

## **General Assembly Side Event**

### **The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants – One Year On**

9:30 – 11 am Wednesday, 20 September  
UN Conference Room 7  
(to check against delivery)

It is an honor and pleasure to be here with you today, one year and one day not only from the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants but also from the entry of the International Organization for Migration into the UN system.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Secretary General Guterres, for both his tremendous stewardship of the United Nations now as Secretary General, and his leadership and friendship when he served as High Commissioner for Refugees.

The Secretary General, then High Commissioner Guterres, was pivotal in the decision to bring IOM into the UN family. He argued that the United Nations needed a migration agency and that there was no reason to create a new one when IOM – which recently celebrated its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary and will soon welcome its 167<sup>th</sup> Member State – already existed and was ready to fill that gap, working in close partnership with other parts of the UN system.

I would also like to thank most sincerely both SRSG Arbour and High Commissioner Grandi for their leadership and collaboration. IOM and UNHCR have been joined at the hip since our two institutions were created at the end of the Second World War to address not only the protection of refugees – UNHCR -- but safe, regular and orderly relocation of nearly 1 million Europeans in new societies when European economies and societies were seeking to rebuild – IOM.

Both IOM and UNHCR have grown and evolved since our early roots, but we have never lost our close relationship and common purpose: to serve the international community in addressing the movement of people.

That common purpose is more evident than ever in today's highly mobile world. Together we continually recalibrate our response to the needs of our Member States and the refugees, migrants and displaced persons that we serve.

I wish to thank High Commissioner Grandi and his team for continuing this tradition. I have assigned a member of the IOM team to be IOM's focal point for UNHCR on the refugee compact, to bring to UNHCR IOM's expertise as an implementing partner on many refugee matters and to help ensure operational coherence between the two compacts.

### **Now, turning to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.**

As the Secretary General and my dear friend SRSG Arbour underscored, we have an historic opportunity to reframe our collective approaches to human mobility.

We simply must not fail to improve the lives of migrants and refugees, and the ability of governments to manage human mobility.

We must restore public confidence in the capacity of governments to determine which non-national may enter their territories, consistent with international law, and to do so in a way that not only addresses national priorities and interests in the short-term, but that also deepens cooperation and a sense of common purpose for generations to come.

As SRSB Arbour said, virtually all countries today are simultaneously countries of origin, transit and destination of migrants, albeit to differing degrees. Yesterday's countries of emigration today are now countries of immigration, and vice versa.

Governments the world over are updating their national migration policies to adjust to the realities of a more mobile world.

IOM has encouraged governments to hold national multi-stakeholder consultations to prepare for development of the Global Compact. IOM has been struck by the high interest of national and local governments to contribute to this groundbreaking initiative. I share SRSB Arbour's assessment that while differences exist, there is more that unites than divides us.

At the regional level, governments through the various Regional Consultative Processes on Migration are sharing their priorities and good practices at the global table.

So, too, our colleagues in civil society have organized themselves in regional consultations to bring the firsthand experiences of migrants and diaspora members to this global effort.

I am also heartened by the commitment of academia to bringing the latest evidence to the table. Migration policy must be evidence based, and renounce the stereotyping that pervades so much of the discourse today. Next week, IOM will host in Geneva a meeting of the greatest academic minds on migration to wrestle with the issues before us today.

**Let me conclude** by saying that we must marshal our collective efforts to ensure that migration and human mobility take place through safe, regular and orderly means, to protect the human beings at the heart of these journeys and to realize the tremendous benefits that migration can bring.

Refugee protection and safe, orderly and regular migration are not a zero-sum game. Indeed, protecting refugees is an essential element of well-functioning migration systems and we share an interest in ensuring that there are adequate channels for regular migration.

I firmly believe that, an ambitious vision, with practical and achievable milestones, will help us restore public confidence and embrace the dynamism, diversity and richness that migrants and migration bring to our economies and societies. Member States and the populations we serve expect nothing less.

Thank you.