

High-level Side Event:  
Strengthening Cooperation on Migration and Refugee Movements in the  
Perspective of the New Development Agenda

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Statement by H.E. Ms. Erna Solberg  
Prime Minister of Norway

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Secretary-General, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for hosting this timely meeting.

This issue is at the top of our political agenda, both at home and internationally. We have all been moved by the pictures and articles telling the individual stories of the people fleeing from war and conflict areas. Some of them are heart-breaking.

More than 60 million people have fled their homes. This is a direct result of the inability to reach a political solution to the conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Nigeria and other places.

Joint and urgent action must be taken. We must address the root causes of the refugee crisis. We must increase our efforts to reach political solutions. And we must increase our humanitarian and development assistance to refugees, to internally displaced people and to host communities.

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Norway, in cooperation with the UN, Germany and other partners, has offered to host an international donor conference for Syria. We are in dialogue with our partners to find a suitable date.

Migration can be a driver for human mobility, development and growth. All societies need new ideas and knowledge. Many migrants are already contributing to our economies, our cultures and our societies in very positive ways.

However, in order to exploit the opportunities that migration offers, we must understand the dynamics. We need to ensure that refugees are included in our societies and given opportunities. They must get a new home, a job and learn a new language. For Europe, it will be a challenge to successfully integrate the high number of refugees we are now welcoming to our countries. However, with a coordinated approach, I am confident we will succeed.

Furthermore, we need to bridge the gap between humanitarian assistance and development assistance in fragile States. Fragile States must be stabilised.

We need to engage development actors more extensively in this issue. And we need closer partnerships. Between all of us.

This meeting is an important step towards strengthening the international cooperation on migration. And I look forward to continuing this discussion in Valletta in November when European and African countries meet for the summit on migration.

Thank you.

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