

**High-Level Segment of the  
112<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council International Organization for Migration  
The impact of COVID-19 on borders, migration and mobility:  
Learning lessons and preparing for the future**

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Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to participate with you today in the high-level segment of the IOM council which focuses on a very timely topic, namely the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on migration and mobility.

As we have witnessed, the pandemic significantly impacted migration flows and labour mobility around the world. Migrants were the first to lose their jobs, and some of them were left subject to exploitation by smugglers who were empowered by the restrictions on international mobility. International recruitment was also negatively impacted due to economic uncertainty and travel restrictions. Migrant workers had to return to their home countries where the job market was unable to absorb them. There was a significant plunge in migrant remittances which was an important source of income for countries of origin, thus affecting economic development of both countries of origin and destination.

This pandemic has demonstrated the importance of initiating a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the national, regional, and international levels to devise strategies to align safety and health measures across borders in cases of global crises, including mutual recognition of health and vaccine certificates.

The role that migrants play in the sustainable development of their host countries – which was made clear during the pandemic – is enough for us to conclude that encouraging migration mobility in the coming period of time will be instrumental to our efforts in mitigating the economic challenges caused by COVID-19.

Thus, while formulating future strategies, migrants and refugees, should be integrated into national public health responses and granted equitable access to treatment and vaccines, and included in social protection schemes.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

While the pandemic represented a challenge to the international community, it also provided an opportunity to assess international cooperation mechanisms that are in place, and to test the global preparedness in dealing with a crisis of this magnitude.

Finally, as the world still struggles to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, and while economic development and mobility have been disrupted on the short-term, we must work together to formulate medium and long-term policies and plans that capitalize on the lesson learnt, with a shared vision on mitigating the negative impact of the pandemic on economic development. We need to work together with a sense of solidarity and unity after this pandemic has reminded us of our shared fate.