



THE SECRETARIAT



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

GCIM – IOM Workshop on Regional Consultative Processes

14-15 April 2005, Geneva

SUMMARY REPORT

Introduction

1. This Workshop, organized jointly by the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), brought together government representatives and secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) worldwide, as follows:

- Europe:** Inter-governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies (IGC);
Budapest Group;
- Asia:** Bali Regional Ministerial Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process);
Labour Migration Ministerial Consultations for Countries of Origin in Asia (Colombo Process);
Inter-governmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants (APC);
- The Americas:** Regional Conference on Migration (Puebla Process);
South American Conference on Migration (Lima Process);
- Africa:** Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA);
5+5 Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean.

2. Present on behalf of the Global Commission were Commissioners Mr. David Wheen and Mr. Joris Demmink. ILO and UNHCR were also represented. A list of participants appears in Annex 1 to this report. GCIM Executive Director, Dr. R.K. Jenny, and the Director of IOM's External Relations Department, Mr. Robert Paiva, presided over the Workshop.

3. This was a first-ever opportunity for the major RCPs to meet in a common forum and it gave rise to interesting and informative discussions. This report serves to provide a summary of essential points that emerged from this interactive event. A number of background documents on inter-state cooperation were made available to the Workshop and

have been posted on the GCIM and IOM websites.¹ A list of these background materials is provided in Annex 2.

4. In a brief welcoming statement, GCIM Executive Director Dr. Jenny explained that the Workshop was designed to help reflect on issues such as the impact of RCPs in terms of contribution to the governance of migration at the national and interstate level, similarities and differences of RCPs, determinants of success and failure, the range of ministries involved, the role of civil society, links between the various RCPs, and possible implications for the future. He recalled the work and objectives of the Global Commission, as a time-limited body created to undertake an in-depth analysis of all aspects of migration and related other global issues. The Commission's work includes wide-ranging regional consultations with a variety of stakeholders in all regions, as well as thematic workshops and a broad-based policy analysis programme covering all essential aspects of human mobility. The RCPs represent a vital element in this consultative process, in particular in the context of migration governance by states and concerned international institutions. The results of the Workshop will contribute to the Commission's further analysis and also contribute to the Final Report to be presented to the UN Secretary-General, governments and other stakeholders in the autumn of 2005.

5. Complementing this introduction, Mr. R. Paiva, Director of IOM's External Relations Department, drew attention to the growing awareness of a need for a more global examination of migration, heightened by certain trends and events of the past decade. He referred to the valuable outcome on migration of the International Conference on Population and Development that had taken place in Cairo in 1994, and of the need to pursue the migration dialogue at the international level. The RCPs have proved one of the most significant developments since 1994, emanating from shared concerns and interests and new possibilities for consensus. All of the RCPs start with confidence and trust building; the mere fact of coming together to meet is an achievement. There is an interest now in exploring both their achievements and their potential. He recalled IOM's commitment to supporting cooperation between states as a means to achieving better management of migration at the regional and global level, as well as IOM's active role in supporting and facilitating RCPs. He noted that progress would only be possible through dialogue and a common understanding of the complex issues involved, to which the RCPs were making an invaluable contribution.

6. There followed an introductory presentation by Dr. F. Laczko, Head of Research and Publications at IOM, illustrating the membership and focus of the various RCPs.² This overview also showed that RCPs were a relatively recent phenomenon. While the IGC goes back some 20 years, most RCPs have been established during the last decade. Their geographical expansion has been rapid and now covers most parts of the world. Some regions, most notably the Asia-Pacific, are covered by more than one process. Some gaps still remain, most notably in parts of Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East and the Gulf States.

7. Questions emerging from this overview included:

- the causes of the rapid growth of RCPs, why more RCPs exist in some regions than others, and why some gaps still remain?
- what is the impact of RCPs and could it be evaluated?
- what future directions could be anticipated? Would RCPs lead to greater cooperation at a global level? Would they be "building blocks" or "stumbling blocks" in such a process?

