



UN high level side event  
on  
Strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee movements  
in the perspective of the new development agenda

Statement by the  
NGO Committee on Migration

Excellencies:

The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the NGO Committee on Migration, and other NGOs present today, urgently call on those here assembled, to join in an effective partnership to protect the rights and address the critical needs of migrants and refugees, making full use of the new development agenda.

Migrants and refugees have rights, regardless of their status, citizenship or nationality. An effective partnership must focus both on immediate needs, safety, and protection in times of crisis, including situations of human trafficking, deaths at sea, and detention at borders; and, at the same time, on longer-range, comprehensive policies which generate durable solutions for refugees, and a shift from humanitarian aid to self sufficiency.

This calls for swift implementation of the goals and targets of the new development plan, especially:

- facilitating orderly, safe, regular migration and mobility of people, regardless of their migratory status, including humanitarian admissions programs, education visas, work visas, and family reunification schemes;
- eliminating all forms of violence against women and children;
- protecting labour rights of migrant workers, and reducing the transaction costs of migrant remittances; and
- partnerships with Civil Society to ensure the effectiveness of implementation, especially at the regional and local levels.

The refugee crisis in Europe and beyond requires immediate concerted action. We call on Governments to ensure:

- respect for the human rights and dignity of all refugees and migrants;
- a focus on saving lives, not border control;
- tackling racism and xenophobia;
- resettlement opportunities for forced migrants, and alternative, legal pathways to admission;
- immediate generous funding to respond to the refugee crisis; and
- investment in addressing root causes of conflict, violence, and displacement such as poverty, inequality and injustice.

Thank you.