



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič,
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International
Organizations in Geneva
First Thematic Consultation on the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular
migration
Panel 3: *"All forms of discrimination, including racism, xenophobia and intolerance"*
Geneva, 9 May 2017

Mr. Chairman,

It is the firm conviction of my Delegation that our commitment to migrants and refugees in the two Global Compacts should be guided by the *"values of welcome and fraternity that constitute a common patrimony of humanity enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in numerous conventions and international agreements"* (Pope Francis, Address to participants in the International Forum for Migration and Peace, Vatican City, 21 February 2017).

While migrants have the responsibility to respect the material and spiritual heritage of the host countries, they also constitute the human face of globalization and can be instrumental in promoting peaceful relations among nations. They make visible the reality that we all belong to one human family. Too often, they are welcomed only for the valuable contribution they make to the economy of their host country, compensating, in this manner, for demographic deficits and labour shortages. Tragically, however, they are subjected to racial and other forms of discrimination and intolerance because they are perceived as being "different" from mainstream populations and dominant cultures.

This contradiction, which stems from a limited vision of the human person and the predominance of economic interests, runs contrary to the dignity and equality inherent to all human beings.

In this regard, the availability of clear, neutral, and disaggregated data and information on migrants, free from partisan and political interests, must be promoted at both the international and national levels. The media should commit themselves to portray the broader picture of the human reality of migration and its causes honestly and fairly. The "cherry-picking" of information which perpetuates sensationalism and negative stereotypes can hide the truth lying behind the decision to move, which, too often, is prompted by extreme poverty, famine, natural and man-made disasters, violence, and persecution.

Mr. Chairman,

As Pope Francis recently recalled “... *mass media themselves use negative stereotypes and sensationalism when talking about migrants and refugees. Just think of the unfair use that is often made of terms to describe migrants and refugees. How often do we hear people talk of “illegals” as a synonym for migrants?*” (Pope Francis, Interview on the struggles of migrants and refugees, 7 April 2017).

Mr. Chairman, my Delegation wishes to ask the panelists whether it could be useful to draw within the Global Compact an appropriate and unambiguous lexicon, as enshrined in relevant international agreements and conventions. This could be mainstreamed at the national level in order to support a real understanding of the human reality of migration and to help prevent the rise of xenophobic and racial prejudice among the general public.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.