

Guyana

I thank you Madam Chair and as this is the first time my delegation takes the floor, we wish to congratulate you on your election and we also offer our congratulations to all members of the bureau. My delegation aligns itself to the Statement delivered on behalf of the GRULAC earlier this week.

We also wish to thank the Director General for the presentation of his Report and we pay tribute to his leadership of the Organization and to the hard work and sacrifice of his staff, particularly those who leave behind loved ones and families to be in the fields to address the needs of the world's migrants and refugees.

Since becoming a member of the IOM in 2011, Guyana has worked with the IOM to implement several projects particularly in the promotion of the involvement of the Guyanese diaspora in Guyana's development. We thank the IOM for the assistance provided and we look forward to continued successful collaboration in the years ahead.

As we commemorate the one-year anniversary of the IOM within the United Nations System, Guyana believes that this seat at the table has served to strengthen the voice and role of the IOM in the international community's efforts to address the interests of migrants and refugees.

Madam Chair,

We agree completely with the remarks of the President of the General Assembly when he stated that we have never lived in a world without Migration and that we cannot make it disappear. Migrants have always contributed to the economic, social and political development of receiving countries and will undoubtedly continue to do so.

However, the situation of Migrants today in many parts of the world and what is accurately termed a migrant crisis is unprecedented and represent grave challenges

to the international community. This makes the work of the International Organization for Migration more necessary than ever before. Images and accounts of men, women and children, who are forced to flee their homes and homelands in search of safety and often better economic opportunities are transmitted daily and graphically by the mass and social media.

Those host countries that have been grappling with the effects of this crisis must be lauded for their efforts and the international community must continue to do all that it can to alleviate the plight of these desperate human beings. Many of them do not choose to become migrants, leaving homes, loved ones and livelihoods behind to face an uncertain future often at grave risk to their very lives.

As we continue this process leading to the 2018 Intergovernmental conference on International Migration with a view towards the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, Guyana believes that we must understand the circumstances behind this migrant crisis in order to effectively address its challenges and we must in our deliberations, strike a careful balance between the need for safe and secure borders and the humanitarian needs of the world's most vulnerable. Our national policies and measures must be aimed at effectively managing migration for the benefit of our own peoples, but we must also be guided by the humanitarian needs of those who are desperately searching for a safe and better life.

To this end, Guyana is heartened that the discussions on the Global Compact appear to have the interests of migrants at the forefront. This we believe is crucial in reaching a framework which we can all agree and which can be to our national benefits and work for the good of migrants and refugees. Guyana believes that should our deliberations continue to be guided by common goals of eradicating racism, prejudice and intolerance, our work will provide for the protection of the human rights to life, education, health etc. for all both within our borders and those of our neighbours.

Guyana will continue to work with the international community towards this end. I thank you.