

Public Services International

Statement at the Thematic Consultation on the Human Rights of All Migrants, Social Inclusion, Cohesion and All Forms of Discrimination including Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance in the Global Compact on Migration

Panel 2 – Social Inclusion and Cohesion

8 May 2017, United Nations at Geneva

Public Services International, the global union federation representing 20 million working men and women involved in the delivery of public services, welcomes the centrality placed on the human rights of all migrants in the Global Compact on Migration.

In promoting human rights, social inclusion and cohesion, access by all migrants and the whole of society to quality public services is indispensable. It is not enough that services, such as health, shelter and education are basic, but we must strive to provide for quality public services that are accessible to all, without fear or discrimination. Towards this, our unions, along with local authorities, civil society and migrant organisations, are leading our campaign on “Public Services Welcome Migrants and Refugees” in promoting inclusion, social cohesion and fighting racism and xenophobia.

Public Services International fully supports the establishment of “firewalls” between public services and immigration enforcement, and these firewalls must be based on legal and institutional frameworks as clear indicators. Moreover, access of all migrants to decent work, labour rights, including the right to join unions, access to justice and to social protection must be guaranteed. Enjoyment of these rights is intrinsically linked to social cohesion.

The UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers (ILO C97 and C143) provide the comprehensive and practicable framework in developing migration policies. While guiding principles, based on existing Conventions are valuable in the governance of migration, these should not be taken as a replacement, but must go hand in hand with the ratification and effective implementation of international human rights norms and labour standards.

The success of the Global Compact on Migration depends on clear commitments substantiated with concrete actions, indicators and timeframe. States have the ultimate responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all migrants in the Global Compact.