



THE UNPRECEDENTED RISE OF PEOPLE ON THE MOVE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

VOLUME I: MIGRATION AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY, A CHALLENGE AND AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR EUROPE AND THE MENA REGION

VOLUME II: PROTECTING PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: IDPs IN THE CONTEXT OF
THE REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CRISIS



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

مركز جنيف لحقوق الإنسان والحوار العالمي

CENTRE DE GENÈVE POUR LA PROMOTION DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET LE DIALOGUE GLOBAL

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“To preserve the diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious heritages of transit and host countries, while, at the same time, offering opportunities for integration to arriving refugees and migrants. The aim is to promote mutual contributions and respective resilience, thus avoiding forced assimilation of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, in line with the provisions set forth in Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to avoid proselytization.”

Follow-up action point number 4 in the Ten-Point Global Strategic Plan of the Declaration entitled *“Moving Towards Greater Spiritual Convergence Worldwide in Support of Equal Citizenship Rights.”*

Adopted on 25 June 2018 at the World Conference on *“Religions, Creeds and Value-Systems: Joining Forces to Enhance Equal Citizenship Rights”* organized at the United Nations Office at Geneva under the Patronage of HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.



The Geneva Centre for Human Rights
Advancement and Global Dialogue

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IDPs IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REFUGEE
AND MIGRANT CRISIS

GENEVA, DECEMBER 2018

List of abbreviations

DAESH = Terrorist group calling itself “*Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant*”

DRR = Disaster Risk Reduction

EU = European Union

EU NAVFOR Med = European Union Naval Force-Mediterranean

GCM = Global Compact for Migration

HH = His Holiness

HRH = His Royal Highness

ICMC = International Catholic Migration Commission

IDPs = Internally Displaced Persons

IOM = International Organization for Migration

IPS = Inter Press Service

LRA = Terrorist group calling itself “*Lord’s Resistance Army*”

MENA = Middle East and North Africa region

NRC = Norwegian Refugee Council

OHCHR = Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights

OSCE = Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

SDG = Sustainable Development Goal

UAE = United Arab Emirates

UN = United Nations

UNFCC = United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNOCHA = United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNOG = United Nations Office at Geneva

UNSMIL = UN mission in Libya

US = United States

USAID = United States Agency for International Development

WEOG = Western European and Others Group (in the Human Rights Council)

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**VOLUME I:
MIGRATION AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY,
A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EUROPE
AND THE MENA REGION**

FOREWORD

“No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land” was the apt expression of the British-Somali poet Ms Warsan Shire. She made these remarks following the drowning of a Syrian refugee child who was found lying face-down in the sand near the Turkish resort of Bodrum in September 2015. His name was Alan Kurdi – a three-year-old toddler – who became the symbol of Europe’s migrant crisis. According to the International Organization for Migration’s Missing Migrants project, more than 10,000 migrants and refugees have lost their lives since 2014 in their last-resort attempts to cross the Mediterranean Sea. The latter has become a “man-eater” or a “liquid graveyard” owing to the high death toll. The Romans once referred to the Mediterranean Sea as “*Mare Nostrum*” (our sea). However, the Sea of the Romans has become a symbol of “*summa iniuria*” (the greatest injury) of the 21st century.

The present publication entitled “*Volume I: Migration and Human Solidarity, a Challenge and an Opportunity for Europe and the MENA Region*” is the fruit of a panel debate held on the same theme on 14 December 2017 at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The aim of this debate was to address the interplay between the causes and consequences of forced and involuntary displacement of people on the move from the Middle East and North Africa region (hereinafter “*MENA region*”). The adverse impact of cross-border movement resulting from war-related insecurity and from environmental degradation - in its Europe-Middle Eastern interactive dimensions - was brought to scrutiny.

The first part of this publication summarizes the panel proceedings of the inspiring statements provided by migration specialists from the Arab region and the West alike. We were honoured to have high-level representatives from the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Catholic Migration Commission, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the European Centre for Peace and Development and the Permanent Delegation of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the UN, Geneva, to provide their thoughtful analyses on the current migrant and refugee crisis. The interactive debate, which involved

the Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of The Sudan to the UN Geneva, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, the African Centre against Torture and the EU Business School contributed to enrich the debate and to build bridges between different narratives thereon of the Global North and of the Global South. It became the symbol of mutual enhancement and convergence of thoughts and ideas to address the migrant and refugee crisis. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the panellists and the participants for making this a reality.

During the debate, we were reminded that multilateralism and consensus building are needed more than ever. Decision-makers in the Global South and the Global North must work *in tandem* to respond with a unified voice to the tragedy of those millions of people on the move originating in the MENA region. The speakers called for the identification of a common framework to respond to the plight of migrants and refugees worldwide. It was agreed that dialogue, alliance building and multilateral diplomacy must guide decision-makers in the West and the Arab region to address jointly the causes and the consequences of the migrant and refugee crisis. As an outcome to these stimulating ideas, a Declaration entitled “*Mobility and Human Solidarity, a Challenge and an Opportunity for Europe and the MENA Region*” was adopted after the panel debate. Joint initiatives, such as the Geneva Declaration, are telling examples of how civil society organizations can build alliances to foster lasting change and enhanced responsibility sharing for refugee protection.

The second part of the publication includes an intellectual think piece prepared by the Geneva Centre in which the causes and consequences of migration have been analysed from different perspectives. In the West, populism is gaining increased sway and political momentum not witnessed since World War II. In the MENA region, the rise of violent extremism is pushing people to flee their once stable home societies. Prior to the outbreaks of the civil wars and strife in Syria, Iraq and Libya, these countries were hardly considered as “*net exporters of migrants and refugees*.” As a result of decades of geopolitical power games and political adventurism, Damascus, Baghdad and Tripoli have become “*fabrics and channels of people on the move*”. The think piece sheds light on these topical issues and the solutions required to adapt to global human mobility. The Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees are useful starting-points. However, with the withdrawal of a major world power - which takes pride in being a “*migrant melting pot*” - from the Global Compacts, the efforts of the world community to identify joint solutions could be compromised unless everyone is on board. Multilateralism and consensus building must not be replaced by populism and unilateralism. It is only through joint efforts that world society can emerge stronger once the refugee and migrant crisis has been solved. I wish you an enjoyable reading of the Centre’s observations in this regard.

Together with our partners and through joint endeavours, the Geneva Centre will

keep its gear high in addressing the plight of refugees and migrants worldwide. The 14 December 2017 panel debate was the first of a series of events designed to raise awareness regarding the complex situation involving people on the move. The situation of internally displaced persons in the MENA region is explored by the Geneva Centre - in collaboration with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre – in a panel debate organized on 21 March 2018 at Palais des Nations. These two panel debates provide important guidance to the Geneva Centre’s “*flagship project*” namely the 2018 World Conference entitled “*Religions, Creeds and/or Other Value Systems: Joining Forces to Enhance Equal Citizenship Rights*”. The World Conference was an important occasion for decision-makers and religious leaders worldwide to harness their collective energy in promoting models of equal citizenship rights and in responding to the plight of vulnerable social segments of society including people on the move.

By Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim

*Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights
Advancement and Global Dialogue*

19 December 2018

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE PANEL MEETING¹

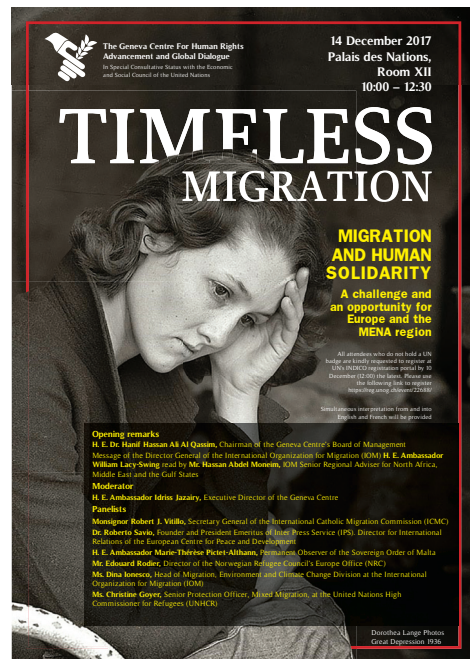
1. The present report provides a summary record drawn up by the Geneva Centre on the discussions which took place during the panel meeting at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG). It does not commit the authors of the remarks themselves whose statements, which were recorded, are reproduced in full in Annex I to the report

On 14 December 2017, the Geneva Centre organized a panel debate entitled “*Migration and Human Solidarity, a Challenge and an Opportunity for Europe and the MENA Region*” at UNOG. The conference was held in room XII from 10:00 to 12:30.

The objective of the December panel debate was to address the adverse impact of cross-border movement resulting from war-related insecurity and from economic push factors such as the detrimental impact of climate change. It also sought to highlight that violence and insecurity, as well as climate change migration have adversely affected millions of people in the MENA region and have become issues of high importance for the countries in the region and in Europe. The debate offered a timely opportunity to address these issues in their Europe-Middle Eastern interactive dimensions rather than through focussing on the two regions separately.

The event was structured in two main sections with the first part covering forced cross-border movement of people resulting from war-related insecurity affecting countries in the Middle East. The second part explored the triggering factors contributing to the forced cross-border movement of “*climate migrants*” from the Sahel region to Europe via North Africa, and the solutions required to redress this situation. These two clusters thus offered an inclusive and holistic assessment of, and a response to, the protracted climate migrant and refugee crises affecting the MENA region.

As an outcome to the panel debate, a Declaration entitled “*Mobility and Human Solidarity, a Challenge and an Opportunity for Europe and the MENA Region*” was adopted and signed by the **Geneva Centre** (Chairman HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim and Executive Director Ambassador Idriss Jazairy), the **International Catholic Migration Commission** (Secretary General Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo), the **European Centre for Peace and Development** (Director for International Relations & Founder of IPS



Dr Roberto Savio), the **Norwegian Refugee Council** (Director of Europe Office Mr Edouard Rodier), the **Sovereign Order of Malta** (Permanent Observer to the UN, Geneva, Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann), the **International Press Syndicate** (Director General and Chief Editor Mr Ramesh Jaura), the **European Public Law Organization** (Head of EPLO's Delegation in Geneva Ambassador George Papadatos), the **African Centre against Torture** (Director Mr David Koros), **Webster University** (Head of the Department of International Relations and Associate Professor of International History & Politics Dr Oreste Foppiani), **Citizens United Switzerland** (Founder and President of Citizens United Switzerland, Ms Ngoneh Panneh), the **European Centre for Peace and Development - UN University for Peace** (Executive Director, Academician Prof. Dr Negoslav P. Ostojić), the **Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development** (Chief Executive Officer, Ms Samar Muhareb), the **Dominican Order** (Permanent Delegate to the United Nations, Reverend Mike Deeb), **Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme** (Chief Executive Officer, Dr Ibrahima Guissé), the **Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organizations** (National Coordinator, Mr Joseph Désiré Zebaze), **Jeunesse-Enfance-Migration-Développement** (President, Mr Manou Nabara Hamidou), **Solidascension** (President, Mr Hacen Mohammedi), the **Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organisation** (President, Mr Deen Gibril) and the **Arab Italian Center for the Mediterranean** (President, Mr Raimondo Schiavone).

The **United Nations Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order** Dr Alfred de Zayas and the **Norwegian author and journalist** Mr Halle Jørn Hanssen also signed the Declaration.

The objective of the Declaration is to highlight, *inter alia*, that States and decision-makers in the Arab region and the West are morally and legally bound to enhance human mobility. It calls for the need to respond with a unified voice to the tragedy of those millions of people on the move in the Middle East and North Africa region. The Declaration and the full list of signatories are available in the present version of the publication in **Annex II**.

The **Executive Director of the Geneva Centre** **HE Ambassador Idriss Jazairy** moderated the panel debate that brought together civil society organizations and high-level spokespersons on the migrant and refugee crisis from the West, the Arab region and from international inter-governmental organizations. In his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Jazairy noted that the world is witnessing the “*highest rise in the number of people on the move since the end of World War II.*” This situation – he said – has caught the world by surprise as populist parties in the West have seized this opportunity to articulate xenophobic ideologies to the general public. Simultaneously, extremist and violent groups in the Middle East and North Africa region fuel insecurity and instability in Arab societies forcing people to leave their

countries in a last-resort attempt to seek refuge and protection in other regions of the world.

In this connection, Ambassador Jazairy appealed to all member States of the United Nations to contribute to the realization of the UN Global Compact for Migration. He warned that the realization of global human mobility would fail if “*multilateralism and consensus-building*” is replaced by “*unilateralism and the fortification of societies*”. He stated that the migrant and refugee crisis can only be solved through dialogue, alliance building and multilateral diplomacy. In this regard, Ambassador Jazairy said there must “*be a sharing of responsibility for hosting displaced people*” to address the plight of people on the move and to support countries in the Arab region in their efforts to provide shelter and protection to refugees and migrants. “*In the MENA region countries are left with no other option than to provide refuge to migrants and refugees that may add up to 25% of their own nationals,*” stated the Geneva Centre’s Executive Director.

Following these observations, Ambassador Jazairy subsequently invited the **Chairman of the Geneva Centre HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim** to open the conference. IOM’s Senior Regional Advisor for the MENA region **Mr Hassan Abdel Moneim** was also invited to deliver an opening statement on behalf of **IOM’s Director General Ambassador William Lacy-Swing**.