¹ <http://www.gcim.org> and <http://www.iom.int/en/know/berneinitiative/index.shtml> (Berne Initiative Research Policy Papers: Inter-State Cooperation).

² See GCIM and IOM websites for a matrix on the major RCPs as well as a copy of the presentation.

Evolution of RCPs

8. This session was led by Ms M. Klein Solomon, Deputy Director of Migration Policy, Research and Communications at IOM, and was structured around the questions formulated below.

Why has there been a growth in the number of RCPs in recent years?

9. Several participants pointed to specific events or developments as the trigger for the establishment of RCPs. These varied from the introduction of new restrictions on entry and stay in countries of immigration, to the fall of the Soviet Union, sudden major influxes of irregular migrants, and concerns over security linked to the events of 9/11. Many observed that asylum issues had figured prominently at an initial stage, while in some cases the concerns had been broader, linked to an awareness of the need for dialogue between countries of origin and destination, and a realization that a common approach was possible. There was broad agreement that even in cases where the establishment of an RCP had been sparked by a specific incident, wider concerns, mostly linked to globalization, integration and development, were also present, as is the growing recognition that the issue of international migration could only be addressed effectively by means of inter-state dialogue and cooperation. Several participants noted that the efficiency and effectiveness that results from the informal and non-binding nature of RCPs is a key motivation to forming RCPs, in contrast to pursuing inter-state dialogue and cooperation on a global level. In particular, one participant noted that the informal nature of RCP discussions fosters a frankness that in turn enhances the effectiveness of the dialogue and cooperation. In addition, many participants emphasized the relative manageability because of the smaller size and commonalities of interests of a regional process versus a global process.

Which stakeholders have taken a lead in their establishment?

10. Governments were identified as the primary lead in establishing most RCPs. UNHCR and IOM were identified as having taken a leading role in the establishment of some RCPs, along with the governments concerned. It was also observed that in the case of a few RCPs, the process of establishment had been purely government driven.

What are they designed to achieve?

11. There was a consensus that RCPs were not generally established with a pre-determined output in mind, but rather as an opportunity for frank and informal exchange on issues of common concern. There was unanimous agreement on the usefulness of this approach, and on the benefits of sharing effective practices and experiences. Echoing earlier observations, several participants recalled that the focus of issues had evolved over time and had tended to broaden. For example, a few RCPs now encompass subjects such as the link between migration and development, the integration of migrants and protection of their rights. Although migration issues are predominant, one RCP had chosen to include the subject of partnerships for solutions for refugees as a current focus. It was emphasized that the flexibility to respond tangibly and immediately to practical issues and to the evolving interests of participating countries is a vital characteristic of RCPs. These characteristics are also crucial to the continuing existence of an RCP, as RCPs must operate in the broader context of globalization and competing government priorities.

12. In some instances, RCPs have led to enhanced practical cooperation among operational agencies within regions. Practically focused workshops have assisted such cooperation which, partly as a result, is becoming increasingly self-sustaining. Several participants mentioned the use of workshops on current issues as a means of maintaining a practical focus. In some cases, the work undertaken gave rise to recommendations for action, but these were non-binding. Two participants from different regions also gave specific examples of how the dialogue engaged within the RCP had led in one case to an inter-state agreement, in the other to the development of national legislation.

Are there regions of the world where RCPs have not been initiated or others where more, or more effective, processes should be put in place?

13. One participant expressed the opinion that the current coverage was adequate, with the possible exception of the Caribbean. Another drew attention to the fact that many members belonged to more than one process, notably in the Asia-Pacific region, raising the question as to whether some processes might be amalgamated. A participant from this region mentioned that this had been considered, but that each process had a specific focus and a decision had been made not to merge.

