

## **IOM International Dialogue on Migration 2017**

### **Understanding migrant vulnerabilities: A solution-based approach towards a global compact that reduces vulnerabilities and empowers migrants**

**18 July 2017, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

*Director-General Swing,  
Honorable Ministers and High-level Dignitaries,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies & Gentlemen,*

It is a great pleasure to address you and I regret not being able to come in person to Geneva for this dialogue. This two day event is a continuation of the first session of International Dialogue on Migration, which I was glad to attend held in New York in April. The International Dialogues provide an excellent opportunity for in-depth discussions on the various relevant themes of international migration. They provide a very valuable input to the preparatory process towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

*Excellencies,*

In September last year, the United Nations Member States consensually adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. In this declaration, States committed themselves to developing a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, to be presented for adoption in an intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018.

The global compact for migration will be the first, intergovernmentally negotiated agreement, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, to cover all dimensions of international migration in a comprehensive manner.

The first phase in the preparatory process for a global compact is well underway, with three of the six thematic consultations already held in Geneva and New York. Next Wednesday I will preside over the first interactive multi-stakeholder hearing which is taking place in New York. In addition, several regional and national consultations are planned for the upcoming months.

This is, indeed, a busy and pivotal time for all actors interested in international migration. This is the time when we must work together to advance international cooperation and governance on migration in all its dimensions, from protecting the human rights of migrants, to better understanding the drivers of migration and recognizing the contributions of migrants.

*Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen*

I wish to draw your attention to another important process currently underway under the auspices of the General Assembly.

The Member States of the United Nations are negotiating a concise political declaration on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This political declaration will be presented for adoption at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly in September this year.

At a time when an increasing number of desperate people are moving across the globe seeking to escape conflict, insecurity, and extreme poverty, a disturbing nexus has emerged between people smugglers and human traffickers, leading to many vulnerable people falling into the wrong hands.

Despite collective efforts, human trafficking is still as alarmingly prevalent today as it was when the Palermo Protocol was adopted in 2000. And in the last ten years, the increase of the share of trafficked children has more than doubled, from 13 percent in 2004 to 28 percent in 2014.

And as we know, women and girls are particularly vulnerable, as they are still disproportionately affected by poverty, discriminated against in education and healthcare, are often the most affected by violence and conflict, and are disproportionately represented in the informal economy.

*Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen*

The high priority of my Presidency during the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the UN General Assembly has been to drive the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda calls for a fundamental transformation of humanity's patterns of consumption, production, the sustainability of our relationship with planetary resources. The Agenda calls for an end to the deleterious effects of hunger, poverty, and poor health, all of which calls touch upon international migration.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, human mobility is no longer seen as just background context for development, or as a consequence of lack of development. Rather, the Agenda recognises migration's potential to enhance sustainable development. Thus the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration can further strengthen and elaborate these important links between migration and sustainable development.

*Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen*

I welcome this International Dialogue's focus on migrant vulnerabilities. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the vulnerability of migrants to exploitation and abuse, specifically through the targets related to countering human trafficking, forced labor and child labor.

We still have more to do in defining a vulnerable migrant, or a migrant in a vulnerable situation. This International Dialogue's discussions on understanding and identifying migrant vulnerabilities are therefore highly pertinent. They will further assist the international community to fulfill its promise to leave no one behind. No doubt your discussions will also be most helpful in increasing our understanding on migrant vulnerabilities. We need to

identify efficient ways of building resilience as we move forward in our work to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

I wish you all fruitful discussions and I thank you for your attention