The Geneva Centre’s Executive Director then invited the keynote speakers to address their guiding themes in the following order:

- I. Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission **Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo** on: “*Intensifying dialogue and practical cooperation between Christians and Muslims in response to refugee movements and other forms of forced migration*”;
- II. Founder of Inter Press Service and Director for International Relations of the European Center for Peace and Development **Dr Roberto Savio** on: “*Migrants, religion and populism*”;
- III. Permanent Observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta **HE Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann** on: “*An alternative to the liquid graves of the Mediterranean*”;
- IV. Director of the Norwegian Refugee Council’s Europe office **Mr Edouard Rødder** on: “*EU and the refugee and migrant crisis: Solutions and challenges ahead*”;
- V. Head of IOM’s Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division **Ms Dina Ionesco** on: “*Role of IOM in responding to the adverse impact of climate change*”;

VI. UNHCR Senior Protection Officer on Mixed Migration **Ms Christine Goyer** on: *“The role of UNHCR in enhancing refugee protection in the Middle East.”*



Ambassador Jazairy highlighted that the *“guiding themes of the panellists will make it possible to assess different perspectives related to the causes and consequences of the migrant and refugee crisis. There is a need”* - he said - *“to promote a discussion of these major issues in their Europe-Middle Eastern interactive dimensions rather than focussing on the two regions separately.”* In his concluding remarks, he observed that international decision-makers in the Arab region and in the West must agree to share the responsibility for hosting displaced people more fairly and proportionately. Ambassador Jazairy asserted:

“States and international decision-makers must resort to dialogue and alliance building to identify a path that is in everyone’s mutual interest and which celebrates diversity. Actions to enhance human mobility must be guided by the principles of international solidarity and justice in the longer term. A new post-conflict international funding plan must be drawn-up to rebuild or create income-generating activities in countries of origin of refugees and migrants and their return must be voluntary.”

The Geneva Centre’s Chairman: A new common agenda is needed between the Arab region and the West to address the migrant and refugee crisis

In his opening remarks, the **Geneva Centre’s Chairman HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim** stated that the increase in the numbers of people on the move around the Mediterranean Sea is *“not sustainable in the long run, either for Europe or the Arab region.”* *“Nearly 5 million people”* – he said – *“are now living in detention camps on Mediterranean shores whereas approximately 1 million people have so far attempted to cross to Europe from either the Middle East or North Africa. The “surge*



of violence begotten by conflict” - he remarked - “has resulted in the forced displacement of at least 10 million people. The lack of equitable burden-sharing is putting enormous socio-economic pressure on host countries. That could further aggravate the situation.” Migration cannot be reversed and remains part and parcel of the Earth’s DNA as 15% of the world population are either considered as refugees, migrants and/or internally displaced persons, highlighted the Geneva Centre’s Chairman.

In addition to the situation in countries located to the South and to the East of the Mediterranean Sea, a populist tidal wave is increasingly gathering strength. In this connection, Dr Al Qassim noted that the rise of populism in Europe is *“becoming more vociferous.”* *“Their recipe for success relies on placing the blame on migrants and refugees for the failures of modern societies. Xenophobia, racism and bigotry are on the rise. The fear of the Other is once again rearing its ugly head,”* added the Geneva Centre’s Chairman in his statement.

Dr Al Qassim likewise sounded the alarm about the adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation in the Sahel region that could *“stir an even bigger migrant and refugee crisis in the future.”* In conclusion, the Geneva Centre’s Chairman called for a *“new common agenda that unleashes the potential of global human mobility”* and that will coordinate the *“efforts of countries in Europe and in the MENA region to respond with one voice to the current crisis.”* He concluded his statement appealing to international decision-makers and UN member States to join forces to address the unwarranted rise of people on the move. Dr Al Qassim said:

“A new common agenda that unleashes the potential of global human mobility must be identified. States and international decision-makers are doomed to fail in their endeavours to respond to this man-made crisis if they don’t join forces.”

Opening remarks from IOM’s Senior Regional Advisor for the MENA region: *“Migration is not a problem to be solved, but a human reality to be managed”*

Following Dr Al Qassim’s presentation, **IOM’s Senior Regional Adviser for North Africa, Middle East and the Gulf States Mr Abdul Moneim** presented Ambassador Swing’s message to the conference. He stated that the world lives in an era of unprecedented human mobility. Migration is – he said - *“a fact of life and a reality as old as humankind.”* In this regard, he noted that up to 1 billion people worldwide are considered as people on the move. *“This volume of modern*



migration is in itself an important indicator and an eye opener to the situation occurring within and across borders,” he stated.

Mr Abdul Moneim recalled that IOM has more than 20 years of experience in implementing development-oriented interventions that move beyond “humanitarian response by addressing the root causes of

forced migration before, during and after crisis.” He added that IOM has produced a strategic framework document on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience “*covering prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and partnerships.*” These elements – he said – are key to IOM’s approach in providing a holistic and inclusive response to the multiple factors involving people on the move. Addressing the root-causes of forced and involuntary displacement of people before, during and after a crisis – he noted – are key elements of IOM’s preventive interventions to help mitigate the impacts of protracted displacement situations and large-scale population influxes.

In his concluding remarks, Mr Abdul Moneim stated that decision-makers worldwide must be guided by the vision to embrace migration as a force of social progress. “*We must all stand ready to aid migrants, and to ensure social inclusion into all policies. Migration is not a problem to be solved, but a human reality to be managed,*” concluded IOM’s Senior Regional Advisor for the MENA region in his presentation on behalf of IOM’s Director General.

Collaboration among people of different faiths is key to addressing migration challenges



The Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo appealed for enhanced efforts between Christians and Muslims in jointly addressing the adverse impact of the refugee and migrant crisis. He observed that “*dialogue and practical cooperation among*

Christians and Muslims” can create points of convergence and “*eliminate the tensions*

arising from a lack of direct familiarity with people whose cultures, faith traditions, and ethnic identities may differ from our own.”

Historical experiences throughout the history of interfaith dialogue – he said - between Muslims and Christians show that points of convergence can be identified in addressing joint challenges. To illustrate with an example, Monsignor Vitillo referred to Saint Francis of Assisi’s visit to Damietta in Egypt during inter-religious upheavals between Muslims and Christians in the 13th century. After being received by Sultan al-Kamil – the Ayyubid ruler of Egypt –, they agreed that fostering dialogue, peace and reconciliation between followers of both religions should remain high on the agenda. Ultimately, when Saint Francis of Assisi returned to Italy, he brought with him an ivory horn used to make the Muslim call for prayers which he used *“to call people to hear him preach.”*

Monsignor Vitillo also referred to other examples of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims: in the early 1960s, the Second Vatican Council *“proposed a roadmap for future practical collaboration”* between believers of Christianity and Islam. In 1986, HH Pope St. John Paul II appealed to religious leaders to *“move from words to actions capable of creating peace and thus eliminating the forced migration that flows from war and other social evils.”* The Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission finally remarked that HH Pope Francis *“has spared no effort to join other religious leaders in a just and equitable response to forced displacement of peoples.”* The efforts of Pope Francis to address the plight of Syrian Muslim refugee families in the Greek island of Lesbos and the human rights situation of the Rohingya people in Myanmar – he said - are concrete efforts by the Catholic Church to *“put their faith into practice.”*

He concluded his statement stating that the International Catholic Migration Commission is driven by the need to promote dialogue, reconciliation and cooperation between Christians and Muslims. Monsignor Vitillo said:

“While travelling around the world to visit programmes sponsored by the International Catholic Migration Commission, or ICMC, I am filled with the hope that springs from such dialogue and cooperation. Moreover, I believe that our everyday collaboration among people of different faith communities already is promoting integral human development.”

The misuse of religions: a fertile ground for the rise of populism and xenophobia

In his presentation, Dr Roberto Savio spoke on the misuse of religion and the rise of populism and xenophobia in the Enlightened and developed West. He remarked that the *“misuse of religion, and of populism and xenophobia, is a sad reality, which*



is not clearly addressed, and met with hypocrisy and not outright denunciation.” The Founder of Inter Press Service said that the decision of the US government to withdraw from the Global Compact for Migration contradicts the founding ideal of the US as a country built by migrants. In this regard, Dr Savio remarked that recent evolutions in the US

“set a perfect example” for other countries in Europe to ignore the decisions of the international community to address the plight of migrants. *“Nationalism, populism and xenophobia are back with growing popular support and politicians openly surfing on them,”* highlighted Dr Savio in his presentation.

A reason for the rise of populism and xenophobia in the developed world – he continued - can be attributed to the adverse impact of globalization. The reason for this is that *“globalization based on free market is losing some of its shine,”* added Dr Savio. The results are a growing inequality within societies and between countries as a result of freewheeling globalization and of the lack of reference to social justice, solidarity, participation and equity. These principles – he said – have been replaced by *“competition, success, profit and individual achievement”* which guide decision-makers in their political endeavours. Dr Savio made the following observations:

“After a generation of greed, we are now in a generation of fear. We should notice that before the great economic crisis of 2008 (provoked by greed: banks have paid until now 280 billion dollars of penalties and fines), xenophobe and populist parties were always minorities (with the exception of Le Pen in France). Greed and fear have been so successfully exploited by the new nationalist, populist and xenophobe parties, that now they keep growing at every election”.

The contributing factor to the rise of populist parties is the misuse of religion to serve as an element of division and as an obstacle to social progress. The fearmongering and scapegoating of people on the move provides legitimacy to the political ideologies and aspirations to power of populist parties. This attempt is flawed – said Dr Savio – as a viable Europe relies on its ability to celebrate diversity and integrate migrants and refugees into its societies. *“There is no hope for Europe to be viable without substantial immigration. Yet, to speak about that in the political debate, is now a kiss of death,”* concluded the speaker.

An alternative to the liquid graves of the Mediterranean



In her statement, **Ambassador Pictet-Althann** informed the audience regarding the Sovereign Order of Malta's humanitarian activities in addressing the plight of migrants and refugees in the Mediterranean Sea. In this regard, Ambassador Pictet-Althann noted that the medical teams of the Sovereign Order of Malta aim to *"save lives and to alleviate the suf-*

fering of those in desperate need of help" In this connection, she highlighted that the Sovereign Order of Malta has assisted more than 50,000 people in rescue operations at sea:

"Since 2008 medical teams of the Order of Malta's Italian Relief Corps have been deployed on board the vessels of the Italian Coastguards and Customs Officers' patrol boats in the southern Mediterranean and on board the vessels of the Italian Navy since 2014. This Volunteer Corps which consists of doctors and nurses provides first-aid and administers lifesaving therapies to the refugees crammed into unseaworthy boats arriving from North Africa and the Middle East."

Ambassador Pictet-Althann also observed that the Sovereign Order of Malta has taken numerous initiatives, primarily at the diplomatic level, to raise awareness on the key humanitarian challenges related to migration flows. Issues related to irregular migration, political instability, violation of human rights and conditions in detention centers have been addressed on a regular basis by representatives of the Sovereign Order of Malta. In this regard, the Permanent Observer noted that two Ambassadors of the Sovereign Order of Malta were recently appointed to combat human trafficking. *"With projects both at local and diplomatic level, they will help strengthen the commitment of the Order of Malta in preventing the trafficking of humans and protecting the victims by intensifying relations with international stakeholders and raising awareness about this terrible blight that is increasing in scope and dimension,"* highlighted HE Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann in her presentation.

The Sovereign Order of Malta had carried out humanitarian activities in countries of origin, transit and arrival such as Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. It had also provided counselling services to refugees in overcoming daily life challenges in host countries. Regarding the latter, Ambassador Pictet-Althann referred to the practical example of the Sovereign Order of Malta's initiative to contribute to the successful integration of refugees and migrants in Germany:

“The assistance to migrants in Europe is particularly concentrated on integration. In Germany, for example, we have set up a number of innovative models such as the creation of integration services to make migrants familiar with the German society and culture. These units also generated a platform for Germans to meet individual migrants which in turn allowed for a totally different image of migration as opposed to fearing the influx of hundreds of thousands of foreigners.”

Ambassador Pictet-Althann concluded her statement stating that *“cooperation in the humanitarian field of faith-based institutions also creates a bond of mutual trust and confidence among people of different religions.”*

EU and the refugee and migrant crisis: identifying solutions



The panel debate also benefited from the inputs of a renowned and respected humanitarian organization, the Norwegian Refugee Council. In light of the political crisis in Europe, **Mr Edouard Rodier** assessed the response of the European Union in relation to the refugee and migrant crisis on the continent. Mr Rodier said that people on the move leave

their home societies as a result of, *inter alia*, armed conflict, violence, starvation, misery and persecutions. *“Those who are reaching Europe are clamoring for a better life: a life without fear, where fundamental rights are protected, where dignity is restored,”* he remarked.

Efforts to promote the protection of people on the move and to contribute to the ongoing global efforts to enhance global mobility were needed more than ever. In this regard, Mr Rodier said that *“while we appreciate the political sensitivity of the topic, we need to acknowledge that solutions cannot be found in denial of this fact: migrations are here to stay. A responsible approach to European fundamental principles cannot be about externalising the response or organizing large money transfers to support the efforts of others.”*

He called upon Europe to *“take back its leading role in the defence of refugees’ rights”* in light of the decision of the US government to withdraw from the Global Compacts. Civil society organizations must also contribute to achieving this goal by *“proposing ways, exploring options and supporting initiatives”* to address the plight of people on the move. In this regard, Mr Rodier observed that the Norwegian Refugee Council has played a key role in assisting and protecting victims and promoting the

inclusion of a responsibility sharing mechanism in the Global Compact for Migration.

In relation to the adoption of the 2017 Geneva Declaration entitled “*Mobility and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region*” Mr Rodier added that the Declaration gives the signatories an additional opportunity to consider the growing tensions between “*our Northern fortresses jealously defending their comparative advantage and the rest of the world. Surely, many of us would agree that the solution cannot be about developing protectionism and championing unilateralism. Denial is rarely the answer. Human mobility has become a common feature, a reality on the ground.*” In this regard, he called upon civil society organizations and specialists worldwide to endorse the Declaration as it “*contributes to the mobilization and provides us an additional opportunity to confront ideas and formulate propositions.*”

In reaction to these remarks, the moderator of the debate **Ambassador Jazairy** added that the Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel should be endowed the Nobel Peace Prize for her endeavours to respond to the plight of refugees and migrants and for welcoming more than one million displaced people to Germany, regardless of the political price that she had to pay for her courage.

