

# Cooperative Republic of Guyana



**Ministry of the Presidency**  
Vlissengen Road, Bourda, Georgetown, Guyana

**Statement by His Excellency President David Granger  
to the High Level Meeting  
on  
Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants  
United Nations General Assembly - 19 September 2016**

Mr President,  
Excellencies,

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana welcomes the convening of this High-level Meeting on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants. The 'Meeting' offers the international community the opportunity to commit to a comprehensive solution to a complex and chronic problem.

The refugee and migrant crises confronting the world today represent grave challenges to the international community. Images and accounts of men, women and children who are forced to flee their homes and homelands in search of peace and security are transmitted daily and graphically by the mass and social media.

The international community can no longer ignore the plight of these desperate refugees and migrants. The conditions and situations demand a commitment to address both the root causes of, as well as the human consequences which accompany mass refugee and migration crises.

Conflicts within and between states are mainly responsible for most of the mass movements of refugees and migrants that we are witnessing in the world today. Refugees and migrants, however, are not the only ones affected. Conflicts between states, if left unattended or unresolved can escalate into regional and even global crises which can threaten the existence of larger numbers of persons in wider areas beyond their boundaries.

The root causes of the conflicts around the world which have spawned refugee and migrant crises must be addressed. The resolution of conflicts between states and the discouraging of aggression and the use of force between and within states cannot be ignored in the global response to the plight of refugees and migrants.

The international community has a responsibility to prevent these conflicts and to usher in a new global era of peace and security and to preserve peace between states.

Natural disaster is also a cause of the migration and refugees crises. The global community must not ignore the impact which catastrophic natural disasters, including those caused by climate change, has had in triggering mass destruction creates refugees and migration.

Guyana is a member of the Caribbean Community which six years ago, was overwhelmed by the death, devastation and destruction inflicted on the Caribbean state of Haiti, a sister member of our Community. The earthquake left thousands of persons dead and consigned thousands of others to a life of refugees in their own country. Haiti's agony is being compounded today by the creation of a new waves of refugees from the Dominican Republic. The lessons are that international humanitarian support must be swift and it must be sustained and must be

complemented by political action to reduce conflict which can promote instability and insecurity.

The Political Declaration on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants offers a path towards addressing the problem of large movements of refugees and migrants in a more coherent and comprehensive manner. It must be backed, however, by the efforts of the United Nations, in trying to bring an end to inter-state and intra-state conflicts that are active, incipient and latent.

Guyana supports the protection of the rights of all migrants, including the rights to non-discrimination. We welcome the process that this meeting will inaugurate for the convening, in 2018, of an intergovernmental conference on international migration with a view to the adoption of a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Guyana intends to play an active role in that process and to ensure that the root causes of conflict are eliminated and that peace will prevail.

I thank you Mr President.