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MICIC Guidelines Launch Panel 1
UN ECOSOC Chamber
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- Good morning. I'd like to first thank the MICIC Secretariat, and members of the Working Group, for engaging civil society throughout the MICIC consultation process. As migrants directly impacted by crises, as first responders to crisis situations, as NGOs supporting and advocating for migrants before, during and after crises, we believe the inclusion of civil society as stakeholders in this Initiative has really enabled our critical input to the Guidelines. As the Guidelines' Introduction chapter states on page 3, "*civil society actors are a critical bridge between governments and migrants.*" Thank you for recognizing this and reflecting it throughout the Initiative's process.
- In 2013, civil society presented an 8-point, 5-year Action Agenda to the High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development. Point 3 of that Action Agenda calls for "*multi-actor mechanisms to address the assistance and protection needs of migrants stranded in distress beginning with those trapped in situations of war, conflict or disaster.*" As such, when MICIC was announced the following year in Stockholm, we strongly welcomed it. And then taking a step further, the Global Coalition on Migration, in partnership with MADE (the Migration and Development Civil Society Network), organized [a series of regional civil society consultations](#) that were held in conjunction with the states' consultations. These consultations were not only useful to brief our colleagues working on the ground about MICIC, but also engage and extract their inputs, much of which is reflected throughout the Guidelines.
- As Sir Peter has just stated, the urgency of such an initiative as MICIC, cannot be over-stated. Throughout our consultations, we dived deep into discussions about the various dire crises being experienced in each region, and how migrants were disproportionately and deeply affected. Many of our colleagues lamented how migrants were often the "first hurt, and last saved." Each one underscored how inadequate human rights protections have exposed our fellow migrants to even greater vulnerabilities.

- As such, we are very pleased to note that the Guidelines state that the Initiative complements existing legal frameworks and protection mechanisms. We applaud the Principles of the Initiative, and highlight in particular Principle number 2, which states that migrants are entitled to human rights **regardless** of immigration status. We recall the cross-cutting theme in the consultations, of protecting migrants' rights in **ordinary times**, and encourage states to work together, and with us, to achieve these.
- We are pleased to hear today, Assistant Secretary Richard's remark that the U.S. has recommended the development of broader guidelines to assist vulnerable migrants. We also strongly agree with Sir Peter's comment that this Initiative is part of a broader need to close protection gaps. This was one of our primary recommendations throughout the consultation process when we expressed concern about the initiative's relatively narrow scope. But the consultations demonstrated its value, especially with regards to partnerships with civil society, and we agree that the model that this process presented can be a useful one for broader initiatives to come – a prototype of the “mini-multilateralism” that Sir Peter was just describing. We look forward to working with you again on those.
- As we celebrate the launch of these Guidelines, today also marks a shift in our focus from consultations and drafting, to implementation. There should be no gaps in implementation. We should move forward with strong commitments from states and all stakeholders. We must ensure that adequate resources are dedicated for these, particularly for civil society engagement so that we can meet what has been proposed. We note Guideline 6 on establishing “*coordination agreements*”, and the recommended practice of creating “*migrant participation platforms*” – NOW is the time to begin thinking how we can kickstart those.
- At the global level, we look forward to continuing this level of cooperation. We offer a special nod to the Secretariat at IOM in particular, on your notable open door policy to us throughout this process. And we ask that you maintain it in the implementation phase, and with other initiatives, as **this** is the correct model of multi-stakeholder collaboration. To the Working Group, we look forward to bringing our members' and partners' ongoing experiences from on the ground, back to the policy level, and then to carry the outcomes again

back to them.

- At the start of our consultations, many of our civil society colleagues expressed some skepticism whether this would actually impact migrants' lives – perhaps a reflection of Sir Peter's own skepticism about such processes. But at the conclusion of each consultation, there was a sense of renewed hope. Today, we call on states, international organizations, as well as our own civil society colleagues, to never forget our commitment and obligation to make that hope a reality. Thank you.