Overview of similarities and disparities

14. This topic was introduced on behalf of GCIM by Dr. J. Crisp, Director of Policy and Research, who suggested that although it is difficult to make a clear distinction between those RCPs that are structured based on the common geography of their participants versus those that are structured based on a particular theme or issue, this distinction would help to structure a discussion of the similarities and differences between the RCPs represented. Brief presentations then followed by representatives of each RCP, who provided details under the various sub-headings below³.

Objectives, organization, working methods, participation, outputs and funding

15. The RCPs' *objectives* as defined by participants were largely similar: to provide a forum for debate, to exchange information, experience and good practice, and to improve cooperation at the inter-state and regional levels on issues of common interest. Some participants also mentioned in this context the aim of promoting concrete action in terms of the management of migratory movements by countries of origin, transit and destination.

16. With respect to the *organization* and *working methods* of the RCPs represented, there was more diversity. Many participants referred to an annual forum at ministerial level (in one case that of Deputy Ministers), of which the chair rotated from one participating country to another. In several cases, RCP meetings are convened at a more technical level, by senior officials. Several participants questioned the effectiveness of operating at a ministerial level relative to a level involving more technical officials, although it was emphasized that ministerial level consultations play a role in facilitating important political will. Two participants mentioned the involvement of networks of national focal points who might also be involved in follow-up to recommendations. Most participants mentioned the importance of technical workshops as an integral part of their working methods. These allow for an informal exchange on specific, practical issues. One RCP explained its use of an innovative "pathfinder" approach to progress, allowing those States that wish to forge consensus on particular issues to do so with no negative implication for those that are not prepared to join.

17. While several of the RCPs represented have a fixed secretariat, this is not the case for all. Some RCP representatives also mentioned the technical and logistical support provided by IOM. One RCP, functioning without a secretariat, observed that in the absence of any bureaucracy, stakeholders communicate directly with each other and found this to be an efficient system. Others regretted the absence of a secretariat to provide expertise and continuity.

18. On the subject of *participation*, governments figured prominently as the common denominator, mostly through Foreign Affairs, and in some cases Home Affairs, Justice, Immigration and Police, Labour and others. One participant mentioned the inclusion of a representative of the government department for women's affairs as an important player.

³ See IOM and GCIM websites for supporting documents and power-point presentations.

RCPs also invite international organizations, notably ILO, IOM and UNHCR as regular participants. The representative of one RCP also mentioned the inclusion of the press, experts, researchers and labour recruitment agencies. Some divergences appeared regarding the inclusion of civil society (see below). Many participants emphasized the need to include government officials working at the technical level, in addition to (or, in the case of one RCP, in place of) politicians.

19. Many similarities emerged with respect to *outputs* of the RCPs. In line with their essential informality, the main outputs were in the form of declarations, non-binding recommendations, plans of action or guidelines for government action. Some participants also mentioned enhanced information as an important output: this could be through public or private websites, training, as well as statistical databases on migration stocks and flows regionally. One RCP representative made reference to model legislation and guidelines made available through its website as basis for possible action at national or inter-state level.

20. There were also striking similarities on *funding*, since few RCPs benefited from a predictable self-financing mechanism. Most participants perceived this as a challenge that limited and hampered activities (in one case, the organization of a forthcoming workshop hung in the balance for want of funding). A representative of one government was of the opinion, however, that the voluntary basis of government funding of activities should be maintained since it signified ownership and thus commitment. One RCP representative also mentioned IOM's support of its fund-raising efforts. Several participants noted the role of in-kind funding (e.g., the provision of a venue by a host-country).

Involvement of civil society and the private sector

21. Interventions on this topic revealed that few RCPs admitted either NGOs or the private sector to their proceedings. Some participants pointed out that the RCPs were young processes and still evolving, and could well give consideration to admitting NGOs in due course. One participant observed that, although absent from the debate, NGOs were involved in certain follow-up activities of the RCP he represented, such as pre-departure counselling. On the question of private sector participation, several RCP representatives expressed reservations, observing that the interests of this sector were likely to diverge from those of governments. They advised caution. Some participants questioned the meaning of "participation" or "involvement" of NGOs and the private sector in RCPs, given the states'-owned nature of RCPs and the crucial role of both informality and open discussion in the success of RCPs. A few participants noted that perhaps the key to involving NGOs and the private sector is to involve them selectively, whether by subject matter or by event (e.g. workshops rather than consultations) on an ad hoc basis.