The multicausality of migration and climate change issues must be recognised



In addition to the contributions of the panellists on the interplay between the causes and the consequences of insecurity-driven migration from the Middle East, **IOM's Dina Ionesco** offered her inputs on the detrimental impact of climate change and environmental degradation. In her statement, **Ms Ionesco** stated that the adverse impact of drought,

environmental degradation and ecological crises in the MENA region contributes to the rise of the number of people on the move and adds “*an extra layer of complexity*” to the protracted migrant and refugee crisis.

The multicausality of migration and climate change issues – she said – must be recognised by decision-makers and reflected in migration policies to address the causes and consequences of the displacement of people. The risk of inaction in addressing the adverse impact of climate change has the potential to thus expose more people to environmental risks associated with global warming. These elements must be recognised by decision-makers in order to respond to the multidimensional factors that underpin forced climate migration. In this regard, Ms Ionesco made the

following observations:

“A complex equation is perfectly exemplified by the MENA region unfortunately because environment is one of the drivers of migration. Climate change is already affecting the MENA region very strongly and in very direct ways.”

In this regard, the Head of IOM’s Migration, Environment and Climate Change division noted that IOM has identified drought, desertification, heat stress, rising sea levels and lack of water access as triggering factors contributing to forced and involuntary population movements in the MENA region. It has *“put as a strong emphasis in its work programme and in its work with States that climate change is a key driver of contemporary migration and also that migration has an impact on the environment and on our Planet and its resources.”* She added that IOM has made it *“a top priority to make the connection between human mobility in its forced and voluntary forms and what happens as impacts of climate on our Planet today.”*

In view of these observations, Ms Ionesco concluded that the Global Compact for Migration has not adequately addressed the adverse impact of climate change. *“Environment and climate change is still very much invisible as part of this discussion. I was personally very disappointed by what I have heard. It shows how difficult it is for all of us to connect the policy domains”* – she said – that *“contribute to forced and involuntary movements of people”*.

Enhancing refugee protection in the MENA region



In addition to Ms Ionesco’s observations, **UNHCR’s Christine Goyer** observed that armed conflict, violence and sectarian strife have led to increasing levels of displacement across the Middle East and North Africa region. She underlined that 28% of displaced people worldwide are in the MENA region including 2.6 million refugees, 15.1 million IDPs and

returnees, and an estimated 372,500 stateless people. *“If we look at the Middle East including Northern Africa this is a very complex and challenging environment which encompasses many different realities,”* said Ms Goyer in her presentation.

Increased protection space for refugees and support for access to asylum procedures remain imperative to UNHCR’s efforts to enhance refugee protection in the MENA region. This also applied – she said – to mixed migration in view of large-scale irregular mixed movement flows from the MENA region to Europe. *“One of the key principles is access to territory that means persons who are in need of international protection*

are able to move to another country, to cross the border and to seek protection and asylum. It sounds very simple but nowadays, as walls are being raised, it is a difficult reality for a lot of people, who do not have the capacity or the ability to cross an international border to seek asylum,” she remarked in her presentation.

In addition to enhancing refugee protection in the MENA region, Ms Goyer noted that facilitating access to procedures to seek protection and asylum are imperative to the endeavours of UNHCR to address the plight of people on the move. In this connection, she observed that the world’s leading refugee agency has provided support to, *inter alia*, processing individual biometric registration for refugees, registration and documentation of births, enhancing national asylum legislation, access to livelihood opportunities and to the establishment of community centres and mobile teams in the region, in pursuit of sustainable protection responses and durable solutions in favour of refugees. *“Our success is when we are able to leave a country and when we are no longer needed because it feels that we have done our job either because the situation has changed, as there are no humanitarian needs, or because the government is totally in capacity to deal with the situation,”* said Ms Goyer.

The audience was also informed that UNHCR likewise aspires to enhance refugee protection in the MENA region jointly with local organizations and civil society at grassroots level. In this regard, Mr Goyer stated that UNHCR has established strategic partnerships in the region, including cooperation with regional organizations such as the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, academic institutions, the media and the private sector. It follows the *“whole of society approach”* - which was a key element of the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants *“and focuses on establishing robust and comprehensive partnerships for a sustainable humanitarian response and a greater beneficial impact on people of concern”*, Ms Goyer concluded.

Interactive debate with the audience

Reaching out to global decision-makers with a short political message



Following the presentation of the keynote panellists, the moderator opened the floor subsequently to the audience. **Ambassador George Papadatos** – the Head of European Public Law Organization’s delegation in Geneva – asked the participants to identify a short political message that they would send to global policy-makers to respond with a unified voice to the adverse impact of the

refugee and migrant crisis.

In this regard, **Monsignor Vitillo** referred to the message of HH Pope Francis on the occasion of the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018, in which he called for the need for *“Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees.”* **Ms Ionesco** added her voice to the debate stating that people’s destiny is connected. People must understand – she said – that *“we have one Earth, but it is how we treat the Planet and the people concerned that make up the connections.”* Lastly, Ambassador **Pictet-Althann** added that all parties concerned must be on board and agree on a common framework so as to advance the agenda of the Global Compact for Migration.

Sudan in the context of the refugee and migrant crisis



In addition to these observations, the moderator gave the floor to the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Sudan to UN Geneva **HE Mustafa Osman Elamin. Ambassador Elamin** stated eloquently that *“neither migration nor movement are going to stop. They are going to continue as life is going on.”* The root-causes of forced displacement of people –

the Ambassador of the Sudan said – are man-made and related to political regime changes. In this regard, he referred to the situations in Myanmar, Iraq and Syria as examples of countries facing unprecedented levels of forced displacement of people owing to political issues. He called upon the United Nations to play a stronger role in establishing and maintaining peace and stability around the world.

In relation to the observations made by the Ambassador of the Sudan, **Dr Savio** said the world is undergoing *“a crisis of the concept of multilateralism”* which is undermining world peace and stability. To illustrate this with a relevant example, Dr Savio noted that the UN General Assembly agreed to establish a new international economic order which never fully materialized. He mentioned that former US President Ronald Reagan announced that there would be no more international cooperation as the basis of international relations. President Trump has likewise taken a similar stand in which the US will submit multilateral options to its own national interests.

In addition to this, Dr Savio noted that the fall of communism following the end of the Cold War, gave rise to a new financial order which has exacerbated the level of inequality between States and within societies. The loss of vision together with the

growing power of financial institutions has created a crisis of politics and a growing distance between the aloofness of political elites and the concerns of ordinary people. Greed and fear downgrade the importance of pursuing political agendas rooted in values and principles. To overcome this complex situation, Dr Savio said that decision-makers must resort to alliance building and dialogue with global civil society actors, to build a new system of values and principles conducive to peace and stability in the world.

Ambassador Jazairy noted in this context that the Sudan was a best-practice case study, given that Khartoum was guided by the principles of human solidarity and international justice when it decided to provide refuge and protection to refugees from Eritrea and South Sudan, despite the fact that the host country itself was subject to heavy international sanctions.

Greater attention must be paid to address the plight of internally displaced persons



The Director of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre Ms Alexandra Bilak added her voice to the debate by reiterating the importance of recognising the multitude of factors contributing to the forced and involuntary displacement of people. *“Displacement and migration patterns are caused by a number of factors. Isolating one factor from*

another has become virtually impossible nowadays. We are looking at social, political, economic, environmental and climate related factors that all come together forcing people to move. The consequences of displacement are multiple as well. They affect people, communities but also local and national economies,” said Ms Bilak.

She highlighted, however, that the phenomenon of internally displaced persons has not received the political attention that it deserves in recent years. This issue – she noted – was excluded in the Global Compact discussions on migration and refugees and in the New York September 2016 debate in the wake of the adoption of the New York Declaration. The majority of people who are displaced today are considered as internally displaced people who cannot benefit from an international protection framework, owing to their status and to the fact that sovereign States are primarily responsible for providing protection to their own citizens. Ms Bilak expressed the following standpoint:

“Right now there are more than 40 million people living in displacement due to conflict across the world. Every year, there are more than 25 million people on average that become displaced by disasters”. In view of these observations, she noted that IDMC has been disappointed by the exclusion of this issue from major debates related to addressing the causes and consequences of the lasting migrant and refugee crisis. Issues related to internal displacement movements share the same causes as cross-border movement as they are driven by political, environmental, social and economic factors.

In conclusion, the Director of the IDMC called upon decision-makers to pay greater attention to address the plight of internally displaced persons in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis.

Endorsement of the Geneva Declaration from UN Special Rapporteur



The United Nations Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order Dr Alfred de Zayas took the floor to endorse the 2017 Geneva Declaration on human mobility and solidarity and to inform the audience that he will sign the Declaration. He likewise took the opportunity to thank the Geneva Centre for keeping its gear high in addressing issues of

relevance to the international community:

“In my function as the United Nations Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order, I have had the opportunity to speak with regard to migration and refugee problems. I would like to pay tribute to the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue and would like to mention that I had the honour to participate in some of your events including your inter-religious events to try to build bridges among religions and peoples,” said Dr de Zayas in his statement.

Torture and other forms of ill-treatment at detention camps must remain unaddressed

Following Dr de Zayas’ remarks, the moderator gave the floor to the **Director of the African Centre Against Torture, Mr David Koros**, who said that migrants and refugees face torture and other forms of ill-treatment at detention and refugee camps particularly in transit countries such as Libya. He called upon decision-makers and international organizations to not turn a blind eye to situations in which migrants and refugees endure grave human rights violations.



“We have a lot of cases of torture and other forms of ill-treatment which have not been addressed as a human rights issue. We need to accommodate this issue through investigating and documenting more cases involving such human rights violations encompassing torture and other forms of ill-treatment. A solution must be found to address these challenges and address all aspects of torture causing harm and injury

to people on the move,” said Dr Koros.

The Director of the African Centre Against Torture concluded his statement by informing the moderator that he will sign the 2017 Geneva Declaration.

Youth must be in the driver’s seat to identify innovative solutions to address the plight of people on the move



At the closing session of the panel debate, Ambassador Jazairy gave the floor to a group of students from the **EU Business School** to add their voice to the debate. A student from this renowned institution in Geneva highlighted the importance of identifying innovative solutions to accelerate the integration of migrants and refugees in host societies. Segregation of

societies and the rise of xenophobia – he said – had fuelled the rise of populism, and threatened to destabilize societies. In this regard, the representative from the EU Business School asked the panellists to give their insights on the solutions required to address the plight of people on the move.

In response to the question posed by the EU Business School student, **Mr Rodier** said the solutions should look into the real cost of unresolved displacement situations around the world, and highlighted that such situations adversely affect societal development. *“As long as we do not put this cost on the table, I fear there might not be sufficient appetite to provide the solutions we are looking for,”* he said in his response.

Mr Abdul Moneim added his voice to this exchange by giving a practical example of Jordan that has provided protection and assistance to refugees equivalent to 20% of its population. *“This is equivalent to the US, EU and Germany hosting 64, 100*

and 25 million people respectively,” he said. In order to identify innovative solutions to respond to the plight of people on the move, Mr Abdul Moneim highlighted that youth must be in the driver’s seat to “find solutions because the problem is becoming a problem of culture, education and discrimination related to antagonism against migrants. I think the best approach we have now is to put it in education for our children at schools and make them understand that we must live together and not separately.”

Concluding remarks from the Geneva Centre’s Executive Director



The Geneva Centre’s Executive Director thanked the keynote panellists and the audience for contributing to the enriching debate on the migrant and refugee crisis in the MENA region. He said that the world is in a situation where ideological conflicts are being replaced by conflicts of identities. *“You can change ideologies, but you cannot change your identity. If conflicts are going to be based on that, it will be pretty difficult to accommodate the vision of HH Pope Francis who referred to the need to welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants and refugees,”* said Ambassador Jazairy in his comments on the outcomes of the panel debate.

The question of human rights – he said – is often politicised and subject to geopolitical considerations of involved parties. In this context, Ambassador Jazairy referred to the example of the human rights situation of the Muslim Rohingya community in Myanmar and the international community’s silence in addressing the plight of the Rohingya, as democratization of Naypyidaw (capital of Myanmar) remained the top of the priority of decision-makers prior to, during and after the Cold War. This was a symbol – he observed – of a conflict between politics and values which can likewise be attributed to similar conflict scenarios around the world.

In conclusion, the Geneva Centre’s Executive Director highlighted the importance of strengthening the involvement of civil society organizations to identify new ideas and to provide new impetus to address situations that cannot be solved in the UN Human Rights Council. In the context of enhancing global mobility, the 2017 Geneva Declaration is an important tool – Ambassador Jazairy said - to allow civil society

organizations and specialists to engage in advocacy for improving the situation of people on the move. *“The Charter on Mobility would plug the loopholes and provide a new vision to address relevant issues related to displacement of people on the move,”* concluded the Geneva Centre’s Executive Director.

**DRAWING LESSONS FROM
THE PANEL MEETING**

SYNOPSIS

This paper explores the causes and consequences of forced displacement of people on the move in Europe and in the Arab region. It aims to demonstrate that the migrant and refugee crisis is not a “*number-crisis*” as European countries most hostile to the arrival of people on the move are those that have hosted the least. It is in effect a crisis of solidarity and politics. The paper looks at the number of people on the move and the adverse impact of forced displacement in its Europe-Middle Eastern interactive dimensions. Upon examination of these issues, it shows that the closed border policies of advanced societies and the rise of xenophobic populism further aggravate the migrant and refugee crisis. It also highlights that armed conflicts and environmental degradation in the Arab and the Sahel regions are multi-causal phenomenon, forcing people to flee their home societies. Through its assessment, this paper suggests that finding a solution to the crisis rests on the ability of decision-makers to identify synergies in their efforts to unleash a new common agenda to reduce the “*push*” factor on migration and to promote global human mobility.

