

Draft Talking Points - IOM 108th Council General Debate

Room XXVII

Speaker: Shahrazad Tadjbakhsh, Deputy Director, DIP Service I

Time allocated: 3 mins

Madame Chair, as this is the first time that UNHCR has taken the floor we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election. As we did not have the opportunity to speak during yesterday's panel discussion on climate change, I'd like to start by saying a few words on this subject, with many thanks to IOM for hosting a conversation on this important topic.

It is widely accepted today that persons in regions across the world are displaced across borders in the context of climate change and disasters. There may be circumstances where they fall within the definition of a 'refugee', which is notably the case when climate exacerbates other factors that may force people to flee from their homes, such as conflict and generalized violence.

When persons do not qualify as refugees under international or regional law, they may nevertheless be in need of international protection on a temporary or longer-term basis. Strategies to achieving predictable and equitable responses to international protection needs are usefully being addressed in the global compact for refugees, with thanks to States.

However climate change and disaster are cross-cutting phenomena, and in order to achieve comprehensive responses it will be critical that those elements not related to international protection find expression in the global migration compact. Disaster risk reduction, voluntary migration as an adaptation strategy, and planned relocation as a last resort, are essential elements to safe, orderly and regular migration. We'd like to take this opportunity to recommend to you a toolbox on planned relocation, developed jointly with IOM and Georgetown University, which is available on our website.

UNHCR is very pleased to be partnering with IOM on many other fronts also, for instance on resettlement, where IOM provides important logistical support, and as members of the Steering Group of the Platform on Disaster Displacement. Our joint efforts on combatting trafficking in persons is particularly important. In 2018, UHCR and IOM will be relaunching a joint guiding framework on developing standard operating procedures for the identification and protection of victims of trafficking, and since August this year, we have been co-leading, with Heartland Alliance, a new 'Task Team on Anti-Trafficking' in the Global Protection Cluster for IDPs.

We equally value our cooperation in the process leading up to the Global Compact on Migration. UNHCR and IOM have a common interest in ensuring that all persons on the move are protected, that those with special needs are identified and referred to appropriate services and procedures, that there are safe, regular channels available for migration, and that we have accurate and up-to-date data on mixed migratory movements. UNHCR is very pleased to be working with states, Special Representative Arbour and her office, and of course with IOM and other partners towards a successful elaboration of this important Compact.