



NATIONAL STATEMENT

TO BE DELIVERED AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

OF THE 114TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

ON MIGRATION COUNCIL

BY THE

HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, MR

NJABULO NZUZA

ON

28 NOVEMBER 2023

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

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Madam Chairperson,

South Africa welcomes the focus of the High-Level Segment on “*climate impact on mobility*”: a call for solutions and wishes to applaud the Director-General for creating this platform.

Climate change and mobility is a phenomenon that cannot be ignored nor avoided as it knows no borders. This year alone the world experienced extreme weather patterns such as cyclones, floods, droughts, wildfires, and earthquakes that destroyed infrastructure, and agricultural production which is an indication that no one is immune to the devastations of natural disasters that are disruptive to the livelihood of persons. Sadly, Africa is also at the receiving end of these disruptions.

South Africa and the Southern African region are not spared the disruptive effects of climate change. For South Africa, this contributes to internal displacement, food insecurity, and loss of life, caused by severe weather patterns resulting in droughts and floods on the back ends of El Niño and El Niña. In 2023 alone, South Africa has seen a decrease in crop yields, loss of livestock, and soaring food prices as well as vector and waterborne diseases growing in frequency and intensity.

Chairperson,

As a signatory to the Global Compact on safe, orderly and regular Migration (GCM) South Africa believes the GCM provides a base and articulates how Member States should address cross-border mobility as a result of the adverse impact of climate change.

Consequently, my country is of the view that the discussions on migration should support the existing dialogue on climate change and align itself with the United Nations Framework Conference for Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement, and its subsequent conferences.

Yesterday, the Director-General spoke of the importance of **data collection and analysis** to enhance the forecasting for appropriate early warning response to reduce risks that may contribute to the loss of lives. **We could not agree more!** Countries that are the most vulnerable to environmental shocks are mostly the least prepared.

Earlier this month, South Africa hosted the Group of Earth Observations meeting which gathered weather experts in government and other relevant stakeholders to discuss and build their capacity on how data can be used in addressing environmental challenges, such as **early warning systems**.

Chairperson

If nothing concrete and comprehensive is done, we will keep on taking from mother earth until she says, I have nothing to give. It is that day we must avoid as this will exacerbate the worsening climate situation resulting in further forced displacement of persons.

My country is adding its miniature effort towards tackling this gigantic task facing humankind. Our efforts include supporting the United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) process that in return support Member States to develop national plans that emphasise the importance of investment in the prevention and reduction of disasters.

My government allocated R372 million which was added towards the Municipal Disaster Response Grant and an additional R1.2 billion towards the Municipal Disaster Recovery Grant, to cover the repairs and rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by floods in February and March 2023.

Further in line with the Sendai -Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, South Africa is in the process of finalising the “Draft Guidelines on Humanitarian Standards in Humanitarian Response”, which is a collaboration between the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) and the Provincial Disaster Management Committee

(PDMCs), and other relevant national stakeholders to prepare for annual seasonal contingency plans.

My country has to-date drafted the Climate Bill which is currently in Parliament for consideration. We are also undertaking comprehensive research to understand the linkages between Migration and Desertification, Land Degradation, Drought (DLDD), Climate Change, and other environmental factors. Notwithstanding, in events of potential climate change-induced mobility, South Africa has set bilateral mechanisms with our neighbouring countries.

Therefore, Madam Chairperson, we acknowledge that the nexus between Migration, Climate Change, and the Environment is complex in nature. The international community requires comprehensive approaches and intensive research to inform future global policy direction to build sustainable adaptation and resilience strategies.

In conclusion, my delegation reiterates that we must enhance the capacity of State institutions as primary actors in preparedness and response efforts, given that humanitarian needs are expected to increase due to climate change challenges as noted in Africa and other countries in the rest of the world. We need to increase investments in Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Response systems and prevention strategies focusing on Disaster Risk Reduction.

I thank you.