

General Debate
Fifty-second session of the Commission on Population and Development
Statement by the
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
1-5 April, 2019

- (a) Actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development at the global, regional and national levels;
- (b) Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Madam/Mister Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

As the UN Migration agency, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) would like to applaud the focus of the fifty-second session of the Commission, and the Secretary-General's Reports that have been prepared for the session, particularly the on the references and recommendations made in the context of international migration.

IOM is glad at the last session, states acknowledged the significance of migration as a global megatrend, recognized that well-managed migration contributes to development and economic growth and that the human rights of migrants must be upheld.

The potential benefits that migration offers for the achievement of the SDGs are immense. It depends on the conditions of migration and the extent to which all people can access safe and regular migration as a development strategy. Yet the current state of governance and policy development and the lack of coherence with other policy domains is unfortunately leaving many migrants behind and undermines the potential social and economic benefits that migration could offer.

The 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved without due consideration of migration, and progress towards the SDGs is itself critical to ensure that mobile populations are not left behind. Reaching the furthest behind first also means we have to end protracted crisis and displacement as well as empower migrants in vulnerable situations.

The health needs and realities of migrants must be included in global efforts to achieve the health-related SDGs. Evidence-informed discussions are needed to better inform policy decisions towards policy coherence on migration and health at national and global levels. Acknowledging the importance of migration health across all SDG targets lays the foundation for human rights and equity perspectives on the path towards promoting the health of migrants, as well as involvement of migrants, including health workers, as co-developers of health services and contributors to development.

Allow me to make several core recommendations.

A rights-based approach will ensure that no one is left behind. These ambitious goals can only be reached if greater efforts are made to address the vulnerability of all migrants. Vulnerability is a complex issue demanding greater understanding and better evidence to inform prevention and protection responses.

The benefits of migration for development can only be realized with strong institutional frameworks, evidence-based policies and programming, and, clear objectives and a long-term perspective. We need to act now to make sure that our policies are fact-based, and not short-sighted, counterproductive and working at cross-purposes to broader development objectives.

There is an urgent need to improve the collection and use of migration data to enable the links between migration and sustainable development to be realized. We would like to also welcome the acknowledgement of national data systems strengthened to provide data disaggregated by key demographic characteristics.

Improved collaboration across the humanitarian development peace nexus is required to reach the furthest behind first. The New Way of Working will improve the scope for comprehensive and coherent responses bringing development programming into crisis contexts earlier. Oftentimes, transition and recovery programming will be key for creating conditions that are more conducive to development efforts.

Lastly, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration provides a roadmap to help achieve the migration dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, and the creation of the UN Network on Migration creates new impetus to achieve the migration-related aspects of the SDGs. Governments must understand how meeting the objectives of the GCM will support progress on the 2030 Agenda and vice versa.

In conclusion, migration is a transboundary issue. It needs to be understood as a continuum, spanning across countries and policy interventions. There is a need for greater cooperation at all levels – international, regional and bilateral – as no State can adequately address migration on its own.

I thank you, Chair.