INTRODUCTION

Human mobility remains an inherent feature of humanity or “*a reality as old as humankind*”². Since time immemorial, humans have migrated to other parts of the world as a result of different factors triggering voluntary and involuntary population movements. Whether hunter-gatherers, nomads, seafarers, or migrants, the different migratory connotations reflect various forms of human engagement, which have shaped modern civilization. In the words of the former UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon, “*Migration is an expression of the human aspiration for dignity, safety and a better future. It is part of the social fabric, part of our very make-up as a human family*”³.

At the present time, the world is witnessing the spread and the intensification of migratory flows, which have reached levels not witnessed before. This unprecedented movement of people of all sorts whether voluntarily or forced migrants, refugees and others, constitutes the current expression of time honoured human mobility. It

2. This point was raised by IOM’s Abdul Moneim in his statement.

3. UN Secretary General, “Secretary-General’s remarks to High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development,” 03 October 2013. Accessed 30 May 2018 <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2013-10-03/secretary-generals-remarks-high-level-dialogue-international>

is estimated that approximately one billion of the world's total population of seven billion are either international or internal migrants, refugees or IDPs. Out of this number, 740 million people are referred to as either internal or as domestic migrants travelling within their countries of origin⁴. According to statistics released by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs in December 2017, the number of international migrants worldwide has continued to grow rapidly in recent years, reaching 258 million in 2017, up from 220 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000⁵. It is also estimated that more than 60 million individuals are forcibly displaced worldwide owing to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, natural hazards or climate change⁶.

The first two decades of the 21st century will be remembered as the decades when the trend of people on the move reached a climax. The unprecedented cohorts of people on the move has resulted in the emergence of new challenges requiring the attention of decision-makers. In certain regions of the world, the right to liberty of movement is being denied to people on the move or is subject to restrictive policies. Armed conflict and violence, *inter alia*, have also taken their toll on societies and resulted in the forced displacement of millions of people. The migrant and refugee crises of the 21st century are therefore some of the most complex crises since the end of the Second World War. This is likely to have a lasting impact on international peace and security for decades to come.

To describe these challenges as being related solely to numbers would be misleading. The challenges arise also from the surge of populist nationalism, xenophobia and the politicization of the migrant and refugee crisis. Thus one of the most outspoken officials in Europe expressing hostility to Muslim migrants hails from a country where there has not been any inflow of such migrants to speak of in recent years.

I: AN OMINOUS REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CRISIS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The unprecedented hostility to people on the move has become one of the most controversial and divisive issues of the 21st century, or in the words of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr Filippo Grandi, “*the biggest displacement crisis of a*

4. IOM & UN DESA, “UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. Migration and human mobility,” 2012. Accessed 29 May 2018 http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/13_migration.pdf

5. UN DESA, “International migration report 2017: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/404)” New York 2017. Accessed 29 May 2018 http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf

6. UN, “High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Global trends: Forced displacement in 2016,” 21 June 2017. Accessed 10 April 2018. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/594aa38e0.html>

generation”⁷. According to the European Parliament, the migrant and refugee crisis resulted in the inflow of at least one million migrants and refugees to Europe during the course of 2015⁸. Since then, it is estimated that an additional 600,000 migrants and refugees have arrived to Europe, either through the Western Balkans, or through the Central and Eastern Mediterranean routes⁹. The situation has been dramatized and dubbed an “*existential challenge for the EU*”¹⁰ as put by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk.

Why has the migrant and refugee crisis become a controversial issue? Migration is not a new phenomenon for Europe. The latter remains a leading destination region for migration and hosts more than 70 million migrants already. Following the enlargement of the EU in 2004 (Poland, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Hungary, Cyprus and Slovenia), 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) and recently in 2013, with Croatia’s admission to the EU, internal migration levels have been record-high. Recent statistics¹¹ from the European Commission confirm that the inflow of migrants to the EU in 2016 amounted to 4.3 million people. Approximately 2/3 of this number – or three million migrants – left an EU member country to settle within the 28 member-States bloc. In the case of Romania, it is estimated that more than three million Romanians have emigrated from the country after joining the EU. This has left it with the world’s second highest emigration growth rate for the period of 2007 – 2015¹². Syria is the only country in the world that has witnessed a higher emigration growth rate owing to the outbreak of the Syrian conflict. The EU’s ideal of, *inter alia*, free movement of people has been a vector for economic growth, social

7. UNHCR, “Syria conflict at 5 years: the biggest refugee and displacement crisis of our time demands a huge surge in solidarity,” March 15, 2016. Accessed 18 April 2018. <http://www.unhcr.org/afi/news/press/2016/3/56e6e3249/syria-conflict-5-years-biggest-refugee-displacement-crisis-time-demands.html>

8. European Parliament, “EU migrant crisis: facts and figures,” June 30, 2016. Accessed 19 April 2018. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20170629STO78630/eu-migrant-crisis-facts-and-figures>

9. Joanne Lu, “The number of refugees and migrants coming to Europe is now dropping. Here’s why,” UN Dispatch, January 11, 2018. Accessed 19 April 2018. <https://www.undispatch.com/number-refugees-migrants-coming-europe-now-dropping-heres/>; Relief Web, “Refugees/Migrants Emergency – Europe,” no date. Accessed 19 April 2018. <https://reliefweb.int/topics/refugeesmigrants-emergency-europe>

10. European Council, “Report by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the outcome of the December European Council,” 19 January 2016. Accessed 19 April 2018. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/01/19/tusk-december-euco-report-european-parliament/>

11. Eurostat, “Migration and migrant population statistics.” 2018. Accessed 24 April 2018. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics#Main_statistical_findings

12. Anca Alexe, “3.4 million Romanians left the country in the last 10 years; second highest emigration growth rate after Syria,” *Business Review EU*. 26 February 2018. Accessed 20 August 2018. <http://business-review.eu/news/3-4-million-romanians-left-the-country-in-the-last-10-years-second-highest-emigration-rate-after-syria-159038>

development and poverty reduction for Europe.

In this connection, migration and human rights experts have therefore questioned to what extent the inflow of migrants and refugees constitutes a crisis *per se* as the arrival of people on the move in Europe is far lower than in the Middle East and in North Africa¹³. Following an article published in the May 2017 edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique* entitled “*Errements de la politique migratoire de Bruxelles*”, Professor of Public International Law at the University of Sorbonne, Jean Matringe, argued that extra-European migration of people on the move constitute approximately 0.2% of Europe’s population¹⁴. If this figure is to be compared with the level of response offered by other countries to people on the move, one could question to what extent the migrant and refugee crisis is not “*a crisis of solidarity*” rather than “*a crisis of numbers*” to use the language of the former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon¹⁵. One could also question why the arrival of more than four million intra-EU migrants was not dubbed a migrant crisis as it has bypassed - in terms of numbers - the arrival of people on the move from further afield.

Although there are more than eight million displaced people in the MENA region, the majority of refugees have fled to neighbouring countries. In this connection, countries that have been adversely affected by the refugee and migrant crisis – such as Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey – have provided refuge and assistance to people on the move. More than one million people have found refuge in Lebanon¹⁶, a country that has already welcomed hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. Jordan is home to approximately 660,000 refugees¹⁷. Turkey is also currently hosting nearly three million Syrian refugees¹⁸. Altogether, these countries have provided refuge and protection to more than five million refugees, which exceeds by far the number of people that have sought refuge in Europe. In the case of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, these countries,

13. This point was also raised by Tony Barker in his article entitled “Europe risks failure on migration” published on 21 August 2018 in the Financial Times (subscription required: <https://www.ft.com/content/e45c4b5e-9fcc-11e8-85da-eeb7a9ce36e4>) and by Roberto Savio in his article “Immigration, lot of myths and little reality” (<http://www.ipsnews.net/2018/07/immigration-lot-myths-little-reality/>)

14. Professor Jean Matringe, “Errements de la politique migratoire de Bruxelles,” *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2017. Accessed on 19 April 2018. <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2017/05/MATRINQUE/57483>

15. UN, “Refugee crisis about solidarity, not just numbers, Secretary-General says at event on Global Displacement Challenge,” 15 April 2016. Accessed 19 April 2018. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sgsm17670.doc.htm>

16. Syria Regional Refugee Response, “Lebanon,” 30 June 2017. Accessed 30 May 2018. <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>

17. Mohammad Ghazal, “Jordan hosts 657,000 registered Syrian refugees,” *Jordan Times*. 21 March 2017. Accessed 19 April 2018. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/jordan-hosts-657000-registered-syrian-refugees>

18. Syria Regional Refugee Response, “Turkey” 19 October 2017. Accessed 30 May 2018. <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>

whose per capita income is much lower than in Western Europe, have provided refuge and assistance to people on the move, which add up to 25%, 20% and 3% respectively of their population. For these countries, the migrant and refugee crisis have deeper social and political dimensions as the inflow of people on the move will have long-term societal impact. Despite this, the level of solidarity expressed by the populations of these countries to address the plight of destitute migrants and refugees serves as guidance for other regions witnessing an inflow of people on the move such as in Europe, in the US and in Latin America.

In an op-ed run by the British newspaper The Observer on 9 July 2017¹⁹, it was argued that Europe's attempt to externalise its refugee crisis to address the plight of people on the move sought to "*make the problem someone else's.*" The author of the article concluded that: "*Any moral authority Europe might have claimed has leached away.*" Thus, the majority of the burden in hosting and in providing assistance and protection to displaced people is being taken up by countries in the less developed parts of the world, despite the fact that they often lack adequate resources to respond to the influx of displaced people. It thus remains a paradox that a continent that openly advocates and encourages migration within its social and political sphere, denies these rights for people living outside their social and political spheres.

The unexpected arrival of refugees and migrants to Europe has admittedly caught political decision-makers unprepared. The push and pull factors of the contemporary crisis require further attention. There is a need to assess the factors that have contributed to the politicisation of this divisive issue. Opposition to refugees and migrants is calling into question the *time-honoured right* to seek refuge and protection²⁰. Europe's *El Dorado* cliché is slowly but surely being replaced by the image of an inaccessible fortress.

II: EUROPE AND THE UNPRECEDENTED RISE OF PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

The migrant and refugee crisis has evolved to become a serious test for the unity of Europe as a political project. The inflow of destitute migrants and refugees has tested Europe's political unity to breaking point to an unprecedented extent. With a long-term solution to the migrant and refugee crisis nowhere in sight, the adverse impact of the current situation has the potential to unfold further and to give rise to a broader

19. The Observer, "*The Observer view on Europe's shameful response to the growing refugee crisis,*" July 9, 2017. Accessed 19 April 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/09/observer-editorial-europes-shameful-response-to-growing-refugee-crisis>

20. UN, "*States must ensure all migrants enjoy all human rights, UN experts say on International Migrants Day,*" 18 December 2018. Accessed 18 December 2018. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24027&LangID=E>

crisis with long-term implications, affecting Europe and the MENA region alike.

It appears that the excesses of neo-liberalism and globalization have put forward the notion of freedom at the expense of equality, and competition ahead of solidarity and justice. This has resulted in a series of divisions between the elites and those who have been left behind. The latter have been targeted by populist groups that increasingly rely on politics of fear instead of politics of hope. Fearmongering is always easier to spread if it is focused on external exogenous groups like migrants and refugees, rather than on the loss of income and employment of unqualified labour as a result of, *inter alia*, the digital revolution, and the automatization of the labour force and in particular of the introduction of artificial intelligence²¹.

In his influential essay “*The End of History?*”, Professor Francis Fukuyama predicted that the universalization of the Western concept of liberal democracy, in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War, would prevail and erase differences between peoples, societies, civilizations and world regions.

Nonetheless, the seeds of despair and its manipulation, following the violent destructions of lives and assets in the Middle East, have taken their toll in terms of the radicalization of youth. In advanced countries, the re-emergence of populism continues to divide their societies. The situation is particularly striking in countries of Central and Eastern Europe that witnessed a surge in nationalist sentiments once the communist era came to an end and that did not have a colonial past. In Western Europe, the adverse impact of globalization and the financial crisis have given rise to the notion of a lost generation in which Europe’s youth experience greater degrees of impoverishment, inequality and unemployment. A political vacuum has therefore emerged, which has given rise to movements that anchor their ideologies in anti-globalization, unilateralism, protection and extreme forms of nationalism.

Progress is being achieved to come to terms with its deadly sting, but populism in the West and extremism in the Middle East - spilling over into Europe – cannot be set against one another. The former is still – but for how long – predominantly peaceful in nature, while the latter is generating political violence.

Populist parties are emerging as credible actors in light of the recent electoral successes in local and national elections. Their recipe for success: spread of fear, anger, hatred and xenophobia towards refugees and migrants in an attempt to confer legitimacy to their political ideologies²². Far right and populist parties in the West are on the offensive and are now threatening the democratic traditions of a

21. Dr Roberto Savio highlighted most of these elements in his presentation during the panel debate.

22. These points were also highlighted by the Executive Director of the Geneva Centre Ambassador Idriss Jazairy in his opening remarks

continent referred to as the birthplace of democracy, liberalism and Enlightenment. It challenges the legitimacy of national governments and threatens to restore extreme forms of nationalistic reactions that constitute direct threats to peace, reconciliation and international cooperation.

To illustrate with relevant examples, a Hungarian MEP suggested in 2016 to put pig heads on border fences to deter Muslim migrants and refugees from entering Hungary. Mr György Schöpflin made the following tweet on Twitter²³: “*Human images are haram (...) pig’s head would deter more effectively.*” On 7 January 2018, the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban likewise made a controversial remark in an interview with the German newspaper Bild. “*We don’t see these people as Muslim refugees. We see them as Muslim invaders*”²⁴, he said. The former Prime Minister of Slovakia Robert Fico²⁵ likewise stated that “*Islam has no place in Slovakia.*” Hostile remarks towards migrants and refugees have also been expressed by political leaders in the US. Such forms of antagonistic remarks proclaimed at leadership level - in the same breath as a commitment to “zero-tolerance” to some other form of racism - contradicts the principles of equality and non-discrimination guaranteeing full equality to all people irrespective of religious beliefs, denominations and value systems. It remains a paradox that countries in Central and Eastern Europe – often the most vocal critics of the arrival of migrants and refugees – have one of the lowest percentages of people of Islamic background. These are the countries that have benefitted most from inter-EU migration and from an open labour market.

