



**SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT: 108TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION**

ITEM 11

28 NOVEMBER- 01 DECEMBER 2017

GENEVA

Thank you Madam Chair

Madam Chair,

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ghana on behalf of the Africa Group. Allow me to congratulate you Madam Chair and Members of your Bureau for having been elected to lead the Council to the next session in 2018.

My delegation also congratulates the newest members of the IOM, the Republic of Cuba, Cook Islands and all new observer organizations.

Madam Chair,

My delegation also wishes to thank the Director General on the report presented to Member States. We acknowledge the support IOM provided during the consultation phase of the compact including the six thematic consultations, regional consultations and engagement with civil society.

In addition the IOM over the last 66 years has grown and is now a stronger and responsive organization that serves and assists vulnerable migrants around the world and in 2016 became the newest member of the United Nations system. At the same time also the historical New York Declaration was adopted by world leaders with the aim of improving international cooperation and governance of migration.

Madam Chair,

This meeting takes place amid the shocking and barbaric acts of modern day slavery and we call Libyan authorities to investigate and commend the IOM for its swift response. Trafficking in human beings and modern forms of slavery is a reality for migrants and these extreme forms of human exploitation in the migration process require counteraction.

Madam Chair,

The global compact we will negotiate should be inclusive, with a focus on a whole of society approach in promoting development through migration. We need to be practical in the negotiations, and focus on concrete actionable areas on which States can reach consensus. South Africa has made significant strides towards the realization of the objectives of the global compact for migrants through firm recognition of the positive role played by migrants in the country's National Development Plan Vision 2030 that embraces migration for development and the White Paper on International Migration. Our International Migration Policy balances the primary objectives of economic development, national security, international and constitutional obligations as well as the

vision articulated in the Freedom Charter that we should as a country seek to live in peace and friendship with our neighbours.

We strongly believe that for us a regional approach to issues of migration will deliver a better deal for ourselves and the continent. Push factors of illegal migration are best addressed in regional cooperation and Africa as a whole. Our engagement should be understood in this context of collaboration with our SADC neighbours. South Africa has embarked on a Special Dispensation for regularizing the stay of migrants from the region as a means of managing the flow of migrants. The objectives of the Special Dispensation is to properly document and regularize the stay of nationals from SADC in South Africa for work, study and business. The Special Dispensation has benefits including

- relieving the pressure on the asylum seeker management process
- provides amnesty to those who received South African documents fraudulently
- regularize those staying in South Africa undocumented
- suspend deportation of those residing in South Africa undocumented by allowing them to apply for the Special Dispensation

For South Africa, the global compact for migrants should develop operational instruments for fair and effective migration governance with mutual understanding and international cooperation critical. It should be inspired by the 2030 Agenda for inclusive growth, sustainable development, and balance security concerns and development. The root causes of irregular migration that manifest themselves through underdevelopment, conflict, poverty and unemployment need to be addressed in a comprehensive holistic manner. The global compact needs to take into account the level of development of countries particularly those in the developing world who confront immense pressure to their economic and social fabric when addressing the issues of burden sharing.

Madam Chair,

We also need to acknowledge that each state will have its own emphasis on the global compact for migrants, however focusing on convergence will be critical. Accordingly, a concerted global effort to protect the human rights of all migrants regardless of their migratory status should be a focus for all Member States and a particular protection of unaccompanied minor children, women and the disabled. Any commitments towards the global compact for safe, regular and orderly migration that are not accompanied by concrete interventions and resource mobilization to relieve pressure from the developing countries by developed nations are unlikely to lead the international community to any realization of these otherwise noble ideas.

In conclusion, South Africa will within the existing international obligations support all initiatives contributing to well managed migration and international cooperation as we move towards negotiating the global compact for migrants.

I thank you.