

Commission on Population and Development
51st Session – Theme: Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility, and International Migration
United States Statement - Delivered by Laurie Shestack Phipps, Advisor
April 11, 2018

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the United States, I would like to thank you and the bureau for your efforts to prepare us for the work of this year's Commission on the theme of "Sustainable cities, human mobility, and international migration."

Migration Trends

As highlighted in the Secretary-General's reports to the Commission, the world is experiencing historic levels of international migration and displacement due to conflict, natural disasters, political, social, and economic insecurity, human rights abuses, and community violence. While much migration is regular and contributes to development, each year, millions of migrants undertake perilous and often deadly journeys through irregular migration channels, leaving them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

The U.S. and International Migration

Safe, well-managed, and orderly migration supports economic growth and prosperity and strengthens national and global security. The United States seeks to address the root causes of dangerous irregular migration in origin countries through our overseas development programs that provide increased educational and income-generating opportunities. These efforts and investments help reduce poverty, support inclusive development, protect human rights, promote rule of law and good governance, decrease instability in fragile states, and also help discourage irregular migration. The U.S. is a leader in providing life-saving humanitarian assistance to those fleeing persecution, torture, and conflict, and we encourage other governments to increase their assistance to refugees and vulnerable migrants, including those who are victims of human trafficking.

Census and other Data Collection on Migration

Developing robust data collection processes on migration is important for good migration management and sound policy development, and it is essential for identifying the needs of migrant populations. Increasingly, countries are including indicators of international migration on population and housing censuses, household surveys, population registries, and administrative records. While migration data have improved in recent decades, population flows remain difficult to measure. The U.S. has played a prominent role in developing international recommendations on migration data. We are also committed to helping countries develop the capacity to collect, analyze, and disseminate data on migration.

U.S. Support for Women and Girls

Mr. Chairman, recognizing that nearly half of the world's migrants are women, the U.S. is committed to addressing the unique needs of displaced and migrant women and girls. During and in the immediate aftermath of a crisis as well as during the migration process and after, gender inequalities are exacerbated, and women and girls face heightened risks of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse. The U.S. government remains a steadfast leader within the humanitarian community on the protection of women and girls, particularly through addressing gender-based violence through programming tailored to their needs.

In addition, as the world's largest bilateral donor to global health programs, the United States is committed to helping women and their families thrive. Our bilateral maternal and child health program has been working in 25 countries that together account for more than two-thirds of maternal and child deaths worldwide. Since 2008, our work in these 25 priority countries has saved the lives of 4.6 million children and 200,000 women. We know that investing in the health of women and girls has tremendous social and economic benefits. When women and girls have access to education, health care, and decent work, they are better equipped to fulfill their potential and can contribute to more stable and prosperous communities and nations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we look forward to productive discussions with other delegations on these issues.

Thank you.