



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

**STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION
AT THE 73TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SECOND COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA ITEM 72 (a, b): Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related
intolerance**

New York – 30 OCTOBER 2018

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last year, there has been an increase in the reported number of violent attacks and hate crimes against migrants. Paired with a political atmosphere that has become increasingly influenced by anti-migrant rhetoric, it is important to highlight the obligations to the protection of migrants from this sort of violence that are enshrined in international law.

International human rights law prohibits any advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility, or violence. We need to recognize how such speech and advocacy has a profound impact on individual lives, and we must avoid scenes of intolerance-based violence and agendas which history shows lead to potential persecution and conflict.

Xenophobia against migrants has been recognized as one of the main sources of contemporary racism and human rights violations. It is also a first step on a dangerous road towards less respect for all of our rights – if violations of rights of one group of individuals is encouraged or tolerated it is a direct attack on the rule of law as well as a danger to the future enjoyment and respect for rights of everyone.

As noted in the Special Rapporteurs report, contemporary use of digital technology has created spaces where some users spread extremist, sensationalist content that perpetuates harmful stereotypes. These types of platforms are used to stigmatize people of different origins and to spread hate speech. It is important that these platforms are included efforts to raise awareness of how such speech and attacks on rights-holders have a direct impact on everyone in society. Racism and xenophobia put people in

danger and often disproportionately impact those on the move. But as history clearly demonstrates, racism and xenophobia can easily end up putting the rights and lives of all of us in danger.

We believe that successful integration is fundamental to harmonious, modern, societies and encourage policies that take a comprehensive approach to migrant integration. In doing so we look to ensure that migrants can fully engage with their host society from a socio-economic, political, and cultural perspective.

IOM strives to highlight the positive impact of migration and to raise awareness on how migration can benefit all. Our I Am a Migrant campaign is one effort to feature stories of migrants in order to promote diversity and the inclusion of migrants in society. The campaign uses the testimonials of migrants to connect people with the human stories of migration. Thus far, I Am a Migrant has seen 1,200 profiles published. The anecdotes and memories shared on the platform help us understand what words such as “integration”, “multiculturalism” and “diversity” truly mean.

The Global Compact for Migration Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, finalized on 13 July and to be adopted formally this December in Marrakesh, is an historic agreement that will set the blueprint for good migration governance and the protection of the rights of migrants for years to come. Of only 23 objectives, the Compact dedicates all of objective 17 to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and the promotion of an evidence-based public discourse in order to shape perception of migration. Whilst emphasizing the rights of migrants throughout, the Compact also commits to protect freedom of expression, and recognizes that an open debate contributes to the comprehensive understanding of all aspects of migration.

We continue to work with partners in civil society, the private sector, academia, international organizations and in government to contribute to this debate and will continue to strive to provide evidence to challenge the negative narrative that surrounds many discussions on migrants and migration around the globe.

Thank you.