

Statement by Dr. Natasja Reslow during the informal thematic session on “International cooperation and governance of migration in all its dimensions, including at borders, on transit, entry, return, readmission, integration and reintegration”, Geneva, 19-20 June 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I would like to briefly share with you some thoughts based on academic research into international cooperation on migration.

The New York declaration emphasises the importance of international cooperation on migration management, in particular in relation to border control, search and rescue mechanisms, humanitarian funding, data collection, return and readmission, refugee protection, and migrants’ rights. However, academic research has shown that there is a lack of attention to implementation and evaluation of such international cooperation mechanisms, even though research also teaches us that governance structures on paper are rarely the same as governance structures in practice. Therefore, in constructing the global compact it is essential to design monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, in order to know what impact this international cooperation is having – for countries of origin, transit, and destination, and for migrants themselves.

Putting in place cooperation mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels on all aspects of migration is only half of the task ahead; such structures can and should evolve based on ongoing evaluations of their implementation. And evaluation means more than statements of actions undertaken; evaluation implies a normative and systematic assessment of the effects of those actions. To that end, it is important that the global compact is based on a concise set of clear and measurable objectives, as a baseline against which to assess the actions taken. Just as stakeholders are involved in the creation of the global compact, they must also be consulted during its evaluation, in order to come to a multi-faceted and nuanced understanding of the impacts of international cooperation.

Monitoring and evaluation of international cooperation on migration is essential and the time to think about how to approach this is now, which was also recognised by some delegations who spoke yesterday. Continuous and systematic mechanisms for assessing the impact of this cooperation should be integrated into the global compact from the outset. Thank you.