

New training materials on Human Rights at International Borders

LAUNCH EVENT

Monday, 25 October 2021

(16:00 – 17:30)

Closing remarks: H.E. Dr. Omar Zniber, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco (co-sponsor)

- I would like to thank the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for inviting me to contribute in this important debate concerning the Human Rights at International Borders, and to draw some conclusions.
- Indeed, what we are observing, inter alia, during the past two weeks are very difficult situations of refugees and migrants at international borders, and more we are speaking according to IOM about 3 millions of people, seeking to move across the borders and impeached particularly by the COVID-19 consequences. This numbers are also expected to be in the rise if we take into consideration the adverse effect of climate change.
- Likewise, UNHCR publishes regular statements on deaths of hundreds of people in high seas in the past months, notably in the central Mediterranean.
- As it has been said during our debate, there is also an increasing trend of practices incompatible with international law, such as pushbacks, denial of asylum applications and refusal to rescue at sea and land borders, which violate international refugee law as well as abuse asylum systems for political purposes.
- This is why, multilateral and bilateral cooperation – in this case training programmes – are of outmost importance to govern these situations, in full respect of the Human Rights of migrants.
- Throughout the course of history, the Kingdom of Morocco has always refused the use of immigration detention as a migration management tool, taking into account that the Kingdom is not only a country of origin, but also a transit and destination country, as many other countries worldwide.
- For this reason, a multidimensional approach is fundamental to address the phenomenon of mixed movement, not only from the security dimension at the borders, particularly fighting smugglers and human traffickers, but also through a humanitarian dimension, including in providing assistance to victims and vulnerable people, especially the operation of search and rescue at sea.
- In such perspective, Morocco's experience can be shared on the National Coordination Commission for preventing and combatting human trafficking, including the establishment of a national referral mechanism for victims of trafficking in person, and the program of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights concerning the strengthening of capacities of law enforcement officers and custom agents on human rights issues in Morocco.
- Furthermore, Morocco supported the development of the training material entitled: "***Human Rights at International Borders: A Trainer's Guide***", including in hosting the regional workshop in Casablanca in 2018, which allowed the interested parties to pilot and improve the materials.

- These significant results demonstrate Morocco's major contribution in terms of regional security as it assumes full responsibility of solidarity-based migration management and works with its partners to anchor concretely the principle of shared responsibility.
- The inauguration, in Rabat, on 24 June 2021, of the Headquarters of the United Nations Office for Combating Terrorism and Training in Africa, is a concrete contribution for culminating efforts in terms of protecting migrants and refugees from terrorist networks.
- This new regional office, drawing on the expertise of Morocco and UNOCT, will provide a quality training to African states in the field of counter-terrorism, including security, investigation and prosecution, prison and border management, rehabilitation and reintegration, opting for a collaborative and supportive approach, in a spirit of collective responsibility.
- Furthermore, bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of promoting and protecting the rights of migrants are essential in order to advance the global governance on migration.
- Almost 3 years after the adoption of the Global Compact on Migration in Marrakech, this important international instrument has generated a positive momentum in advancing not only our common Agenda on migration, but also in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- In this framework, based on the 360-degree vision of the Global Compact, we should encourage the work of non-governmental organizations, civil society actors, national human rights institutions and other relevant stakeholders, aiming at the elaboration of recommendation for the promotion and protection of human rights of migrants, crossing the borders.
- Finally, advancing bilateral, regional and international cooperation is a cornerstone for implementing technical assistance and capacity building measures in order to better promote and protect the human rights of migrants worldwide.
- The Guide we are launching today is a very important tool in that perspective, and our debate today is a clear indication on what would and should be done to reach our common goals in protecting the Human Rights of the migrants, particularly the vulnerable among them, also with the help of the UN Network on Migration.
- I thank you for your kind attention.