

Presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development (A/73/286)

**Item 22: Globalization and interdependence
(sub-item b: International migration and development)
Second Committee, General Assembly, 73rd session
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Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my privilege to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development (A/73/286). The report, which was prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/237, comes at a time when the issue of migration has risen to the top of the political agenda in many countries.

In less than two months, the General Assembly is set to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the first-ever United Nations framework to address migration in all its dimensions, at a conference being held in Marrakesh, Morocco. The conference will take place 24 years after the General Assembly first began to consider the possibility of convening a United Nations conference on international migration and development.

Allow me to highlight five key messages from the report.

First, between 2000 and 2017, the estimated number of international migrants increased by almost 50 per cent, faster than the global population as a whole. As a result, the share of foreign-born persons in the world's population increased from 2.8 per cent in 2000 to 3.4 per cent in 2017. Although just 3.4 per cent globally, migrants account for nearly 12 per cent of the population in the more developed regions, but less than 2 per cent in the less developed regions.

Second, the role of migration as a driver of population change is expected to increase in the next few decades, as the birth rate is projected to drop to low levels in a growing number of countries. For countries of destination, migration makes the population both larger and younger, since immigrants tend to be younger on average than the population they join. As a result, migration may partially counter the shift of the population toward older ages in destination countries. However, it cannot halt, let alone reverse, the long-term trend toward an older population over time.

Third, while a large majority of Member States have ratified UN legal instruments related to refugee protection, migrant smuggling and human trafficking, ratification of instruments related to the rights of migrant workers remains much less common. These various legal instruments provide helpful guidance for the formulation and implementation of well-managed migration policies, as called for in target 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Fourth, over the past two years, UN DESA and other parts of the UN system have carried out activities to advance the aims of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted in 2016. For example, several entities, including the Population Division, have supported the development of the Global Compact by contributing to thematic meetings, interactive multi-stakeholder hearings and regional initiatives as well as by preparing briefing notes and organizing events. While progress has been made in developing methodologies for SDG indicators related to migration, significant work remains to be done, in particular at the country level.

Fifth, the report provides concrete suggestions to strengthen migration data, in line with the first objective of the Global Compact. In particular, the report calls for leveraging existing data sources, such as population censuses, administrative records and household surveys, for strengthening national capacities through training programmes, for establishing regional migration observatories, and for promoting cooperation and partnerships.

Ladies and gentlemen,

International migration contributes much to development in countries of both origin and destination, and it has lifted millions of migrants and their families out of poverty. In 2017, officially recorded remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached \$466 billion.

In June of 2018, the General Assembly proclaimed the 16th of June to be the International Day of Family Remittances, recognizing the transformative impact that remittances, including those from migrants, have across the Sustainable Development Goals and in supporting long-term development strategies, particularly on poverty reduction and access to basic services at the household level.

This committee, by deliberating the linkages between international migration and development since 1994, and by deciding to hold high-level dialogues on international migration and development in 2006 and 2013, laid the groundwork for including migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and helped to build a political consensus in support of the New York Declaration and the Global Compact.

Dear colleagues,

In July 2019, the high-level political forum on sustainable development will meet under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and address the theme of “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”. The cluster of Goals selected for review by the forum in 2019 includes Goals and targets relevant to migration, including the only migration-specific target, 10.7, which calls on countries to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

Once the General Assembly has formally adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, future High-level Dialogues on International Migration and Development will be transformed into the International Migration Review Forum. The first edition of the Forum will be held in 2022. Moving forward, the new forum will be the main

intergovernmental vehicle for reviewing the implementation of the Global Compact, including its linkages to the 2030 Agenda.

In closing, let me assure you that DESA, in particular the Population Division and the Statistics Division, will continue to work in collaboration with relevant partners to support Member States in the implementation of the Global Compact, especially for Objective one on migration data and evidence-based policies, and also in the follow-up and review of intergovernmental processes related to migration.

I wish you all the best in your deliberations.