societies. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Establish mechanisms for mutual recognition of qualifications between origin and destination countries.
- ▶ Provide access to quality and free lifelong learning, vocational training, and language programs for all workers, regardless of migration status.
- ▶ Recognize migrant domestic workers as "skilled worker"
- ▶ Ensure trade unions', CSOs' and migrant workers organizations participation in the design of the qualification framework, implementation and monitoring processes.

9. Strengthen Access to Justice and Grievance Mechanisms

Migrant workers frequently face barriers in seeking justice for rights violations. Fear of retaliation, deportation, and ineffective grievance mechanisms exacerbate their vulnerability. Accessible justice systems are critical for protecting workers' rights and fostering accountability. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Create accessible grievance redress systems independent of immigration enforcement.
- ▶ Establish firewalls between immigration control and labour law enforcement.
- ▶ Ensure protection and assistance for migrants who expose exploitation and abuse, including 24 hours hotline, shelter, legal aid, and interpretation
- ▶ Ensure migrant workers right to authorize trade union and migrant workers organizations to represent them in labour dispute handling and judicial processes.
- ▶ Promote regional cooperation in establishing cross - borders grievance handling mechanisms.

10. Promote Policy Coherence, Social Dialogue, Regional Cooperation and Role of the ILO

Migration governance must integrate climate, labour, and social policies to address interconnected challenges. Migration policies must reflect the voices of migrant workers and all rights-holders affected by these interconnected challenges. Integrating the ILO's tripartite structure of consultations in social dialogue platforms where government and workers' and employers' organisations are represented enable migrant workers through their trade unions to play an active role in shaping fair migration governance and addressing regional challenges. The ILO's leadership and expertise in labour migration policy must be central to these efforts. We call on Governments to:

- ▶ Ensure coherence between migration, labour, and climate policies through meaningful and effective social dialogue.
- ▶ Enhance the role of the ILO in designing and implementing labour migration governance frameworks.
- ▶ Ratify and implement ILO standards to ensure universal labour protections.
- ▶ Institutionalise social dialogue platforms at national and regional level to address labour migration challenges.
- ▶ Engage trade unions and migrant workers organizations in negotiating bilateral labour agreements that prioritize workers' rights.
- ▶ Promote regional cooperation to address cross-border migration challenges cooperatively.

11. Monitor GCM Implementation and Ensure Accountability (Objective 23)

- ▶ Transparent implementation and monitoring are vital to the success of the GCM. Alternative reporting mechanisms and genuine stakeholder engagement can strengthen accountability and ensure adherence to international commitments. We call on Governments to:
- ▶ Publish detailed progress reports, consider and allow civil society and trade unions to submit alternative independent reviews.
- ▶ Ensure GCM reviews provide genuine opportunities for meaningful trade union and migrant workers organizations engagement where implementation gaps on the ground and concrete recommendations can be raised and discussed.
- ▶ Align national frameworks with international labour and human rights standards.

The BWI and IDWF stands for a migration governance system that centres on workers' agency, strengthens communities, and fosters economic justice. By implementing these demands, governments and stakeholders can create a future where migration is safe, fair, and rooted in dignity for all.

“Dignity, fairness, and rights for every worker, everywhere.”