



**Statement of Dr. Francesca Di Giovanni, Undersecretary for the  
Multilateral Sector, Section for Relations with States and  
International Organizations,  
Head of Delegation of the Holy See to the High-Level Segment on  
“The intersection between climate change, food security, migration  
and displacement” - 113<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of the International  
Organization for Migration (IOM)**

*Geneva, 29 November 2022*

Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The Holy See wishes to thank the IOM for highlighting the intersection between climate change, food security, migration and displacement. Each of these four phenomena affects, either directly or indirectly, the whole human family. What lies at the center of their intersection is the impact that they have on the lives of human persons, especially those in the most vulnerable situations, including extreme poverty.

Pope Francis has repeatedly called attention to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation, while also expressing concern about the “evident link between environmental instability, food insecurity and migratory movements”.<sup>1</sup> This connection becomes more and more evident every day. Indeed, the crippling consequenc

es of the climate crisis, famine, and water scarcity are already a reality for a multitude of people worldwide, with consequences for the enjoyment of their fundamental human rights.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

This month at COP27, States Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change acknowledged that “climate change is a common concern of humankind”<sup>2</sup> and that “loss and damage” associated with the adverse effects of climate change result “in devastating economic and non-economic losses, including forced displacement and impacts on cultural heritage, human mobility and the lives and livelihoods of local communities [..]”.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, *Address to Participants in the 41st General Conference of the FAO*, Vatican City 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, Preamble, <https://unfccc.int/documents/624444>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, paragraph 22.

Just as on that occasion, the Holy See would like to emphasize that, “the human face of the climate emergency challenges us deeply. We have a moral duty to act concretely in order to prevent and respond to the more and more frequent and severe humanitarian impacts caused by climate change. The growing phenomenon of migrants being displaced by it is a concerning sign. Even when they lack access to international protection, States cannot leave them without tangible solutions, including in the areas of adaptation, mitigation and resilience. Where this is not possible, it is important to recognize migration as a form of adaptation and to increase the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration.”<sup>4</sup>

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Last year alone, climate induced disasters led to the internal displacement of 23.7 million people.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, without early and concerted climate and development action, over 216 million people could become internal climate migrants by 2050.<sup>6</sup> We should never forget that these are not mere numbers or statistics, but our brothers and sisters.

Their suffering, represented by the data and trends cited above, offer us few alternatives. The human reality of migration and the issues of food security and climate change require, by their very nature and magnitude, a collective and coordinated response by the international community. All States are affected by their consequences, and no single State can manage them alone.

Finally, the Holy See wishes to reiterate that the migration debate is not only about migrants. Rather, as Pope Francis reminds us, it is about all of us, and about the present and future of the human family.<sup>7</sup> The challenges posed by climate change to humanity and to our common home have “not only environmental, but also ethical, social, economic, and political relevance, affect[ing] above all the life of the poorest and most fragile. In this way they appeal to our responsibility to promote, through collective and joint commitment, a culture of care, which places human dignity and the common good at the center”.<sup>8</sup>

Thank you.

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<sup>4</sup> Intervention of H.Em. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of His Holiness Pope Francis at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Sharm el-Sheikh 8 November 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre’s Global Report 2022, <https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2022/#at-a-glance>

<sup>6</sup> Cf. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/09/13/millions-on-the-move-in-their-own-countries-the-human-face-of-climate-change>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Pope Francis, Message for the 105th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 29 September 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Pope Francis, Video-Message for the Climate Ambition Summit, 12 December 2020.