

**Statement by Mr. Abubakar Malami, SAN, Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at the Roundtable (No.4) on 'Global Compact For Responsibility Sharing For Refugees, Respect for International Law' Held on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 at the High-Level Segment of the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), New York, USA.**

**Chairperson,  
Distinguished Delegates of State Parties,**

My delegation appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this important topic on the Global Compact for Responsibility Sharing For Refugees, Respect for International Law, within the context of the general debate on Mass Migration and Refugees at this 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

2. The increasing statistics of refugee flows across State and continental boundaries in our world today has undoubtedly become a matter which must engage the attention of the international community in view of the humanitarian, economic and security implications of the phenomenon. While the global community must necessarily be concerned by the dimensions of the current global refugee crisis, especially in its most acute manifestation in the unceasing traffic of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea from African and Asian countries into Europe, we must however not forget that the history of the human race is indeed the history of migration and in different ways, our various races and continents have been beneficiaries of human migration at different stages of history. This fact must therefore encourage us to adopt an essentially

humanitarian view of the situation, rather than considering it only from purely economic or security perspectives.

3. My delegation is of the opinion that in developing a global compact on responsibility sharing for refugees within the context of respect for international law, our various State Parties must continue to be guided by the ideals enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and associated global and regional instruments which emphasise the primary obligation of State Parties to protect refugees and treat them in a humane and dignified manner while also recognizing their basic right not to be returned to territories where their lives and freedoms are threatened.

#### **Chairperson,**

4. The basic question we should be asking ourselves is why millions of migrants and refugees are risking their lives in search of better lives and safer havens across the globe. The major triggers of migration in our world today have been variously identified as the desire of persons to escape wars and conflict, economic deprivations (including those attributable to climate change) and political repression.

5. In developing a compact of shared responsibilities to address this, we must therefore recognize the need for fundamental and concerted action by different global stakeholders including the United Nations system which must continue to work for a more equitable world economic order in order to diffuse economic opportunities globally; developing countries which constitute the major source of migration flows must commit themselves to better governance practices and economic policies which promote social inclusion and discourage conflicts; the destination countries particularly in

the Western Hemisphere who must reaffirm their commitment to the humane treatment of refugees and their economic integration as much as possible; and transit countries whose facilitation of humanitarian assistance, protection and safe passage for refugees is invaluable.

**Chairperson,**

6. My delegation must draw particular attention to the need for the global community, particularly countries housing the major financial capitals of the world, to support on-going initiatives to ensure the faster repatriation of illicit funds within their jurisdictions to the respective countries of origin or victim-States, in order to improve the economic standings of such States. This calls for the elimination of all bureaucratic and legal bottlenecks which often delay repatriation proceedings. In the long term, the ability of developing countries to create economic opportunities for their citizens within their borders is the most potent guarantee against the flow of refugees to other territories.

7. In concluding, let me thank you once more for this opportunity and express my conviction that this Roundtable will contribute to the emergence of a more effective template for shared contributions in a manner that promotes greater respect for international law in the treatment of refugees.

8. I thank you.

**New York**  
**September 19, 2016.**