Another feature that is ubiquitous among decision-makers is the tendency to externalise responses to address the plight of people on the move. In this regard, fences and walls have been erected and borders sealed off in an attempt to outsource and to externalise solutions to address the rise of people on the move. In addition to the notorious wall between US and Mexico, which will be made even more repellent, and to the no less notorious one cutting off the Palestinian Occupied Territories, border fences and wires have been erected between the borders of Spanish enclaves (Melilla, Ceuta)/Morocco, Slovenia/Croatia, Hungary/Croatia, Hungary/Serbia, Macedonia/

23. Siobhan Fenton, “Put pig heads on border fences to deter Muslim refugees, Hungarian MEP suggests,” *The Independent*, 21 August 2016. Accessed 20 April 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/muslim-refugees-pigs-heads-border-fences-hungarian-mep-islam-comments-a7202651.html>

24. Harriet Agerholm, “Refugees are ‘Muslim invaders’ not running for their lives, says Hungarian PM Viktor Orban,” *The Independent*, 9 January 2018. Accessed 20 April 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugees-muslim-invaders-hungary-viktor-orban-racism-islamophobia-eu-a8149251.html>

25. Ishaan Tharoor, “Slovakia’s leader said Islam has ‘no place’ in his country. Now he’s taking a leadership role in the E.U.,” *Washington Post*, 21 June 2016. Available on 20 April 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/06/21/the-next-e-u-president-says-islam-has-no-place-in-his-country/?utm_term=.fb53af48e6eb

Greece, Turkey/Greece and Bulgaria/Turkey. Budapest has also considered erecting a fence along the Hungarian/Romanian border in response to the influx of people on the move²⁶. In the case of Venezuela that is witnessing civil turmoil and political unrest, Caracas' neighbouring countries Brazil and Colombia decided to tighten border security after witnessing a massive inflow of destitute Venezuelans fleeing their country²⁷.

By the end of 2018, 10% of the population of Venezuela - that is three million people - had left the country. This is a crisis of unprecedented proportions: more people have indeed left Venezuela and gone to other countries than the total number of migrants and refugees from the Middle East and Africa to Europe over the past four years and three times more than escaped Myanmar during the Rohingya crisis.²⁸

Although it is the sovereign right of countries to implement measures deemed appropriate to protect their national borders, these physical barriers contradict the right of people to seek asylum as stipulated in article 14, paragraph 1, of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights²⁹, and in the 1951 Refugees Convention, which define a comprehensive framework for refugee protection under international law. Providing assistance and protection to refugees is, therefore, in line with States' obligations under international law and not only with their moral duties to respond to the dire situation faced by many desperate people. In this connection, it is worth referring to Pope Francis's tweet³⁰ made on 18 March 2017 where he appealed to decision-makers to not *"build walls but bridges, to conquer evil with good, offence with forgiveness, to live in peace with everyone."* Pope Francis has likewise urged social and political actors involved in the Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees consultations *"to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate migrants and refugees"* as part of their joint endeavours to find a shared response to the migrant and refugee crisis³¹.

26. Ibid

27. John Otis, Emma Graham-Harrison and Carman Fishwick, "Colombia and Brazil clamp down on borders as Venezuela crisis spurs exodus," *The Independent*, 09 February 2018. Accessed 20 August 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/08/venezuela-migrants-colombia-brazil-borders>

28. Gideon Long, "Nicolás Maduro to begin second term as Venezuela goes into meltdown," *The Financial Times*, 10 January 2019. Accessed 11 January 2019. <https://www.ft.com/content/c30a37f8-0602-11e9-9fe8-acdb36967cfc>

29. Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that: *"Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations."*

30. The Telegraph, "Donald Trump would be 'honoured' to meet Pope Francis on Italy trip, says White House," 20 April 2017. Accessed 25 April 2018. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/04/20/donald-trump-would-honored-meet-pope-italy-trip-says-white-house/>

31. Vatican News, "Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018," 14 January 2018. Accessed 20 August 2018. <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/>

Other measures have also been introduced to stop people crossing from North Africa to Europe. Since 2014, more than 8,000 people have perished in perilous and hazardous attempts to cross the treacherous Mediterranean Sea³² which has become a “*liquid graveyard*”. Following the adoption of the Italy-EU “*Search and Rescue Code*” in July 2017, the situation in the Mediterranean is unlikely to improve in the near future. On 15 August 2017, the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnes Callamard, cautioned against the adoption of the Italy-EU “*Search and Rescue Code*”, stating that “*Italy and the European Commission are imposing procedures that could reduce the ability of NGOs to carry out life-saving activities*”³³. According to the French political journalist Edwy Plenel, the “*Search and Rescue Code*” amounts to an attempt to criminalize the activities of NGOs coming to the aid of refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea³⁴. Despite this, numerous organizations – such as the Sovereign Order of Malta’s Relief Corps – have carried out life-saving activities in the Mediterranean Sea to alleviate the suffering of those in need of help. Since 2008, it is estimated that more than 50,000 people have been saved in rescue operations across the Mediterranean Sea³⁵.

The origin of EU’s attempt to “*externalize*” solutions to the refugee and migrant crisis can be traced back to the 1990 Dublin Convention. The latter stipulates the right to deport migrants and refugees to the first country of arrival, primarily to Greece, Spain and Italy, which are the first European entry points for people on the move owing to their geographical location. Countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea therefore are faced with the burden of absorbing the migrant and refugee inflows from the MENA region. This approach has contributed to an unfair distribution and relocation system of migrants and refugees where countries bordering Syria and Iraq and then European countries situated on the Mediterranean Sea coast are the most affected. In the report of the United Nations Secretary-General addressing large movements of migrants and refugees - submitted in April 2016 to the United Nations General Assembly - he regretted that “*too often, responsibility for new arrivals lies with the authorities and*

[messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20170815_world-migrants-day-2018.html](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20170815_world-migrants-day-2018.html)

32. IOM Missing Migrants, “*Migrants. Tracking deaths along migratory routes*,” 23 April 2018. Accessed 23 April 2018. <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>

33. UNOG, “Italy-EU search and rescue code could increase Mediterranean deaths, UN expert warns,” August 15, 2017. Accessed 19 April 2018.

[https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear_en\)/8B6C9A9A111E-2995C125817D00314122?OpenDocument](https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/8B6C9A9A111E-2995C125817D00314122?OpenDocument)

34. Edwy Plenel, “Le devoir d’hospitalité,” *Mediapart*. 15 August 2017. Accessed 19 April 2018. <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/france/150817/le-devoir-d-hospitalite?onglet=full>

35. These essential points, *inter alia*, were highlighted by the Permanent Observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta H. E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann during her statement at the 14 December panel debate

*host communities in the first country of arrival*³⁶.” Although an EU migrant quota and relocation scheme has been put in place. Governments influenced by right-wing political parties have refused to comply and to provide refuge to people on the move. Yet, this constitutes another attempt from EU governments to express solidarity to people on the move to host countries sheltering hundreds and thousands of destitute people.

The EU has also attempted to work with neighbouring States to defuse the crisis and to externalise solutions to control the flow of people on the move. It appears that the EU has drawn inspiration from the Australian government that have established refugee camps in neighbouring countries such as the island State of Nauru to address the inflow of refugees³⁷. In this connection, an agreement was reached between EU and Turkey, in March 2016, which stipulates, *inter alia*, that Ankara accepts the return of illegal migrants entering Europe. In counterpart, the EU would commit to investing EUR 3 billion to support livelihood projects for returning migrants³⁸. Despite this agreement to externalise EU’s response to the crisis, less than 2,000 people have returned to Turkey³⁹. However, this agreement has closed the land route for Syrian refugees towards Europe. According to the EU, irregular arrivals of migrants remain 97% lower than the period preceding the EU-Turkey agreement³⁷. A similar position has also been taken *vis-à-vis* another migratory transit country Libya, in which the EU is committed to supporting the endeavours of the Libyan government to detain migrants and refugees in confinement camps. Algeria, for its part, has categorically refused to establish confinement facilities to filter Europe-bound transiting migrants. In response to this practice, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad al Hussein re⁴⁰ferred to the detention of migrants and refugees in Libya as “*an outrage to humanity*”⁴¹.

36. UN, “*In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. Report of the Secretary-General*,” 21 April 2016. Page 10. Accessed 25 April 2018. http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/59&=E%20%20

37. Ben Doherty, “A short history of Nauru, Australia’s dumping ground for refugees,” *The Guardian*, 9 August 2016. Available on 20 April 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/10/a-short-history-of-nauru-australias-dumping-ground-for-refugees>

38. European Council, “*EU-Turkey statement, 18 March 2016*,” 18 March 2016. Accessed 25 April 2018. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>

39. European Commission, “*Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council*,” 6 September 2017, page 5. Accessed 25 April 2018. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20170906_seventh_report_on_the_progress_in_the_implementation_of_the_eu-turkey_statement_en.pdf

40. EU, *EU-Turkey Statement . Two years on*, April 2018. Accessed 29 September 2018. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20180314_eu-turkey-two-years-on_en.pdf

41. UN News Centre, “*Libya’s detention of migrants ‘is an outrage to humanity,’ says UN human rights chief Zeid*,” 14 November 2017. Accessed 25 April 2018. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58084#.Wg2Gr1WnGUK>

Despite these attempts to outsource solutions to the migrant and refugee crisis⁴², inflows of people on the move have not ceased, as the main destination regions of migrants and refugees remain the advanced countries in Northern Europe - such as Germany which has welcomed through its erstwhile open door policy towards people on the move approximately one million asylum-seekers⁴³. Restrictive and over-securitized migration will not end the plight of distressed migrants and refugees. These attempts will only exacerbate their sufferings as they pursue their arduous journeys, against all odds, towards destination countries.

III: THE IMPACT OF POPULISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The events that have unfolded recently in Washington are helpful to fully understand the inter-relation and the overlap between politics and populism. The inauguration of Mr Donald Trump as President of the US on January 20 2017, has contributed to a populist upswing propelled by anti-migrant and anti-Muslim sentiments with spill-over effect in other societies. President Trump's vision of an isolationist and "*America First*" policy is an opportunity for political movements in Europe to legitimize their political agendas through nationalism, xenophobia and populism. The former advisor to President Trump, Mr Steve Bannon, is touring Europe to rally support for the creation of populist movements on the Continent and to facilitate their electoral successes at local and national level⁴⁴.

A telling example is the adoption of Executive Order 13769 – referred to as the '*Muslim Ban*' – in which temporary travel restrictions have been imposed on nationals of Muslim and Arab countries. After its adoption on 1 February 2017, more than 200 million citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen were denied the option to travel to the US in view of the "*hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population*" as alleged by President Trump⁴⁵. During an interview in March 2016, President Trump likewise stated that he believes "*Islam hates us*" without drawing any distinction among the approximately two billion followers of the world's second largest faith⁴⁶ and without reiterating the fact that numerous Muslim countries remain key allies of the US.

42. This key point was highlighted by the Director of the Norwegian Refugee Council's Europe Office Mr Edouard Rodier in his statement during the 14 December panel debate

43. Eurostat, "*Asylum statistics*," 18 April 2018. Accessed 25 April 2018. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics

44. BBC, "*Bannon plan for Europe-wide populist 'supergroup' sparks alarm*," 21 July 2018. Accessed 21 July 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44926417>

45. Al-Jazeera, "*Donald Trump calls for halt on Muslims entering the US*," 11 March 2016. Accessed 25 April 2018. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/12/donald-trump-calls-halt-muslims-entering-151207220200817.html>

46. BBC, "*What Trump team has said about Islam*," 7 February 2017. Accessed 13 July 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38886496>

In addition, the pledge to raise a wall between the border of the US and Mexico - and make the latter pay for it – can be seen as another attempt to pursue ‘a populist path’ and to rely on anti-migrant sentiments to gain political support. In justifying his decision to build a wall on all the southern border of the US, fear and distrust towards Mexican migrants were used as main arguments⁴⁷: *“They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people,”* President Trump said. His hard-line immigration policies have also resulted in the adoption of policies criminalizing the entry of migrants to the US. In May 2018, it was announced that Washington would adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards attempts to cross the US-Mexican border which would include all people seeking protection⁴⁸. In addition, children would be taken away from their parents and treated as unaccompanied minors and thus separated from their families so as to deter migrants from entering the US. President Trump’s hard-line policy on this issue led to a public opinion outrage and to reactions from civil society organizations. This measure was subsequently rescinded on 20 June 2018⁴⁹ with the adoption of a new Executive Order that ended the US government’s policy of separating families crossing the US-Mexican border.

Lastly, the protectionist and isolationist agenda of the US has impacted and reached the UN. In December 2017, Washington pulled out from the UN Global Compact for Migration as this *“approach is simply not compatible with US sovereignty”*⁵⁰ and that decisions of the US on *“immigration policies must always be made by Americans and Americans alone.”*⁵¹ The decision to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council – in June 2018 – was lambasted as an attempt to withdraw from a body which is *“hypocritical and self-serving”*⁵² and which makes *“a mockery of human rights.”*⁵³ The decision of the US to withdraw from the Global Compact for Migration and the Human Rights Council was taken despite the long-standing legacy of the US as a country built by migrants - who arrived from Europe and other regions of the world

47. Time, *“Here are all the times Donald Trump insulted Mexico,”* 31 August 2016. Accessed 25 April 2018. <http://time.com/4473972/donald-trump-mexico-meeting-insult/>

48. Vox, *“Trump’s DHS is using an extremely dubious statistic to justify splitting up families at the border,”* 8 May 2018. Accessed 13 July 2018. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/5/8/17327512/sessions-illegal-immigration-border-asylum-families>

49. Christina Wilkie, Jacob Pramuk, *“Trump signs order that he says will keep migrant families together,”* CNBC, 20 June 2018. Accessed 20 July 2018. <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/06/20/trump-says-hes-going-to-sign-a-preemptive-measure-to-keep-migrant-families-together.html>

50. Al-Jazeera, *“US withdraws from UN Global Compact on Migration,”* 3 December 2017. Accessed 13 July 2018. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/withdraws-global-compact-migration-171203160804853.html>

51. Ibid

52. Time, *“Trump Administration withdraws US from UN Human Rights Council,”* 19 June 2018. Accessed 13 July 2018. <http://time.com/5316686/trump-administration-withdraws-us-from-un-human-rights-council/>

53. Ibid

to live the ‘*American Dream*’ – and a country known for its enduring democratic and liberalist traditions.