22. Commissioner When confirmed that involving the private sector was a challenge, but pointed out that this sector had a natural interest in labour migration, notably the longer-term prospects for skilled manpower. He noted that one RCP was already involving the private sector with some success, and recommended further exploration of possibilities. Dr. Jenny referred to the recent GCIM/World Economic Forum meeting at which senior business executives had confirmed the need to bring together the migration and corporate worlds. The evolution of the global labour market required a new context of cooperation between governments and the private sector, and a better integration of the needs of employers into national migration policy. A series of policy and bureaucratic obstacles often posed serious difficulties in recruiting foreign labour. He also referred to the sometimes diverging interests between the private sector and governments whose task it was to find an appropriate balance between the interests of all stakeholders. Efforts were needed to find a way forward.

Scope of issues and range of participating ministries

23. Adding to information already shared illustrating the wide range of participating ministries at the national level, some RCP representatives drew attention to a problem of coordination among the various government agencies concerned. One participant pointed out that the issues were frequently cross-cutting, and that this could give rise to a problem of responsibility for follow-up action. One major country of destination had succeeded, after a lengthy process, in overcoming this problem and achieving a collegial approach. Although this was the exception so far, participants did note the potential for RCPs to facilitate better national coordination. One participant also pointed to the responsibility of states in managing diverging and conflicting interests, such as those with the private sector. This mediating role could be facilitated by dialogue and consultations at an intergovernmental level.

Achievements and implementation

24. This session was introduced on behalf of IOM by Dr. F. Laczko, Head of Research and Publications, with the purpose of identifying and assessing concrete achievements of the RCPs. Discussions were based on three sets of questions, given below.

What have been the achievements and impact of RCPs? In what areas have they proved most and least successful?

25. Responses to these questions described achievements and impacts at the regional, bilateral and national level. Several participants pointed to broad strategic achievements, remarking that the existence of the RCPs they represented, as well as the dialogues that the RCPs facilitate and the confidence building and information exchange that they engender, are achievements in themselves. Participants noted an enhanced awareness of the value of interstate dialogue and of efforts to improve cooperation. This cooperation was seen by some RCP representatives to give impetus to action on a range of issues such as migration and development, migration and health and border management. Two participants gave examples of how the RCPs had informed and transformed policy-making at the national level, and resulted in new or amended legislation affecting the treatment of migrants and protection of refugees. One participant observed that RCPs can enhance bilateral cooperation, noting that the RCP he represented facilitates bilateral side-meetings attended by working and senior level officials, thereby fostering bilateral cooperation and understanding of issues. Another participant pointed out that the RCP he represented had helped harmonize positions on migration issues within states acceding to the European Union, and improve their migration management. Another participant pointed out that it was through participation in the RCP process that her country had realized that it was not just a transit country but also a destination country. An area of weakness signalled by one participant was that of not having been able in that RCP to involve operators at a practical level.

26. Several participants enumerated a range of practical achievements. In the case of one RCP, these included a significant decline in numbers of illegal arrivals, greater interstate cooperation in developing model legislation and guidelines, as well as more systematic sharing of intelligence at sub-regional level on people smugglers and traffickers. While many RCP representatives mentioned that often it is difficult to measure the extent to which a RCP was responsible for a particular outcome (such as a decline in irregular migration), these same representatives provided examples where they believed that the RCP clearly had a positive impact. Other RCP representatives gave as specific, practical examples, information campaigns, workshops, training adapted to national curricula, the establishment of migrant resource centres, and housing for voluntary returnees. Some also mentioned data exchange including through websites, compilation of good practices, as well as research and analysis.

