



**Statement of UNANIMA International for the Global Compact on Migration 4<sup>th</sup> thematic session: *Contributions of migrants and diasporas to all dimensions of sustainable development, including remittances and portability of earned benefits***

On behalf of UNANIMA International, a member of the NGO Committee on Migration, we wish to highlight the critical importance of attention to gender and the particular contributions of the female half of the migrant population in the drafting and implementation of a Global Compact on Migration. On the topic of financial remittances, it bears repeating that women, as both senders and recipients of funds, are more likely than their male counterparts to invest in nutrition, health, and education, which is to say, in the direct achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2, 3, and 4. Furthermore, women sending remittances have been found to do so with great frequency and predictability than men and to send a larger percentage of their income to their countries of origin. They do so despite the fact that, in dozens of countries, they still face gender-based legal obstacles to passport acquisition, independent mobility, conferral of citizenship to their families, registration of new businesses, access to formal labor markets, access to financial services, and access to just wages. A Global Compact that does not explicitly call for the removal of such legal obstacles and a close in the gender wage gap cannot legitimately be said to have made an effort at recognizing or supporting the development contributions of migrants.

Having spoken of financial remittances, it would be grossly remiss not to emphasize the critical importance of migrants' contributions to social development in their role as living bridges and network-builders between their countries of origin and destination. Human migration is the primary phenomenon by which people of different geographical and cultural origins have come to encounter one another, hear one another, and recognize one another as radically human. On the local level, migrants facilitate the cohesion of an international community bound by universal principles and shared values. Indeed, whatever agreements are reached among Member States in New York, Geneva, or Vienna, most assuredly began as seeds of human solidarity sewn at the grassroots by communities of migrants. It is on this solidarity that the UN was founded and on which the entire notion of sustainable development relies. To deny the value of this contribution would thus be to deny the value of the UN system itself.

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