

Remarks of the UNODC Executive Director
High level side event on strengthening cooperation on
migration and refugee movements in the perspective
of the new development agenda
New York, 30 September 2015

Excellencies,

We at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime join our fellow speakers in the call for urgent, united action to address the acute situation migrants and refugees are facing in many parts of the world today.

I welcome the collective commitments to address the situation in a comprehensive manner, including by tackling the root causes of migration, as called for by the UN Protocol against migrant smuggling.

This message must be emphasized as the world has met here and agreed ambitious global goals to build a better world.

If we believe in justice we cannot allow criminal smugglers to prey on desperation and endanger the lives of migrants and refugees.

I would also like to refer to the recent statement of the Secretary-General, which highlighted the need for legal and safe pathways for refugees and migrants, so that they are not left in the hands of criminal networks and embark on perilous journeys.

We need more research, intelligence-led investigations and enhanced information sharing and cooperation.

I encourage all States to live up to their commitments under the Protocol against the smuggling of migrants under the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and to ratify this important instrument if they have not yet done so.

We must stop the criminals and give migrants and refugees the protection they deserve.

UNODC stands ready to work with Member States and all our partners to ensure that collective responses are sensitive, integrated and effective.

Thank you.