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**Statement by Louise Arbour, Special Representative
of the Secretary-General for International Migration**

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**On the occasion of the launch of the report:
Making Migration Work For All**

11 January 2018, New York

Your Excellency, Miroslav Lajčák, President of the General Assembly,

Secretary-General Guterres,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to join the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for the launch of his report, 'Making Migration Work For All'.

At the outset, I wish to echo the words of the Secretary-General in remembering Peter Sutherland. His groundbreaking work was crucial in bringing migration issues to the centre of the international agenda.

Let me now thank the many of you who have shared written inputs towards the Secretary-General's report; your contributions were very helpful in shaping our thinking and analysis.

The report also reflects the very informative discussions undertaken over the course of last year, in the form of thematic sessions and regional consultations, as well as the stocktaking meeting in Mexico last month.

I believe we have collectively come a long way in understanding the complexities of the issues and the range of policy options available to us as we work to better manage international migration.

We have also recognized the need for better data collection and analysis, as sound, smart policy choices must rest on facts, not assumptions and myths.

The President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General have both comprehensively addressed many of the key messages in the report, so I would like to keep my comments to three brief points.

First, the Secretary-General's Report frames the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration through three key pillars of the United Nations system: sustainable development, security, and human rights.

The link between migration and development is already well articulated in the Sustainable Development Goals as an essential tool to reduce inequalities both between and within states. Taking the lead from the New York Declaration, the compact should aim to maximize the benefits of migration for all concerned, improving the impact of remittances on developing countries, while contributing to the continued prosperity of the many countries who will increasingly need to import human resources in the years ahead.

Further, increasing legal pathways for migrants to access labour markets will in time reduce recourse to irregular, often dangerous migratory routes, and enable states to better manage the migrant populations on their territory.

As it promotes an increase in the variety of legal pathways, the report also explicitly recognizes state sovereignty as the basis for international cooperation towards better managed migration.

Subject to existing international law, such as the principle of *non-refoulement*, states have the sovereign prerogative, indeed the responsibility, to determine who may enter their territory, for what purpose and on what terms and conditions. This is exercised, in part, through border management procedures, but more broadly through a series of measures that should address security in three inter-related dimensions: state security, public safety and human security.

Addressing security does not mean that migration should be conceived primarily through a security lens, or that migrants should be assumed to inherently present security threats.

From our very first thematic session last May, dedicated to the human rights of migrants through to today, we have consistently heard the call for the global compact to be people-centered in its approach. Migration impacts the lives not only of migrants themselves but also the future of the people they leave behind and of the new communities in which they settle. Sound migration policies will be attentive to the rights, needs and sensitivities of all those affected by the change that human mobility inevitably entails.

Second, I would like to reiterate a point I made at the closing of the stocktaking meeting in Mexico last month: that the objective of facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration through a global compact on international cooperation is a project essentially based on the rule of law.

I don't mean by this that the global compact must be legally binding or that it should lead to a flurry of domestic legislation.

Rather, it must pursue an objective of fairness and equality rather than tolerate a state of danger and chaos. It should mean expanding legal pathways rather than risking the expansion of dangerous migratory routes. And it should mean treating migrants, including irregular migrants, with dignity and respect as a way to combat xenophobia and racism.

Fair migration laws, fairly applied, benefit all: they increase predictable and orderly outcomes for states, safe and inclusive environments for both migrants and their host communities.

Finally, I said at the outset that I believed we have come a long way together in dealing with these difficult issues. This increased understanding has not always been reflected in world public opinion, and recent developments and reactions towards international migration have given many of us cause for concern. I stress again that the negotiations ahead will require your political leadership and your commitment to finding common ground towards a global compact that will benefit states, migrants and communities alike.

I reiterate my support for your efforts and I look forward to our continued cooperation in the months ahead.

Thank you.