IV: WHY ARE PEOPLE IN THE ARAB REGION FLEEING THEIR HOME SOCIETIES?

What are the push factors that force people to leave their home societies in the Arab region? Why do they come to Europe? Ongoing armed conflict and indiscriminate terrorist attacks have brought bereavement principally to the Arab region and to parts of Northern Africa. For the MENA region, the end of the Cold War, and the shift from a bipolar to a unipolar hegemonic world system, had major repercussions. It led to major social and political transformations. The 2003 invasion of Iraq opened “*Pandora’s Box*” and started a snow-ball effect, which gave rise to the fragmentation of State power. The failure of the international community to facilitate the post-conflict State building of Iraq was a testimony to the misguided attempt of the “*Coalition of the Willing*” to transform Iraq into a Western-style plural and functioning democracy. The political and social vacuum that prevailed in the wake of the fall of the Baathist regime in Iraq triggered the decline of statecraft in the Arab region. Since 2003, inter-sectarian conflicts, civil strife and armed conflicts have affected, *inter alia*, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Iraq. The so-called Arab Spring resulted in enduring political and social transformations of Arab societies that were unexpected and which have contributed to the exacerbation of living conditions and to growing instability.

After more than a decade of geopolitical power games and armed conflict, the human rights and humanitarian implications on societies are evident. Insecurity driven poverty and fragile societies - gripped by violence and conflict - have thrown Arab countries into stagnation, chronic poverty and societal decline. The current situation undermines the prospects of recovery of conflict-affected societies from the adverse impact of armed conflict, owing to the destruction of human capital and of a stable middle class.

The failure of diplomacy to create peace and stability in countries affected by conflict and violence has triggered a massive movement of people fleeing for their lives. Fertile ground has been provided for the proliferation of violent groups seeking political power under the guise of a deceptive ideology purporting to confer religious legitimacy for odious crimes. The power vacuums caused by decades of conflict in the MENA region have now been hijacked by extremist and violent groups. At one stage, it was estimated that DAESH’s territorial control in the Middle East was equivalent to the territorial size of Great Britain⁵⁴. Fortunately, this group has now all

54. Ian Johnston, “The rise of Isis: Terror group now controls an area the size of Britain, expert claims,” *The Independent*, 03 September 2015. Available on 20 April 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/>

but lost its land base. However, the adverse impact of armed conflict and violence has left its mark on the Arab region which will remain for decades to come.

This context is shared by numerous Arab countries. Iraq has experienced several internal upheavals and armed conflicts since the 2003 invasion. It was only in December 2017 that the Iraqi Army succeeded in defeating DAESH militarily after regaining the city of Mosul. Prior to the capture of the city, and of other surrounding territory under the control of extremist groups, the war in Iraq resulted in the forced expulsion of approximately three million Iraqis. The armed conflict has left the country's social fabric in tatters. UNHCR estimates that around 11 million Iraqis – the equivalent of 1/3 of Iraq's population – are in need of humanitarian support owing to the volatile security situation in the country⁵⁵. According to statistics on asylum-seekers in Europe, Iraqis were the second largest group of asylum-seekers in the EU in 2017⁵⁶. From living once in one of the most stable countries in the Arab region, millions of Iraqis see no other options now than to flee their country in search of better living opportunities.

The war in neighbouring Syria has become the synonym of the 21st century's greatest humanitarian disaster. It has now entered its eighth year and has resulted in the death of some 450,000 people. On top of this, it is estimated that there are more than five million Syrian refugees and over six million IDPs in the country⁵⁷. In total, this amounts to more than 50% of the country's population.

The war in Syria follows the same conflict patterns as witnessed in other Arab countries: inter-sectarian and inter-ethnic tensions unravel, resulting in the division of societies, extreme poverty, societal decline and political interventions from external parties worsening the humanitarian situation.

The fact that the spill over effect from neighbouring Iraq and the emergence of DAESH illustrate the fact that the erosion of sovereignty and external interference have resulted in rising instability in the region. In addition, it is also estimated that Syria is home to more than six million IDPs, which exceeds the number of Syrian refugees who have fled their country.

The inability to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria could transform

news/world/middle-east/the-rise-of-isis-terror-group-now-controls-an-area-the-size-of-britain-expert-claims-9710198.html

55. UNHCR, "Iraq emergency," 15 September 2017. Accessed 25 April 2018. <http://www.unhcr.org/iraq-emergency.html>

56. Eurostat, "Asylum quarterly report," 19 March 2018. Accessed 25 April 2018. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:First_time_asylum_applicants_in_the_EU-28_by_citizenship_Q4_2016_%E2%80%93_Q4_2017.png

57. IDMC, "Grid 2017. Global report on internal displacement," accessed 26 April 2018. <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2017/>

today's IDPs into tomorrow's refugees as most IDPs live in hard-to-reach and besieged areas⁵⁸. The situation in the Idlib region - where more than half of the city's population of three million inhabitants are IDPs – could become Syria's next disaster zone as the Syrian government plans to ramp up military operations in the region to recapture one of the country's last opposition-strongholds.

The imposition of far-reaching sanctions by Western countries has likewise contributed to weakening the economic basis of Syria's middle-class who could have played a leading role in reigniting the country's post-conflict economic growth. In conclusion, with no political solution in sight, the refugee and migrant crisis will only worsen in the years to come for the Syrians.

The fragile situation in the MENA region has allowed criminal groups to exploit vulnerable people. Organized crime has become a flourishing network. The human trafficking industry has emerged to become a billion dollar industry⁵⁹. The erosion of sovereignty and the breakdown of institutions have enabled human traffickers to extend their network. Human rights experts⁶⁰ have argued that human trafficking is *"a direct result of extreme poverty, globalization, violence and dysfunctional rule of law. Human insecurity and suffering in the region [MENA] has driven marginalized populations across borders, who often must rely on transnational criminal networks. (...) State collapse in Libya, Syria and Iraq has fuelled the region's instability."* A group of UN Special Procedures Mandate Holders likewise called upon UN member States to enhance the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations in a joint letter sent to all permanent missions accredited to the UN on 8 June 2018⁶¹.

The volatile situation of Libya is a telling example of how human traffickers have taken advantage of the power vacuum in the country. The toppling of former leader Muammar Gaddafi paved the way for the proliferation of trafficking networks and the fragmentation of the country. The civil war in the country has had immense socio-economic impacts on the country's civilian population. According to IOM's study *"Addressing human trafficking and exploitation in times of crisis"* more than two million people were affected by the conflict in the country⁶². Approximately 500,000

58. IDMC, "2017. Humanitarian needs overview." December 2016. Accessed 12 July 2018. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_Syria_hno_161205.pdf

59. Nick Robins-Early, "Europe's refugee crisis spawns a billion-dollar industry," *The Huffington Post*, 3 January 2017. Accessed 25 April 2018. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/europe-refugees-smuggling-industry_us_55ef1426e4b093be51bc400f

60. Marion Boulby, Kenneth Christie, ed., *Migration, refugees and human security in the Mediterranean and MENA*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 191.

61. UN, "Joint open letter from Special Procedures on draft rev 2 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration," 8 June 2018. Accessed 12 July 2018.

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/JointOpenLetterGlobalCompactMigration.PDF>

62. IOM, *"Addressing human trafficking and exploitation in times of crisis,"* December 2015. Accessed

people were forced to flee the country⁶³. It was also estimated that 300,000 migrants and refugees were exploited by smuggling networks⁶⁴. Libya's status is now close to that of a failed State and is a major hotspot for destitute migrants and refugees, who use the country as a springboard for their perilous journeys to reach the other side of the Mediterranean Sea. Gadhafi predicted⁶⁵ that "*The Mediterranean will become a sea of chaos*" should his regime be ousted. His grim prediction proved true.

Although the rise of armed conflict and violence is the main triggering factor of the displacement crisis, other factors have also contributed to worsening the socio-economic situation in the Arab region. One factor is climate change and environmental degradation. The United Nations Development Programme holds the view that "*most conflict-affected areas of Iraq are also climate risk hotspots (...)*". In the journal article "*Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought*", the co-authors argued that drought in Syria "*had a catalytic effect, contributing to political unrest*⁶⁶" and that "*human influences on the climate system are implicated in the current Syrian conflict*⁶⁷."

The adverse impact of climate change has contributed to exacerbating all forms of poverty and food insecurity in the Arab and the Sahel regions as a result of lack of access to renewable and non-renewable resources. This situation is evident particularly in the Sahel region. The depletion of resources, desertification and water scarcity are indiscriminately affecting the countries of the region. Since 1963⁶⁸, it is estimated that Lake Chad has lost 90% of its volume, which has meant that the land has become unable to feed the 17 million inhabitants of the region. The conflict in Darfur (Sudan) and more broadly in the whole Sahara region between sedentary farmers and herders is one of the most ominous consequences of climate change and contributes substantially to increasing the number of "*climate refugees*." Similar conflict lines likewise prevail in Nigeria (Fulanis) and South Sudan (Dinkas and Nuers) between different ethnic and tribal groups. This epitomizes the worsening

25 April 2018. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/addressing_human_trafficking_dec2015.pdf

63. Ibid

64. Ibid

65. Sputnik News, "Gaddafi's Grim Prophecy Comes True: Countless Refugees Swarm Europe," 17 September 2015. Accessed 26 April 2018. <https://sputniknews.com/world/201509171027135147-gaddafi-libya-refugees-exodus-arab-spring/>

66. Colin P. Kelley, Shahrzad Mohtadib, Mark A. Canec, Richard Seager and Yochanan Kushnir, "Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (2015):1, accessed 26 April, 2018, <http://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/early/2015/02/23/1421533112.full.pdf>

67. Ibid

68. Brookings, "Figure of the week: The shrinking Lake Chad," 09 February 2017. Accessed 12 July 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2017/02/09/figure-of-the-week-the-shrinking-lake-chad/>

ecological crisis in the region, which is disrupting the lives of many people who rely on access to natural resources to meet their basic needs. The adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation will further exacerbate droughts, famines and food crises in the Sahel region as witnessed previously in 2010⁶⁹ and in 2012⁷⁰, which then struck 10 and 18 million people respectively. The lack of access to resources owing to the adverse and disruptive effects of climate change has impeded the ability of countries in the Sahel region to create a sustainable economic model fostering economic growth, development and prosperity.

In the case of Syria, it is estimated that the adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation exacerbated the already disastrous economic situation. It drove up food prices and resulted in the forced displacement of 1.5 million residents⁷¹. These disturbing trends can also be applied to other countries in the Fertile Crescent of the Arab region.

In conclusion, the adverse impact of climate change has contributed to force people from their land and has added an extra layer to the multitude of push factors that force people to flee.

V: HOW TO ADDRESS THE MIGRANT AND REFUGEE CRISIS?

The decision to launch the Global Compact for Migration and on Refugees - following the adoption of the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September - arrives at a time when greater international coordination, cooperation and solidarity are needed in identifying win-win solutions to the protracted refugee and migrant crisis. The Global Compact frameworks envisage a cooperative approach for comprehensive international cooperation setting out common standards to protect migrants and refugees worldwide. This has become the starting point of a joint international initiative to enhance coordination and cooperation among member States of the UN in identifying joint responses to the crisis involving forced displacement of people.

Further to the consultation phases held during the course of 2017 and 2018 on the Global Compact frameworks, a zero draft version⁷² of the Global Compact for

69. The Guardian, "Severe drought causes hunger for 10 million in west Africa," 03 June 2010. Accessed 12 July 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/03/drought-hunger-west-africa>

70. Metro, "Sahel drought in West Africa leading to crisis as millions of lives at risk," 03 August 2012. Accessed 12 July 2018. <http://metro.co.uk/2012/08/03/sahel-drought-in-west-africa-leading-to-crisis-as-millions-of-lives-at-risk-521534/#ixzz4qTRTJsv5>

71. Craig Welch, "Climate Change Helped Spark Syrian War, Study Says," *National Geographic*, 2 March 2015. Accessed 25 April 2018. <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/03/150302-syria-war-climate-change-drought/>

72. Global Compact for Migration, "Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Zero Draft." 05 February 2018. Available on 17 May 2018. <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/>

Migration was presented on 5 February 2018 to stakeholders. The zero draft included 22 objectives, which set the foundation for the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration – completed on 13 July 2018 – and was aimed at guiding the endeavours of UN member States to manage migration and human mobility. The Global Compact for Migration offers guidance on key contemporary issues that have shaped the global migration agenda, such as the drivers and structural factors forcing people to leave their home societies, the rise of populism and xenophobia, as well as the empowerment of migrants and societies to achieve social cohesion and harmony. A similar compact on refugees is currently in the process of preparation by the UN. It is estimated that the Global Compact frameworks will be finalized and adopted by the end of 2018⁷³.

Nonetheless, as reminded during the panel debate, key aspects were neglected in the Global Compact frameworks. IOM's Head of Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division, Ms Dina Ionesco, highlighted that the Global Compact for Migration has not adequately addressed the interplay between migration and climate change. The multiple causality of migration must therefore be recognised by decision-makers and reflected in migration policies to address the causes and consequences of forced displacement of people. It is predicted that up to one billion people will be climate refugees by 2050⁷⁴. Climate change and environmental degradation – as push factors of forced displacement – must therefore not be left unattended in the Global Compacts.