What are the determinants of success and failure?

27. The majority of participants cited political will and sustained commitment of governments to the RCPs as the essential determinants of success. In this context, one participant linked this commitment to the need to keep the agenda focused and relevant, and to maintain the de-political and non-binding approach, balancing technical and high-level inputs. Another participant did however underline that the political impetus of the RCP s/he represented was a major factor for its success. More than one participant remarked that, while the process is technically non-binding, an implicit “word of honour” and a self-imposed pressure to “keep up” with other countries often underlie the process, increasing its effectiveness. Another essential determinant of success echoed by many participants was that the RCP’s participants have a common interest in the topical focuses of the RCP (although they need not have convergence of interest). The main determinants of failure as perceived by most participants were the absence of commitment and of resources, mainly funding. Closely linked to the funding issues was the need for a dedicated secretariat, considered by one participant as essential for follow-up on implementation. Another participant identified that, in the absence of a dedicated secretariat, the constant rotation of the chair is a constraint to success due to a lack of continuity. However, not all RCPs considered a dedicated secretariat as essential although they found it useful to have a dedicated administrator. Other problems were those of inter-ministerial coordination, the risk of holding discussions with no follow-up actions, the problem of prioritization, and the question of cost-benefit analysis. Failure to involve destination countries in certain regions in the RCP dialogue was identified by one participant as yet another determining factor.

Have any RCPs been formally evaluated? If so, what have been the findings? If not, why not?

28. Responses to these questions revealed that some RCPs have conducted internal reviews with the outcomes endorsed by senior officials and ministers. Some internal evaluation mechanisms in place include “Friends of the Chair”, working groups, and other means of ensuring periodic reviews that included an assessment of impact, with recommendations for possible improvements. Such activities had led in one case to the establishment of a more focused set of issues, accompanied by a range of practical measures. In other cases, however, there had been no attempt as yet at evaluation, even on an informal basis. Representatives of these RCPs observed that the processes were too recent, and a formal evaluation would be premature. Some participants questioned whether it was even sensible to evaluate RCPs given their nature (e.g. because participants do not undertake binding obligations and the focus of RCPs often shifts to reflect new priorities). One participant pointed to the fact that so far, no RCP had yet been the subject of a formal, external evaluation. Whereas one participant observed that such evaluations were a common feature of humanitarian activities and had proven beneficial, there were varying views on the value of such independent evaluations in this context.

29. Before concluding this item, participants were invited to give some thought to whether the dialogue engaged by the RCPs invariably brought progress, or whether it could engender controversy; whether power disparities between states were a source of tension; and whether RCPs were giving excessive attention to issues of control, at the expense of the protection of migrants’ rights.

30. Interventions on these questions revealed a high degree of consistency. Most participants confirmed that dialogue had brought a better understanding of issues, rather than controversy, some pointing to the proliferation of RCPs, combined with the active participation of governments in discussions and workshop follow-up, as proof of their success. A large part of this success was due to the informal, non-binding nature of proceedings and the commonality of interest. One participant observed that the “bottom up” approach that characterized the creation of RCPs was an indication that governments were willing to take responsibility on migration issues and engage in dialogue. The fact that they could take advantage of a frank and sometimes confidential exchange, removed from the

scrutiny of the media, also contributed to progress on certain issues. One participant acknowledged that the dialogue was not invariably without problems, but that difficulties had been overcome and positive results achieved.

31. There was also broad agreement among participants that the mix of larger and smaller states was not an impediment. One participant acknowledged that some difficulties had arisen from the diverging interests of countries of origin, transit and destination, but these had been overcome through building mutual trust and respect, founded on an overriding common interest. One participant observed that small and larger states were drawn together on a "level playing field," and noted that RCP activities provided his country with exposure to an international forum for the first time. Another pointed out that it was the implementation stage at which problems resulting from the mix of larger and smaller states might arise.

