

Mr President,

Mr Secretary General,



Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 2016 we adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

Back then, in the midst of the refugee and migrant crisis that affected Europe and other regions of the world, we all committed to launching a process of consultations and negotiations that would lead to the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

The moment has now arrived, that we have before us the outcome of this process, in the form of a political framework of cooperation. This framework, although non-legally binding, sets out our common principles and commitments towards migration and calls for concrete action. In that sense, it is not the end of the road, but rather the beginning.

Our world is changing fast; inequalities within and among countries are expanding equally fast. Moreover, challenges

that generate migration movements persist, whether they relate to population growth, lack of education and employment opportunities, extreme poverty, climate change or the effects of wars and conflicts around the globe. At the same time, information is spreading at high speed and reaches larger parts of the world population.

These global challenges require global responses.

In our view, this is exactly what the Compact on Migration is all about; It is about providing the international community with an agreed set of rules to:

- facilitate our cooperation on all dimensions of migration, taking into account receiving capacities and national labour market needs;
- facilitate regular migrants' integration;
- ensure dignified return of persons who are not in need of international protection;
- address the root causes of irregular migration; and, finally,
- combat criminal networks involved in migrants' smuggling.

In doing so, we agree to protect the lives of migrants, as an absolute priority, to safeguard their human rights, to act in a gender-responsive and child-sensitive manner, and to



respect national sovereignty, national competences and the rule of law.

My country has experienced emigration of its own citizens and has also been a transit country for migrants wishing to reach other European Union Member States. Moreover, Greece has been largely affected by significant mixed migration and refugee flows since 2015. The Greek people, despite all the hardship it was going through, showed to the world how to treat people in need with solidarity.

Based on this experience, we are convinced that understanding the priorities, expectations and concerns of both origin, transit and destination countries is necessary, if we are to make a step forward and provide effective solutions to the challenges we face.

We are obliged to overcome the different approaches, as shown during the negotiations, acknowledging that we have an obligation but also a right to regulate this phenomenon on a national level. At the same time, we should acknowledge no country alone can manage migration

effectively. We need multilateral responses based on international law.

Being fully aware of that, my country has contributed to the process that led us here, today, with a genuine interest to help finding common ground.

We believe that we have now reached a broad agreement on a Global Compact on Migration that, through its objectives and suggested actions:

- reflects the expectations of all UN member States in a fair, balanced and comprehensive manner;
- encompasses the rights and the obligations of both the sending and receiving States and migrants themselves, and
- recognizes migration as a people-centered process, that is both a challenge and a development opportunity.

I therefore confirm my country's commitment to contribute in making the Global Compact on Migration work, as an effective political framework of cooperation that does not hinder but, on the contrary, is there to support our efforts at

national and regional level towards safe and well-managed migration.

To ensure that, we need to set up an efficient follow-up and review mechanism, that avoids excessive red tape and administrative burdens and increases synergies with all relevant mechanisms.

Let me close by expressing my sincere wish that the political commitments we undertake today, are transformed into concrete action, for the benefit of all.

Thank you.