



STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. NEGASH KEBRET BOTORA
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
AT GENEVA AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN SWITZERLAND
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 108TH SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL

GENEVA
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Ambassador Martha Mauras, Chairperson of the IOM Council,

Ambassador William Swing, Director General of the IOM,

Distinguished representatives,

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we all recognize, today the management of human mobility has become a pressing global challenge - the governance of which undoubtedly requires robust international cooperation beyond any other thing. The collective efforts we have put behind multiple migration related initiatives further reinforce the fact that no member state can manage migration without cooperating with other states. All the same, the efforts exerted so far have clearly shown that there is now an overwhelming consensus on the need for global response and that well-managed migration benefits both societies and migrants.

Ethiopia believes that the migration related issues are best addressed when approached from development-oriented perspectives. The facts and figures collected over the years are incontrovertible that well managed migration can fill the gaps in labor demand in the developed nations while economic and social remittances in knowledge and skills transfer are transforming economies in origin countries. That is why we believe thus that the inclusion of migration related goals in the SDG's provides a unique opportunity. It is thus incumbent on us to ensure the implementation of the goals and keep the momentum alive so that with the required global political commitment that migration is well-managed as global public good with shared responsibility and sense of solidarity. To that end, my delegation wishes to recognize the progress we have made since the adoption of the New York Declaration in the consultations we conducted so far towards the adoption of a Global Compact on Migration.

Excellencies,

While we draw comfort with the growing interest in a better international cooperation, we are, however, saddened by the rise of xenophobia, discrimination, debt bondage, modern slavery and exploitation of migrants. The barbaric act witnessed recently in Libya is one among such tragic incident where stranded migrants are traded as chattels. This is a sad and disturbing scene reminding us once again of our failure to protect helpless migrants. Ethiopia condemns this dehumanizing act in the strongest possible term and urges for a concerted action to end to this tragedy without any delay.

Excellencies,

Ethiopia's firm stance making migration safe, legal and orderly is evident in the steps we have taken to streamline the goals set out in the Agenda 2030 in our national development plan. In addition, we are working to strengthen the legal and institutional framework of labor migration to ensure that migration benefits migrant workers and societies at both side of the aisle. Accordingly, we enacted a new overseas employment law to ensure that recruitment remains fair and ethical and migrant workers' rights are observed. To that end, the law has included provisions on employer pays- principle, using of standard labor contracts, mandatory pre-departure orientations alongside with strict rules to ensure that private employment agencies are not engaged in disguised smuggling of workers. Ethiopia has also concluded several bilateral labor agreements with major destination countries including Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia among others and has been working to beef up its consular capacity to improve the observance of migrant workers' rights.

Despite these efforts, Ethiopia remains challenged by trafficking in persons smuggling and irregular migration. In this current year, Ethiopia had to deal with the return of migrant workers who find themselves in irregular situation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ethiopia worked closely with the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the IOM to return Ethiopian workers by increasing flights, consular service and conducting information campaign to ensure Ethiopians migrant workers return home before the amnesty period granted by the Saudi Arabia ends. 43,000 Ethiopian returned from Saudi Arabia and we are currently working to reintegrate them within their local communities. In this regard, Ethiopia would like to thank the IOM for its support in returning Ethiopians through the Assisted Voluntary Return Program. With respect to the challenge posed by human trafficking, a national committee and a taskforce led by our Deputy Prime Minister was established with a mandate to address the problem by carrying out activities at all levels of governments through a whole-of-society approach. These include educating the youth about irregular migration, law enforcement, victim protection and reintegration. We have also enacted a law that severely punishes traffickers, protect whistleblowers and establishes victims support fund in line with our commitments to the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crimes and the two additional Protocols. As current chair of the Khartoum Process, Ethiopia is also working with the European Union and regional countries in job creation, strengthening border control and dismantling network of illegal migrants. Low level awareness about the nature of the crime, lack of resources to reintegrate victims however remains a challenge to effectively address the challenges. Cognizant of the Diaspora's role in development our nation, Ethiopia is also intensifying its Diaspora engagement in trade investment and knowledge transfer. A In the past year alone Ethiopia earned four billion dollars from remittances. A new proclamation that provides incentives, defines privileges and duties of the diaspora is under process of enactment. High transfer costs and lack of capacity to map and fully engage the Diaspora remain a challenge to us.

Excellencies,

Finally, as we all know, the interplay between development and migration is intricate. The reality is that as migration hastens development and development also increases human mobility. Benefiting the best of well-managed migration requires thus understanding these dynamics and strengthening cooperation and the governance architecture of migration. In this context, Ethiopia's wishes to call for strong engagement of states and other stakeholders in the Global Compact process and reaffirm its commitment to development, oriented and human rights centered multilateralism to make migration safe, legal and orderly.

Thank You