



## **REMARKS**

### **Louise Arbour, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION**

**“Inclusive and innovative partnerships for effective global governance of migration”**

**Panel on “Setting the scene: Partnering to make migration work for all”**

**26 March 2018, UNHQ, New York  
10:30am – 12pm**

**Dear Director General Swing,  
Dear Excellencies, Dear colleagues,**

Thank you, Bill, for inviting me to speak at this International Dialogue on Migration, and for your long-standing partnership with me personally, and particularly since I became involved in this world of migration management.

Today’s event on building partnerships for the effective global governance of migration presents a welcome opportunity to examine an issue of importance in the development of Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

From the outset, let me assure you of the ongoing partnership with and support from the United Nations system throughout the development of this Global Compact for Migration. The UN was founded on international cooperation and solidarity – agreeing to join efforts to achieve ambitious aims; it is once again called into action in this process.

Of course, partnership also requires the UN to adapt to the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Just as the Global Compact must be forward looking to anticipate future migration challenges, so too should the UN. We need effective and operational support to Member States from the UN Secretariat, Agencies, Funds and Programmes, grounded in the principles and values of the United Nations, and in strong partnership with the broader migration community, to ensure the success of the Global Compact. Part of this will include further integrating IOM - the largest operational organization working on migration and now a UN related organization - with the rest of the UN system, recognizing the desirability of its leadership role in this sector.

As you know, the Secretary-General has launched consultations on this very issue, linking it with his larger reforms in the UN’s development and management domains. This

institutional reform will be useful but important as it is, it should not blind us to the paramount importance of ensuring that, between now and the end of negotiations in July, and as we look forward to December conference in Morocco, our collective focus remains firmly fixed on how best to address the daily realities of migrants and their communities of origin and destination and, within those groups, that we focus most of all on the most vulnerable among us.

Excellencies, Colleagues,

Let us recognize that when we speak of partnerships in this context we must include a multitude of actors: states, migrants, host communities, civil society, the private sector, media, unions, academia and many others. As has been emphasized from the outset of this process migration is ultimately about people and communities, and we all have a vested interest in improving partnerships for the betterment of a people-centered approach to migration.

Throughout this Global Compact process, we have seen an increased recognition by States that they are simultaneously countries of origin, transit and destination, and that migration is an issue where state sovereignty and interdependence converge; hence the need for cooperation if migration is to be managed effectively.

We have also heard many times that addressing migration requires a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach - a strengthening of partnerships amongst all actors at all levels. Such partnerships should not exclusively be top-driven but should also reflect national and sub-national realities ensuring that people – both migrants and host communities – are brought more clearly into migration policies and initiatives.

Decades of research have highlighted the many benefits of migration to development, the contributions that migrants make to their home and host societies, and the fact that most of the world's international migrants have journeyed through regular channels while still facing real challenges and vulnerabilities. Yet, today, we are confronting public discourse, media and political dynamics in many parts of the world that would have us believe otherwise. It is particularly in the face of these misconceptions that we need inclusive partnerships on international migration now more than ever.

The Secretary-General's Report "Making Migration Work for All" called for the Global Compact to provide a positive agenda that would focus on helping migrants fulfill their potential, promote regular migration and address effectively the challenges of irregular migration. He also underlined the need to ensure respectful and realistic debates about migration and migrants, so as not to allow xenophobic narratives to distort the reality of migration's true benefits, while also addressing inequities globally, whether those endured by migrants or by host communities.

Despite migration's overwhelmingly positive reality, there are still difficult issues to address. Deficits in decent work standards for migrants and in human rights protection, particularly for irregular migrants persist, as do unjustifiable and unsustainable inequalities within and among countries. Large migratory movements of population, often mixed groups containing irregular migrants as well as refugees, have brought specific challenges which will be best addressed in the future by enhanced international cooperation and solidarity.

Migration is a constant in our lives. Our task is to optimize its considerable upside while better tackling its potential downsides, all the while seeking to anticipate more effectively its future patterns.

Looking towards the future of migration means that we must also look at the projections of demographic growth of the world's population, the likely impact of climate change, rapidly evolving technologies and the possible tectonic shifts in the way we will work in the near future. All these, and many other social, economic and cultural factors will have an immense impact on human mobility and, in turn, migration will continue to affect the changing realities of how we construct our communities.

The Secretary-General highlighted a number of these issues in his report, calling for States and many stakeholders to work together to improve migration for people and states, including through robust international cooperation and responsibility sharing. Titled "Making Migration Work for All" the report recognizes that we all have much to gain from migration, if we mobilize our common resources towards that common end.

But to truly appreciate the need for partnerships to further migration governance, we need to look no further than the 2030 Agenda which called for facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration in the context of reducing inequalities within and among countries. Not only does the 2030 Agenda call for improved international cooperation for the sake of sustainable development, it aims to ensure that no-one is left behind. Let us use this opportunity of applying the 2030 Agenda through this Global Compact to improve our partnerships, and to truly make migration work for all.

Thank you.