32. Participants also agreed that the focus on control, mainly linked to security concerns in the post 9/11 world, had now shifted to broader issues. Those most frequently named were issues of governance, development, consular protection, labour integration, human rights, migration and health, trade, support for the victims of trafficking, return arrangements, and development of legislation to prosecute traffickers and smugglers. Several participants remarked on the importance now being given to measures to facilitate regularization. In one state, new legislation based on an enhanced awareness of the causes of irregular movements had made it possible for a large number of irregular immigrants to gain legality very swiftly.

Cross-fertilization between RCPs

33. Discussion of this item was facilitated by Ms M. Klein Solomon, Deputy Director of Migration Policy, Research and Communications at IOM, who invited participants to share their thoughts on the scope and nature of exchanges that might already exist between RCPs, their outcome, whether there should be more and how they might be organized.

34. The interventions by participants were mixed. Several had little or no experience with this type of interchange. In one case, attempts had been made, but proved impossible for practical reasons (although future attempts to include other RCPs in that RCP's activities were planned). Other RCPs were too recent to have explored such avenues. One participant mentioned the opportunities made available for the participation of non-members in an observer capacity. Some participants also referred to the complex nature of migration issues and the multiplicity of other relevant actors. Mention was also made of the fact that individual governments sometimes belonged to more than one RCP, and that reporting back on discussions elsewhere in itself constituted a degree of cross-fertilization, albeit on an ad hoc basis. Two RCP representatives (from different regions) made reference to the interchange between them as an important means of broadening the debate, leading to enhanced understanding at the national level. Mention was also made of discussions between RCPs within the same region as a means of clarifying respective mandates and avoiding duplication. Participants gave practical examples of areas in which they felt they could learn from the experiences of other RCPs (e.g., how to engage both sending and receiving countries; how to develop a program involving functional officials (rather than exclusively ministers)). Several participants emphasized that the appeal of cross-fertilization depended on a commonality of interests in substantive migration issues, although it was observed that RCPs could benefit from interchanges on practical matters such as administrative functioning and structure, for which substantive issues would be irrelevant.

35. There was a broad agreement that the Workshop was a very valuable experience and that it was indeed the first event of its kind. Reaffirming the usefulness of this inter-regional initiative, one participant mentioned that further meetings of this type should be held in the future. In connection therewith, it was mentioned that there are other RCPs and

groups working on migration issues that were not participating in the Workshop, and that it would be advantageous to consider these other groups in planning possible future meetings.

36. Continuing the discussion of cross-fertilization, the consensus was in favour of maintaining an ad hoc approach to interchange, based on a commonality of interests, without formal structures or regularity. Some participants drew attention to the useful role that might be played by RCP secretariats, notably in facilitating contacts with new RCPs. Several also drew attention to the importance of cooperation in exchanging information, mainly through websites. IOM mentioned its plan to create a dedicated section on its website with public information on each of the major RCPs readily available, and provide links to the RCP-specific websites. The need for exchange of information was supported by Commissioner Wheen, who encouraged RCPs to maintain their websites as an invaluable source of cross-fertilization.

Relationship of RCPs to economic, political and security institutions

37. Several participants confirmed that contacts were taking place, or being explored, with a range of regional and sub-regional organizations, many of which had been mentioned in the course of earlier discussions. The regional institutions cited included the following:

Europe: EU; Arab-Mahgreb Union; European-Mediterranean partnership.

Asia: ASEAN, APEC.

Americas: MERCOSUR, Andean Community; Community of South American Nations (newly formed); Summit of Heads of States of the Americas; OCAM; OAS.

Africa: AU, SADC, COMESA, ECOWAS.

The international organizations most frequently named were IOM, UNHCR and ILO. One participant also mentioned the inclusion of UNDP in workshops.

38. There was a consensus that such contacts were useful. One participant gave concrete examples of results that included the establishment of a permanent system of cooperation between migration officers at the national level, as well as the coordination of human rights policy. Another referred to the input that was planned to the UN General Assembly's High-Level Dialogue on International Migration. Such contacts thus helped ensure a broader debate on migration and its inclusion on the political agenda.

