

Rabat World Human Rights Pre-Forum

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

February 17-18, 2023

Held in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, on February 17-18, 2023, at the invitation of the National Human Rights Council of the Kingdom of Morocco (CNDH) and the International Center for the Promotion of Human Rights (CIPDH-UNESCO); Rabat World Human Rights Pre-forum was marked by the participation of officials, human rights defenders, parliamentarians, civil society representatives and intelligentsias from 50 countries around the world in addition to the African Union and the United Nations treaty bodies;

The participants praised the actions and efforts of human rights defenders, organizations and institutions that contributed to enrich the debates and establish constructive, open and pluralistic dialogue. They reaffirmed in this regard that dialogue and experience sharing have been and remain a fundamental anchor of promoting human rights.

The participants examined, in depth, many factors related to the challenges posed by three intertwined themes: Migration, Climate change, and Transitional justice/ memory. They reiterated the relevance and importance of the World Human Rights Forum as an essential space for dialogue, debate and trust-building, as it provides opportunities for full, equal, and meaningful participation for various stakeholders.

Participants expressed their concern about the increased politization of debates on human rights, which is likely to curb efforts and impact

negatively the actions aimed at protecting and promoting human rights worldwide.

Participants also called for the protection of Palestinians' fundamental rights as well their human dignity. They addressed a recommendation to the World Human Rights Forum in Argentina to include the Palestinian human rights situation to the agenda of the Forum.

They recalled the importance of the declarations and outcome of the first edition of the World Human Rights Forum held in Brazil and the second edition held in Morocco. They also recalled the lessons learned, best practices exchanged and progress made since the two forums have taken place.

On climate change:

Participants noted with great concern that climate change has come to be a transnational and unconventional threat, putting at risk the very basic human rights of people around the globe. In this regard, they noted that Africa and Island States remain on the frontlines of climate change. They highlighted, as an example, the existential threats that the Maldives and Vanuatu are facing.

Participants also recalled that climate change can be directly linked to migration and to various forms of violence and instability in fragile contexts. In this regard, they emphasized the need to shed light on climate migration as one of the main forms of forced migration in the Africa and in the South in general.

Highlighting that climate funding should not exacerbate developing countries' debt burdens, the participants expressed their satisfaction regarding the adoption of a resolution on a climate loss and damage fund during COP27. However, they expressed their deep concern regarding

the implementation and effectiveness of such an initiative, given the lack of clarity surrounding the funding and the measures needed to implement it.

Participants concluded that the creation of this fund must not divert attention and must not be considered as an alternative to tackle root causes of climate change and to adopt efficient measures to build resilience in regions that are least responsible for the climate crisis and that remain among the most vulnerable to its consequences, including Africa, South America, and the Island States.

On migration and mobility:

The participants stressed the need to rethink mobility beyond the concept of migration in order to guarantee the protection of human rights in various contexts. This was illustrated by the restrictions the COVID19 Pandemic imposed on the right of people to return to their home countries. A specific attention was also given to the legal framework of the protection of migrants' rights, its effectiveness, and its governance-related arrangements, as well as the cultural rights of all categories of people living outside their home countries.

The participants noted the emergence of some premises of a potential global governance of migration with several shortcomings that still need to be addressed. The adoption of the GCM in Marrakech was a milestone in setting a global governance on migration. However, despite the adoption of various conventions and treaties, the implementation is facing serious challenges. Most of migrants receiving countries failed so far to meet their international obligations in terms of providing effective protection to migrants and their families. This makes them more vulnerable and increasingly exposed to systematic discrimination and an easy target to human trafficking.

The Participants stressed the necessity to advocate for the ratification by all States, particularly EU state members and the United States of America, of the International Convention for the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. They also insisted on the convergence of the Convention and the GCM, in order to strengthen the protection of migrants' rights.

Participants recalled that migration occurs for several reasons, including inequalities in development between the North and the South. They further noted that migration factors have been further exacerbated by the persistence of hotbeds of tension and armed conflicts in the world.

They observed that migration continues to be largely handled according to a security-based approach which often neglects the requirements of protection and integration as well as the principles of shared responsibility and the necessity of multidimensional and multi-stakeholder consultations.

Participants expressed concern about the prominence of the securitization of migration in many countries, and about the fact that reports often focus on the negative aspects of migration, while it can generate social and economic benefits for migrants, their families and countries of origin but also for migrant-hosting countries;

On transitional justice and memory:

The participants noted that while most of transitional justice experiences took place in the South, systematic contributions in the theorization and assessments of these experiences are conceived in the North. As a result, it seems that context specific factors need to be taken into consideration both in assessing past transitional justice experiences and initiating future ones.

They praised the experiences in transition justice of the Global South including Morocco, Argentina, Chili, Ghana, and South Africa.

They observed that when assessing the impact of transitional justice processes on memory and history, attention must be paid to a wide variety of forms of remembering, historicizing and storytelling, as the past is expressed in popular culture through music, poetry, dance, painting, popular theater, handicraft, but also through silences. Memory should be considered not only as a way to guarantee non-repetition and to reconcile with the past but also as one of the pillars of consolidating sustainable democratic systems.

While transitional justice processes are meant to deal with victims' suffering regardless of gender, experience shows that women are more vulnerable to human rights violations and or abuses. Specific gender-sensitive tools should be set up in order to account for the fact that women are a vulnerable category in past gross human rights violations, and could also continue to suffer after a transitional process is achieved, as they could be victims of stigmatization.

Participants highlighted that memory is a critical component of transitional justice processes, as it can represent a mechanism to prevent future violations. In this regard memory should be preserved through the establishment of institutions, national policies and educational curriculums.

Finally, participants decided to submit this Pre-Forum Outcome Document to inform the work of the World Human rights Forum, to be held in Argentina in March 2023.