

UNITED NATIONS



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

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**Press Briefing**

**11 December 2018, Marrakesh**

**Good evening everyone,**

**Over 160 Governments from every corner of the world have come together here in Marrakech and unanimously adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.**

**In doing so, Governments committed to a global migration framework based on facts not myths, a framework that protects their national interests and in fact advances them through better cooperation.**

**As its title makes clear, the Compact is designed to enhance safety and order in migration management, and reduce recourse to dangerous, chaotic migratory routes. It seeks to maximize all the benefits of human mobility and mitigate its challenges.**

**This framework also reinforces, unambiguously, the fundamental principle that migrants everywhere should be treated with dignity and fairness.**

**The overwhelming support of the international community for this Compact is also the expression of multilateralism at its best.**

**Over 2,000 people attended this conference – including Government officials, representatives of business, labour unions, civil society, mayors and many others who have a vital role to play in ensuring that migration is managed in a manner that brings benefits for all – for host countries and communities, for countries of origin and for migrants – while ensuring protection for those most vulnerable.**

**To those who are still skeptical about this Compact, I urge you to read it carefully and of course form your own opinion. In doing so, listen to the Secretary-General's dispelling of the myths about the Compact.**

**It is not correct to suggest that this Compact imposes obligations on Member States and infringes on their sovereignty. It does nothing of the sort, and it is not binding, as a treaty would be.**

**It does not create a right to migrate. Under international human rights law citizens of a country have the right to enter, stay and leave their country but they don't have a right to go anywhere else unless they seek asylum, or are authorized by another country to enter its territory.**

**Developed countries are not operating as a charity when they invite immigration. For the most part, they fulfill economic needs in adding to their work force. And when countries open their door not only to refugees, as they must, but to desperate people seeking assistance, whether temporarily or more permanently, these states should be assisted and celebrated, as they make the world a better place for all of us.**

**Finally, allow me to express the United Nations' sincere gratitude to the Kingdom of Morocco for its outstanding hospitality and for enabling us to have this historic moment for migration and multilateralism here in Marrakesh.**

**We leave Marrakesh full of energy and conviction. With the Global Compact, we have an opportunity to embark on a new phase of cooperation on migration. The UN, through a new collaborative UN Migration network, is ready to work with all countries and all stakeholders to take forward this Compact.**