

DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL: STATEMENTS

New York, 19 July 2016 - Deputy Secretary-General's remarks to thematic workshop on Migration for Peace, Stability and Growth Global Forum for Migration and Development [as delivered]

I am glad to be with you here today. The Global Forum on Migration and Development has taken a wise decision to focus the discussion today on migration governance and on areas of peace, stability and growth.

Over the past months, the public debate on migration and refugees has to a great degree been dominated by security concerns. We read dramatic headlines and witness intense, sometimes polarizing, national and international discussions around these issues on a daily basis.

Some of the concerns may be legitimate. However, we must recognize that overall, human mobility has a positive impact on development and is a driver for economic prosperity and social progress. And we should all recognize that migration is at the heart of the new global landscape and of the global social and economic dynamics.

To implement the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, we need a discourse: about making migration safe, orderly and responsible as spelled out in one of the Goals.

The United Nations and the Global Forum for Migration and development (GFMD) have a responsibility to set a positive tone and direction of the discourse - one that places the human rights of migrants and the contributions of migration to development and economic prosperity at the core. We also need to be reminded in today's world that our nation states are built on diversity and recognition of minorities.

I would like to thank the Government of Bangladesh for holding this meeting in New York. This is only the second time that a GFMD meeting is being held here. It is particularly important that we are gathering now, as Member States are preparing seriously and intensively for the upcoming UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September.

Creating a new narrative focused on human rights and sustainable development is about upholding the founding principles of the UN. But it is also about recognising the benefits of migration to both sending and receiving countries.

First, we must address the factors that lead people to leave their homes. Migration is a fact of life in our interconnected, highly mobile, world. People vote with their feet. They want to invest their talents, their children's futures and their money where they see the best opportunities.

But people should not feel forced to migrate against their wishes. They should have choices about whether to stay or leave. Implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is the

best way to give all people, everywhere the chance to fulfil their potential without being forced to cross borders.

Second, we must address the absence of safe and regular opportunities to move across borders. This means that many migrants take great risks and face exploitation and abuse as they try to move in search of a better life. Some resort to smuggling provided by transnational criminal networks. Others may fall prey to human traffickers. This serious global problem will be considered at the Summit to address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants on 19 September.

Third, The SDG which calls for effective, accountable and transparent institutions has an important role for migration.

Many countries, which have experienced sustained immigration in the past few decades, suffer from weak institutional frameworks and lack of policy coherence. This has prevented them from developing well-managed migration policies.

A more integrated and coherent approach to migration within states will require institutional reform. The same is true at the global level.

While there are trans-national frameworks to deal with the environment, trade and finance, we lack a similarly comprehensive approach to the governance of international migration — one linking migration, human rights and development.

Bringing the IOM into the United Nations system is a crucial first step. I welcome the overwhelming positive reaction from both UN and IOM Member States to taking this historic step for dealing with movements of people across borders.

We should aim for a rules-based system for global mobility, which recognizes the benefits of migration for migrants and host communities, as well as for receiving and sending Member States.

I recognize that this will take time. But the thinking and decision-making must take place now, like at this event and other venues over the next months and years. I commend the President of the General Assembly, the facilitators and the Member States for their serious work in launching an effective intergovernmental process for the 19 September Summit.

The Global Forum on Migration and Development, meeting in Dhaka this December, can also make a valuable contribution, not only to the thematic review of the SDGs but by inputs for a possible intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018 which is being discussed.

Today's meeting is an opportunity to develop an alternative narrative about migration; one that recognizes the inherent worth of each individual, and welcomes the vast contribution migrants make to economic and social progress as well as for the diversity of societies.

I urge you to come up with and develop concrete ideas and practical actions for Member States to consider as they now negotiate and finalize the important Summit's outcome document.

I thank you and I wish you a fruitful debate.