

**“Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development”  
8th GFMD Summit Meeting  
Istanbul, Turkey**

Plenary session  
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**UN Women’s priorities as Chair of the Global Migration Group**

*Remarks by Julien Pellaux, Strategic Planning Adviser, UN Women*

Good morning,

Thank you Deputy Director General Esen Altug on behalf of the GFMD chair for inviting UN Women to this session and let me extend my congratulations for such an impressive and successful Summit.

It is a privilege to speak to you today on behalf of UN Women, the incoming chair of the Global Migration Group for 2016. I bring the greetings of our Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, who could not be here today but asked me to convey the importance she places on this Forum.

We at UN Women are honored to be taking the role of Chair of the Global Migration Group in 2016, and that at a very special time of unprecedented scope and attention to the issue of migration.

2016 will also be important as the first year of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and we know that it will not be possible to achieve this new ambitious agenda without coherent migration policies and engagement of all stakeholders. A number of implementation

modalities are being discussed and developed, from localization of the SDGs, to financing and coordination mechanisms. As GMG Chair, we will strive to position the issue of migration centrally in these processes.

We will also seek to coordinate GMG inputs in a number of important international conferences and processes taking place next year, such as the World Humanitarian Summit, which will take place in May here in Istanbul or the Habitat III conference later in the year.

Unsurprisingly, we also intend to place a special emphasis on the gender dimensions of migration.

Women make up approximately half of the 247 million people who work outside of their countries of birth. Migration enables them to earn an income, support their families and contribute to the development of sending and receiving countries.

But we know that women experience migration differently from men. From recruitment and remittances, risk and vulnerability, gender factors are at play. Despite this reality, discourse, news coverage and policy making continue to be gender blind.

We are seeing a change in the way women migrate – some of which bring greater risks and vulnerabilities, such as precarious work or vulnerability to violence and exploitation.

As chair of the GMG, we will seek to elevate the focus on women in the migration debate, and highlight the importance of mainstreaming a gender and human rights approach in migration policy and national development strategies.

This also means identifying opportunities and building on good practices. Bilateral and regional frameworks, such as those between the government of Philippines and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or ASEAN provide opportunities for improving protection of the rights of women migrant workers.

The potential of these agreements to increase commitments on the promotion of women migrant workers' rights can be further explored. As GMG chair, we will emphasize the need to enhance such cooperation and adopt coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approaches to migration that are specific to local and regional contexts and take gender perspectives into account.

The current migrant crisis does not only highlight the importance of effective partnerships but also the need for a focus on women in special situations. For instance, half of Syrian refugees in camps here in Turkey are women, along with more than 700,000 children under the age of 11. We need to bring greater attention to issues such as sexual and gender-based violence and early and forced marriage in these contexts.

And while we intend to bring gender perspectives in the migration discussion, we also intend to do the reverse. We are committed to engaging our gender equality partners on the importance of integrating migration in their agendas, including by leveraging specific forums such as the Commission on the Status of Women.

In all these priorities, we will build on the excellent work of the current Chair, the World Bank, as well as previous GMG chairs, to continue to foster the role of the GMG in strengthening coordination between all stakeholders - including the GFMD - and ensure the protection of rights of all migrants.

Thank you for your attention.