Another issue deserving increased attention from decision-makers is the situation of IDPs. In the consultation phases of the Global Compacts, IDPs were largely excluded from discussions on migration and refugees. In view of the fact that there are more IDPs than refugees worldwide, it remains a paradox that IDPs cannot benefit from an international protection framework as addressing their situation is left to the whims of individual States. In a letter of 7 June 2018 signed by 19 UN Special Rapporteurs, a strong emphasis on the importance of acknowledging the legal protection status of IDPs was put forward⁷⁵. Decision-makers should therefore pay greater attention to addressing the plight of internally displaced persons. Another critical remark to the zero draft version of the Global Compact for Migration is the reference to the

[files/180205_gcm_zero_draft_final.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/files/180205_gcm_zero_draft_final.pdf)

73. Amy Lieberman, "New UN global compact on migration moves ahead," *Devex*, 08 February 2019. Available on 20 April 2018. <https://www.devex.com/news/new-un-global-compact-on-migration-moves-ahead-91832>

74. IPS, "Climate migrants might reach one billion by 2050," 21 April 2017. Accessed 26 April 2018. <http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/08/climate-migrants-might-reach-one-billion-by-2050/>

75. UN, "Joint open letter from Special Procedures on draft rev 2 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration," 8 June 2018. Accessed 12 July 2018. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/JointOpenLetterGlobalCompactMigration.PDF>

use of detention centres as a last resort remedy⁷⁶. In view of the appalling conditions prevailing at detention centres in Libya, it is absurd that the use of detention centres is still considered as an adequate option to treat people on the move.

Although the Global Compacts contribute to mitigating the adverse factors triggering global human mobility, the real challenge lies in addressing the situation on the ground. In this connection, the first part of the solution to the protracted refugee and migrant crises consists in rebuilding war-torn societies emerging from the ruins of conflicts in the MENA region, in responding jointly to the rise of extremist and violent groups in the Middle East and the Sahel regions, and in preventing future crises. The cross-border nature of the threats requires national policies to merge into a concerted international strategy. It requires that all States commit to the fulfilment of the provisions set forth, *inter alia*, in the Charter of the UN, calling for member States to maintain and to promote international peace and to take measures to address acts of aggression. Unilateral interventions and violent regime change should not guide the efforts of States to transform the future of the Middle East. The political process should be initiated and led by the peoples concerned through inclusive dialogue, consensus-building and peaceful societal transitions. Investing in programmes enhancing livelihood options and self-reliance will enable societies to stand on their own feet and to be in charge of their own development in line with their wishes and aspirations. In this regard, cloning of political systems is no substitute for national self-determination.

In addition to promoting development and enhancing security in countries of origin for present flows of refugees and migrants, the second part of the solution lies in identifying new approaches to promote equitable burden-and responsibility-sharing mechanisms for hosting, accommodating, and integrating refugees and migrants based on the shared values of social justice and tolerance⁷⁷. The international community needs to recommit themselves to sharing responsibility for hosting people on the move more fairly and proportionately, being guided by the principles of international solidarity and justice. Enhancing international cooperation and coordination among countries in Europe and in the MENA region – as well as with international organizations such as IOM and UNHCR⁷⁸ – is key to identifying a

76. Global Compact for Migration, “Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Zero Draft.” 05 February 2018. Page 15-16. Available on 17 May 2018. https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180205_gcm_zero_draft_final.pdf; A critical assessment of the use of detention centres was also made by a group of UN Special Procedures Mandate Holders on 8 June 2018 <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/JointOpenLetterGlobalCompactMigration.PDF>

77. In his statement at the panel debate on Migration and Human Solidarity, the Geneva Centre’s Chairman drew the audience’s attention to the importance of identifying equitable burden-sharing mechanisms to address the inflow of people on the move

78. In relation to the efforts of UNHCR to address the plight of people on the move, Ms Goyer noted that

more equitable burden-and responsibility-sharing system in response to the current migrant and refugee crisis. This can be achieved, *inter alia*, through the allocation of resources earmarked for specific countries through increased development aid in countries affected by poverty and climate change and enhanced capacity-building programmes to raise the level of preparedness of countries hosting large numbers of migrants and refugees. The funding requirements identified by the UN to address the acute humanitarian needs of refugees worldwide should not be left unaddressed by international decision-makers⁷⁹.

The promotion of equal and inclusive rights for migrants and refugees is likewise needed to promote a model that is conducive to building a harmonious and diverse society, whose pillars are dialogue and peaceful co-existence, in line with the provisions set forth in the 2009 UN Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. It would enable all social components of communities - irrespective of ethnic, religious, geographical and cultural origins - to benefit from the same set of rights and privileges that would be enjoyed increasingly by non-citizens and not exclusively by citizens of a given nation. The fortification of Europe will not provide a long-term solution to repel the large flows of people heading towards Europe. The solutions consist in addressing the root-causes of fragility and violent conflicts and the factors that trigger migratory flows through joint dialogue between decision-makers responding with one voice to the challenges associated with the protracted refugee and migrant crisis. These elements were explored during the Geneva Centre's World Conference entitled "*Religions, Creeds and Value Systems: Joining Forces to Enhance Equal Citizenship Rights*" which was held on 25 June 2018 at the United Nations Office at Geneva under the Patronage of HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Within this context, the successful integration and inclusion of migrants and refugees must remain a core objective for numerous countries in Europe as well as in the Arab region. Displaced people need to be empowered and better integrated in new societies, so as to enhance social inclusion and social cohesion. A step in the right direction would be to help migrants and refugees to find employment, to acquire the requisite skills and knowledge to enter the labour market and to integrate rapidly in the host society. According to an article published by The Economist on 21 April 2018, entitled "*European countries should make it easier for refugees to work*", it

the world's leading refugee agency has provided support to *inter alia* processing individual biometric registration for refugees, registration and documentation of births, enhancing national asylum legislation, access to livelihood opportunities and the establishment of community centres and mobile teams in the region in pursuit of sustainable protection responses.

79. This element was also raised as an issue in the 2017 Geneva Declaration entitled "*Mobility and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region.*"

was estimated that 70% of refugees in Germany were in full employment after 15 years⁸⁰. This was only below the 74% employment rate for native Germans⁸¹. Another successful case study of facilitating the integration of people on the move is that of Uganda, which hosts more than one million refugees from South Sudan⁸². Kampala has enabled refugees from the neighbouring country to work and to contribute to the development of the local economy, which has had a long-term positive impact on consumption and economic growth. A similar situation has also prevailed in Jordan, where refugees are allowed to take up, usually low-paying, jobs.

In view of these observations, the implementation of inclusive policies would enable displaced people to better integrate in host societies. Migrants and refugees are more likely to thrive and to be considered as a benefit to host societies. It is worth recalling that the median-age in Europe has now reached 42.8 years⁸³, whereas this figure is 19.8 years for Africa⁸⁴. If capitalism is to survive as an economic and political system, access to labour migration is essential to ensure the demographic renewal of ageing societies and to meet economic needs. This is specially the case in large parts of Europe as well as in Japan where ageing societies will put an excessive social burden on the working population without some regulated access of migrants of working age. Changing people's narratives and managing diversity is therefore key to facilitating a successful integration process of displaced people in host societies, to overcome the irrational impact of a toxic discourse that is gaining ground and to accept migration as a social and economic benefit to societies. Looking into best practice examples of reintegration assistance – particularly from countries in Europe and in the Middle East – can provide empirical evidence to decision-makers in identifying innovative solutions for the enhancement of social inclusion and social cohesion, in line with SDG 16 that calls for the promotion of peaceful, participatory and inclusive societies⁸⁵.

80. The Economist, “*Refugees need not be a burden, if they are allowed to work*,” 21 April 2018. Accessed 17 May 2018. <https://www.economist.com/international/2018/04/21/refugees-need-not-be-a-burden-if-they-are-allowed-to-work>

81. Ibid

82. Ibid

83. Eurostat, “*Population structure and ageing*,” May 2018. Available at 20 August 2018. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing#The_share_of_elderly_people_continues_to_increase

84. UNDP, “*Africa’s defining challenge*,” 07 August 2017. Available on 20 August 2018. http://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/blog/2017/8/7/africa_defining_challenge.html: Financial Times’ Assistant Features editor Cordelia Jenkins discusses Africa’s demographic transformation in her op-ed entitled “Opinion today: Africa’s demographic destiny” (subscription required: <https://www.ft.com/content/9775e504-a1cd-11e8-85da-ceb7a9ce36e4>)

85. Sustainable Development Goals, “*Goal 16: Promote, just and inclusive societies*,” 2017. Accessed 26 April, 2018. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>. See also “Joint open letter from Special Procedures on draft rev 2 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration” issued on 8 June 2018 by UN Special Procedures Mandate Holders for more information about return and reintegration of people on the move <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/JointOpe>

CONCLUSION

The migrant and refugee crisis is not sustainable in the long run either for Europe or for the Arab region. The rise of populism in Europe – which so far remains political in nature – and the rise of violent extremism in the Middle East – which is an immediate threat – may destabilize both regions and have the potential to stir an even bigger migrant and refugee crisis in the future. The root-causes of the unprecedented flow of people on the move are multiple, requiring a multilevel response. It is imperative that decision-makers recognise the multitude of factors that contribute to the forced displacement of people. Most importantly, peace and stability and a climate conducive to the development of, and the respect for human rights must be restored. It is hard to imagine why refugees and migrants would return to their home societies if sustainable and alternative livelihood options are not in place to meet the individual and collective needs of peoples and societies, and if wars and armed conflicts continue unabated. A similar situation once prevailed during the Second World War, when destitute European refugees once lived in refugee camps in Syria, Egypt and Palestine⁸⁶. History has once again repeated itself, but it appears that decision-makers have forgotten its lessons.

In this connection, the Global Compacts on Refugees and Migrants are good starting-points to find common ground in identifying a global framework to respond to the plight of migrants and of refugees. Attempts to promote the protection of people on the move and to contribute to the ongoing global attempts to enhance global mobility are needed more than ever. Over the long term, the international community must act to eradicate the underlying causes leading to an excessive flow of destitute migrants and refugees. Identifying new approaches to promote equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing mechanisms would enable countries in Europe and in the Arab region to speak with one voice and to build coalitions on a variety of issues related to the safe and orderly movement of people in accordance with international law. Modern societies must adapt to contemporary patterns of global human mobility. It is in many destination countries' interest to unleash the potential of migrants, most of whom are productive, young and eager to share the burden of an ageing population in advanced societies. Migrants are agents of change and social development who contribute to long-term sustained economic growth and social development and justice. They must be given a chance to contribute to the well-being of destination countries. Migration will only become a vector of change and prosperity if the rights of migrants are respected by host societies. The forthcoming adoption of the two

[nLetterGlobalCompactMigration.PDF](#)

86. Ishaan Tharoor, "The forgotten story of European refugee camps in the Middle East," *The Washington Post*, June 2, 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/06/02/the-forgotten-story-of-european-refugee-camps-in-the-middle-east/?utm_term=.a296a9159428

Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees will therefore offer a strong human rights framework to manage and to harness the power of global human mobility.

Nonetheless, the successful implementation of the provisions set forth in the Global Compacts will require the contribution of all UN member States in order to address the root-causes triggering the unprecedented rise of people on the move. Therefore, the decisions of 29 States to not sign or adopt the UN Migration Global Pact, following the 10 - 11 December 2018 Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration held in Marrakesh (Morocco), is a major setback for multilateralism⁸⁷.

In this regard, the lack of consensus in the adoption of the UN Global Migration Pact illustrates that global human mobility has become a politicised issue. Global human mobility must not be considered as an obstacle to the social progress of societies or a red herring to distract ordinary people from political, social and economic issues affecting their livelihoods. There is a need for courageous leadership and broad-based support from the media to “*depoliticise*” the issue of refugees and migrants and to free public opinion from the irrational fear that has gripped it in this regard. One should not expect that the flows of destitute migrants and refugees will cease in the near future if the social and economic conditions in the countries of origin cannot sustain their population and are exacerbated through outside external interference. Imposing unilateral sanctions affecting the middle classes as is the case in Syria, leads to a breakdown of income generating activities. Producers of goods and services lose their jobs and increase the flow of West-bound migrants. “*First do no harm,*” said the Greek philosopher Hippocrates in his oath. Therefore, if the political will to solve the migrant and refugee crisis in their home country is not in place, it becomes counter-intuitive for Western Europe to address the issue as an exogenous factor. Politicians must not use the migrant and refugee crisis as a catalyst to obtain political power and legitimacy. The lessons from history show that when world societies work together to achieve common goals, the fruit of their efforts bring great results. This was notably the case during the decolonization of Africa and the end of the Apartheid system in South Africa. The Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees will only become ‘a story of success’ if everyone is on board. It would go against the founding pillars of the UN – promotion of peace, development and human rights – to ignore such a large-scale crisis and to turn away people in need of protection.

87. United Nations, “*Governments adopt global migration pact to help ‘prevent suffering and chaos,’*” 10 December 2018. Accessed 17 December 2018. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/global-migration-pact.html>

ADDRESSING FAKE NEWS ON IMMIGRATION

CLAIMS	TRUTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immigrants are a drain on GDP Immigrants are a drain on social security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immigrants are 3.5% of world population and contribute 9% of world GDP(IOM) US: Immigration will add \$1.4tr to GDP by 2033 (Heritage Foundation 2013) In US, undocumented immigrants paid yearly in social security taxes \$ 463b. w/o getting benefits (Economic Report of President 2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immigrants as “invaders”: Italy: 20% of population with 50% Muslims, drain on unemployment insurance funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Italy, Immigrants 10% of population, Christians 60% and Muslims 30%; rate of immigrant unemployment same as overall rate of 10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a wall across the US border with Mexico will stem inflow of immigrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US/Mexico border wall will increase numbers of immigrants because control will put an end to traditional rotation movement by virtue of which immigrants go back home. (Congresswoman Jayapal, NYR 3/12/2018)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No need for immigrants who will take our jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim belied by demography: 60% of Africans are under age of 25 as against 32% for North Americans and 27% for Europeans (UN). Increase in productivity and balance of pension funds cannot be addressed in Global North without expanding immigration from expanding demographic areas such as Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is an assault on the sovereignty of States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can one reasonably object to safe, orderly and regular as opposed to irregular migration?