The future of RCPs

39. This subject was introduced on behalf of IOM by the Co-Chairman, Mr. R. Paiva, who invited participants to consider in which direction RCPs were heading; whether there was a process of convergence or divergence; whether common norms and understandings were emerging; whether additional RCPs could be anticipated; what lessons had been learned so far and how these could be applied most effectively, including at the global level; what was the future of RCPs; and what implications they might have for the future governance of international migration.

40. Participants expressed some reticence in responding to these questions. One considered that they were premature: RCPs were too recent a phenomenon to be able to project their future. Another participant pointed out that RCPs were heading in a variety of directions as dictated by the diversity of issues, and that it was likely to see more RCPs, probably thematically-driven, triggered by events which revealed gaps in cooperation. By the same token, they could disappear once they had served their purpose. This view was echoed by other participants, who observed that there was no need to know what the future might hold. One participant was of the opinion that the future of RCPs would depend upon donor support, but another considered that funding must continue to be participant state-driven in order to ensure ownership. One participant agreed that state ownership is

important, but observed that developing countries have limited resources available for RCPs; that there are other means of ensuring state ownership; and that developed countries have an interest in seeing developing countries experience the positive impact of participation in a RCP. One participant also pointed out that besides funding, expertise was needed and this was plentiful. Tripartite funding (e.g. funding provided by donors, national governments and NGOs) had also proved a useful solution in some scenarios.

41. Participants were unanimous that RCPs should not be involved in establishing common norms since this would run counter to their informal and ad hoc nature. It was pointed out, however, that there was some evidence of their normative impact. Two separate examples had been given in the course of the Workshop of new or amended legislation at national level following the new understandings they had gained by participating in the relevant RCPs.

42. Commissioner Demmink recalled that a global normative framework was already in place and there was no need for additional international instruments. The issue was that of implementation of existing norms and laws by sovereign States. States view migration issues as integral to their sovereignty. He considered that the strength of RCPs was their capacity to highlight the common interest of states. This in turn could bring progress towards implementation of the existing normative framework.

43. On the question of possible implications for global governance, participants again expressed reservations. Some recognized that the RCPs were contributing towards common policies, informed by increased understandings at national and regional level, but could not see this extending to a global level, the advantages of which were questioned by one participant. Another observed, however, that the RCPs could have a globalized impact in some areas. He gave an example of a significant drop in undocumented arrivals in a major country of destination, which was ascribed to an increased capacity around the world to prevent undocumented movements, rather than to action taken by the destination country. Other participants called attention to elements in favour of a more global approach. They included the realization that broader issues, notably development and gender, are likely to become more predominant; that there is a lack of capacity to manage migration in some countries; and that the management of migration between regions could only be achieved through a broader approach. It was pointed out that a systematic lessons-learned process need not be constraining. Participants also noted that resistance to a global approach often stems from confusion over the meaning of “global governance,” including the assumption that the term necessarily encompasses the development of additional normative instruments.

44. Dr. Jenny confirmed that the Global Commission did not as yet have a final position on the question of what some call global governance. Echoing the comments made by Commissioner Demmink, he reaffirmed that there seemed to be no need for a new Convention, nor for a ‘top down’ regulatory system of governance by states. He recalled that the 1994 Cairo Conference had adopted a Programme of Action which remained relevant, that much of the impact of the RCPs was an integral part of existing and evolving governance at the regional interstate level, and that much of national and regional governance also had obvious global implications.

Conclusions

45. In their concluding remarks, both Commissioners Demmink and Wheen expressed their appreciation for the wealth of information provided by the RCPs, as essential input into the thinking of the GCIM. They noted the many positive aspects shared by the RCPs, such as their informality, manageability, operational focus, impacts on national legislation, and habits of cooperation leading to greater coherence at national level. Their momentum should be recognized and encouraged. They were certainly “building” rather than “stumbling” blocks. While urging the RCPs to maintain the assets they had acquired, the Commissioners also suggested that greater attention should be given to the following areas:

- engagement with international business, taking advantage of the lessons learned from the GCIM's meeting at the World Economic Forum;
- the integration of migrants in host societies, so far on the agenda of only a minority of RCPs. Measures to facilitate integration were also in the interest of host communities;
- the pursuit of longer-term goals in terms of governance and implementation of norms; and
- a systematic exchange of information and best practice, taking advantage of technology for this purpose.

46. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Jenny observed that RCPs had achieved significant results in terms of confidence building, inclusiveness for all concerned states, including small countries, dialogue and development of common understandings, and action at the national level resulting from informal decisions taken at RCPs meetings. He also noted the commonality of interests by states to participate in RCPs. This did not, however, reflect a convergence of interest but rather the will to ensure better migration management outcomes for all involved states. Progress has mainly been achieved because of the non-political, technical and non-binding context in which RCPs operate. In contrast, and by way of example, action within the UN following the Cairo Conference, and other debates in the UN, had not resulted in much progress, not least because the debate had taken place in a sometimes highly politicized and non-expert context.

47. Dr. Jenny noted that the RCPs had the potential to do more, and that they could expand both thematically and geographically. Some specific lessons learned from the Workshop included the following:

- The erroneous perception that RCPs were only dealing with migration control needed to be corrected. In reality they dealt with issues such as human rights, human trafficking, root causes, development, gender, and trade, as mentioned throughout the proceedings. This needed to be made known.
- There would be value in involving non-state actors (including NGOs, the private sector and trade unions) in the RCP dialogue, if only on an occasional basis, while maintaining ownership by states;
- Many of the decisions adopted at RCPs meetings resulted in action at the national level. These operational outcomes should be encouraged and strengthened further.
- Funding, including by a greater number of participating states, was an important element for the further expansion of RCPs, in particular those which had been established more recently. It was also important to ensure that project-related activities could be developed by concerned governments and supporting secretariats.
- Secretariats could play an important role, notably in ensuring cross-fertilization between RCPs.
- Some participants had also mentioned the need for greater continuity, possibly by extending the tenure of the chair and related secretariats.

48. Concluding his statement, Dr. Jenny thanked Ms. Phyllis Coven of IOM, who, earlier in the day had provided the Workshop with a very useful presentation on IOM's new training Manual, 'Essentials of Migration Management for Policy Makers and Practitioners' and the International Agenda for Migration Management, a non-binding reference document comprised of common understandings and effective practices in migration management, which was developed by the states participating in the Berne Initiative.

49. In his concluding remarks, which covered the agenda items from the latter part of the Workshop, Mr. R. Paiva, the Co-Chairman for IOM, emphasized the value of RCPs in bringing together small and larger states. All states are given a voice, and smaller states benefit from exposure to an international forum and to issues that they have not previously considered. In addition, Mr. Paiva commented that means should be found for facilitating the interest in cross-fertilization that had been observed during the Workshop. He noted that there were some doubts about the effectiveness of future joint-RCP meetings, and that cross-fertilization could be achieved to some degree through websites and interactions among the various secretariats. He also noted that some cross-fertilization already occurs as a result of overlapping RCP membership. With respect to the relationship of RCPs to other institutions, he observed that RCPs have much to contribute to those institutions that have migration issues on their agendas, and emphasized the importance of finding a way for RCPs to become involved with those institutions. On the topic of global governance, Mr. Paiva noted that states are not interested in developing new normative instruments, but that RCPs could contribute to the much-needed implementation of existing international normative instruments. Closing the proceedings, Mr. Paiva thanked the participants for their helpful input to the Workshop. He observed that the future would depend upon the evolving desires and needs of participating states, and urged the RCPs to continue their invaluable work as "idea laboratories".