ANNEX I
FULL STATEMENTS AND TALKING POINTS OF PANELLISTS

Moderator's remarks

Ambassador Idriss Jazairy

Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue

Excellencies, Distinguished Panellists, Honourable Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour and pleasure to welcome you to today's panel debate entitled "*Migration and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region.*"

The migrant and refugee crisis has become the topic of the 21st century. The highest rise in the number of people on the move since the end of World War II has caught the world by surprise. Europe was not prepared to handle the cohorts of people on the move and the opportunity was seized by populists to rise from the margins to the mainstream of the political arena. Simultaneously, extremist ideology based on the instrumentalisation of religion spread in MENA societies destabilized by conflict that has left countries in tatters. This awesome ideology is spreading northward. On 4 December 2017, one major power decided to withdraw from the UN Global Compact for Migration. The EU is divided between States that have shown human solidarity and that favour burden-sharing and those countries that have hosted fewer migrants and favour disengagement. Multilateralism and consensus-building are being replaced by unilateralism and the fortification of advanced societies is impeding the realization of global human mobility.

In the MENA region, countries are left with no other option than to provide refuge to migrants and refugees that may add up to a proportion of 25% of their own nationals. On 6 December 2017, UNHCR announced that in absolute terms humanitarian aid collected has reached high levels. However, it only represents approximately 11% of the total funding requirements for internationally displaced people. This funding gap creates an uncertain future for people on the move and for people who need refuge and seek protection. In summary, the current situation threatens the long-term stability of Europe and the MENA region. It requires urgent attention.

The Chairman of the Geneva Centre **HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim** will open the panel debate. The Director General of IOM **Ambassador William Lacy-Swing** informed me that having had to travel outside Geneva he kindly requested Mr **Hassan Abdel Moneim** – IOM's Senior Regional Adviser for North Africa, Middle East and the Gulf States – to read a keynote statement in his name.

Renowned experts on the migrant and refugee crisis who have honoured us today with their presence will follow suit:

1. The first speaker to take the floor will be **Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo**, the Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission. Monsignor Vitillo will offer us his inputs on the theme of “*Intensifying dialogue and practical cooperation between Christians and Muslims in response to refugee movements and other forms of forced migration.*”
2. Our second speaker will be **Dr Roberto Savio**, the Founder of Inter Press Service and the Director of International Relations at the European Centre for Peace and Development. Dr Savio will offer his inputs on the following theme: “*Migrants, religion and populism*”.
3. The third speaker will be **Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann**, the Permanent Observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta. Her guiding theme will be “*An alternative to the liquid graves of the Mediterranean.*”
4. From Brussels, we have invited **Mr Edouard Rodier** the Director of the Norwegian Refugee Council’s Europe Office. Mr Rodier will share his expertise on the subject of “*EU and the refugee and migrant crisis: Solutions and challenges ahead.*”
5. Following Mr Rodier’s inputs, we will give the floor to **Ms Dina Ionesco**, the Head of IOM’s Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division. She will offer her insights into the role of IOM in responding to the adverse impact of climate change.
6. We have also invited **Ms Christine Goyer**, Senior Protection Officer on Mixed Migration with UNHCR to share her perspectives on the role of UNHCR in enhancing refugee protection in the Middle East.

The guiding themes of the panellists will make it possible to assess different perspectives related to the causes and consequences of the migrant and refugee crisis. Violence and insecurity as well as climate change-induced migration have adversely affected millions of people in the MENA region. They have become issues of high importance on both sides of the Mediterranean. The re-conceptualization of global human mobility is needed more than ever.

There is thus need to promote a discussion of these major issues in their Europe-Middle Eastern interactive dimensions rather than focussing on the two regions separately. In order to overcome the current crisis and harness the power of migration and human mobility, joint solutions must be identified. There must be a sharing of responsibility for hosting displaced people more fairly and proportionately. States and international decision-makers must resort to dialogue and alliance building to identify a path that is in everyone’s interest and which celebrates diversity. Actions to enhance human mobility must be guided by the principles of international solidarity and justice in the longer term. A new post-conflict international funding plan must be

drawn-up to rebuild or create income-generating activities in countries of origin of refugees and migrants and their return must be voluntary.

Before I give the floor to our Distinguished Chairman, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Geneva Centre, the International Catholic Migration Commission and the European Centre for Peace and Development, the Sovereign Order of Malta and the International Press Syndicate have adopted a joint Declaration on 18 December 2017. All participants are invited to read the Declaration and to give the Geneva Centre staff the benefit of their possible comments. The Declaration is open for signatures until the end of tomorrow.

After presentations by the panellists for the first half of the meeting, I will open the floor to the audience in the second half of this morning's session and organize a Q & A session. I will then sum up. A book will be published shortly thereafter on the deliberations and the outcome of this event.

Opening remarks

HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim

Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue

Excellencies, Distinguished Panellists, Honourable Guests,

Today's panel debate is an important occasion to address the causes and the consequences of the protracted migrant and refugee crisis. Approximately 15% of the world population are referred to as either refugees, migrants or internally displaced persons. One billion out of the Earth's 7 billion people are on the move.

"We cannot and should not stop people from migration. We have to give them a better life at home. Migration is a process, not a problem." These were the words of IOM's Director General Ambassador William Lacy Swing. Although Ambassador Swing hit the nail on the head in his assessment of migration as a process and not a problem, major challenges loom on the horizon.

Europe and the Arab region have been at the center of attention owing to the sweeping rise of people on the move around the Mediterranean Sea. Millions of desperate people have embarked on perilous and hazardous journeys from the Middle East and Northern Africa to Europe.

More than 1 million refugees and migrants have so far risked the treacherous crossing. Around 5 million people are now living in refugee and in detention camps on Mediterranean shores.

The current situation is not sustainable in the long run, either for Europe or the Arab region. Both regions face major challenges requiring urgent attention.

In Europe, populism and right wing extremist groups are becoming more vociferous. Their recipe for success relies on placing the blame on migrants and refugees for the failures of modern societies. Xenophobia, racism and bigotry are on the rise. The fear of the Other is once again rearing its ugly head. Some decision-makers are inclined to promote fear, exclusion and selective mercy to address the protracted migrant and refugee crisis. The level of intolerance witnessed in many countries is alarming.

On the Southern and Eastern sides of the Mediterranean, major hurdles are also being faced. The rise of violent extremism and armed conflict threaten to destabilize the long-term stability of the Arab region. Millions of people are left with no other choice than to flee their home societies. The surge of violence begotten by conflict has resulted in the forced displacement of at least 10 million people. The lack of equitable burden-sharing is putting enormous socio-economic pressure on host countries that could further aggravate the situation.

On top of this, the adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation is becoming an issue of growing concern. The United Nations has already sounded the alarm as climate change could force millions of people to move. The precarious and unwarranted ecological crisis in the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel threatens to further destabilize the wider Mediterranean region. The decreasing natural resources is a global concern affecting every region on the world. Climate change might stir an even bigger migrant and refugee crisis in the future.

Global challenges require global solutions. Identifying synergies in the efforts of countries in Europe and in the MENA region to respond with one voice to the current crisis is needed more than ever. A new common agenda that unleashes the potential of global human mobility must be identified. States and international decision-makers are doomed to fail in their endeavours to respond to this man-made crisis if they don't join forces.

I wish you all fruitful and constructive deliberations.

Thank you.

Opening remarks

Mr Hassan Abdel Moneim

IOM Senior Regional Adviser for North Africa, Middle East and the Gulf States

From the outset I would like to thank the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue on their initiative to organize this panel debate. The theme for this conference closely reflects IOM's own vision, namely that violence and insecurity as well as climate change-induced migration have adversely affected millions of people in the MENA region and have become issues of high importance for the countries in that region and in Europe.

We live in an era of unprecedented human mobility, a period in which more people are on the move than ever before. Today, there are 244 million international migrants and 750 million internal migrants in the world - one in seven of the global population. This volume of modern migration is in itself an important indicator and an eye opener to the situation occurring within and across borders.

Displacement is one of the principal impacts of crises. Every year, millions of people are forced to leave their homes, fleeing conflicts, violence, disasters and the effects of climate change.

Migration is a fact of life and a reality as old as humankind. In 2016, the number of internally displaced, refugees and asylum-seekers reached 65.6 million, a record high. This growth was concentrated between 2012 and 2015, driven mainly by the Syrian conflict along with other conflicts in the region such as in Iraq and Yemen, as well as in sub-Saharan Africa including Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and Sudan. In Syria alone, half of the country's population was displaced - including over six million internally and more than five million in neighbouring countries, with repercussions also felt by home and host communities.

As part of maximizing our engagement with the UN system, donors and host government partners on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), IOM has produced a **strategic framework document on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience**⁸⁸: covering the period 2017-2020 to align its support with the UN Plan of Action on DRR for Resilience, covering prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and partnerships.

It's important to note that IOM has over 20 years of experience of implementing transition and recovery programs that move beyond humanitarian response by addressing the root causes of forced migration **before, during and after** crisis,

88. <https://www.iom.int/disaster-risk-reduction>

through development-oriented interventions in crisis contexts.

When addressing the root causes of forced migration **before** a crisis, it is important to note that in fragile and crisis contexts, migration drivers and decision-making are shaped by constantly evolving social, economic, political, security and environmental factors that define the landscape of risk and opportunity for potential migrants, including the displaced. In instances where crisis and displacement can be forecast, there may be time to initiate preventive and preparatory measures that can mitigate the scope and scale of the emergency response and minimize risks and vulnerabilities.

Preventive interventions seek to comprehensively address potential vulnerabilities and needs, foster resilience and leverage existing strengths and capacities. Preparedness initiatives classically include contingency planning, stockpiling, coordination arrangements, evacuation planning, public information and associated training and field exercises, and can reduce the possibility of harm or loss and minimize risks and protection concerns associated with displacement. As part of IOM's commitment to seek viable prevention and progressive solutions to complex migration and displacement challenges, community stabilization initiatives are designed to address migration drivers and promote local capacity in order to mitigate or prevent the recurrence of displacement and irregular migration.

When addressing the root causes of forced migration **during** a conflict, large-scale population influxes usually intensify pre-existing challenges, often in terms of economic pressures, unemployment, inflation and reduced access to services. IOM focuses on inclusive approaches considering local economic, social, cultural, security, and environmental dynamics while at the same time targeting the population as a whole (thus avoiding perceptions of preferential treatment and further aggravating tensions.) If our efforts are pre-emptive, we can help mitigate potential impacts of protracted displacement situations, reduce aid dependency and the prevailing sense of limbo, and support the process of recovery. In this regard, it is important to stress that socio-economic inclusion ensures that the displaced will not only be in a much better position to fully contribute to their host community's economy and society but also acquire skills and assets which will contribute to a more durable solution.

After a conflict, some people return, some locally integrate, and for others circular migration or other forms of mobility are the best solution. The proportions vary, influenced by a range of personal and contextual factors, including duration of stay away from home and the reasons that caused them to flee.

IOM excels at effectively managing mobility and solutions – and believes that it is crucial to promote voluntary, informed, and orderly movements in adherence to non-refoulement obligations.

With regard to successful peace-building, the reintegration of former combatants is recognized as a key factor addressing the need for immediate security and longer-term recovery in the transition from war to peace. IOM supports DDR efforts by focusing principally on successful reintegration, supporting former combatants in their transition to civilian life and by supporting communities to engage in recovery, absorb and support returning former fighters and other conflict affected populations through socio-economic recovery, social cohesion programming and a broad array of peacebuilding support interventions.

In conclusion, it is important to recognize the benefits of managed migration, and its role in addressing the better integration of humanitarian and development responses.

We must all stand ready to aid migrants, and to ensure social inclusion into ‘all policies’. *“Migration is not a problem to be solved, but a human reality to be managed”*.

In closing, I congratulate Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue for the timely hosting of this important debate, and for inviting IOM to take part.

I wish the debate a great success.

Panellist statement

Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo

Secretary General International Catholic Migration Commission

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Members of the Panel, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to begin by congratulating and thanking Ambassador Jazairy and his staff for their tireless planning and organization of this panel discussion and for their determination to promote both reflection and action capable of addressing the root causes of marginalization and conflict among peoples and of the involuntary migration and humanitarian emergencies resulting from such turmoil. I feel privileged to speak about the topic assigned to me, since I firmly believe that dialogue and practical cooperation among Christians and Muslims, and all people of faith and of good will, can eventually eliminate the tensions arising from a lack of direct familiarity with people whose cultures, faith traditions, and ethnic identities may differ from our own.

From the perspective and experience of the Catholic Church, perhaps our earliest efforts to engage in interfaith dialogue occurred in the thirteenth century under the initiative of Saint Francis of Assisi. Francis had participated in acts of violence and war during his youth, and thus had witnessed how religion could be misused to promote violence and hatred. Later, he experienced an intense conversion and totally dedicated himself to humble service of the poorest and most marginalized members in society. Subsequently, he made a trip to Damietta in Egypt where he observed leaders and followers of Christianity and of Islam mired in a destructive conflict – one that resulted in thousands of deaths and forced displacement among both Muslim and Christian believers. It was there that Francis was inspired to break with all conventions – religious, political, and cultural – with a strategic aim to reclaim a space for encounter, dialogue, mutual respect, peace and reconciliation. Thus, he deliberately journeyed to the Muslim camp and begged for an audience with the Sultan al-Kamil. After much resistance from both the Sultan's religious and military advisors Francis was received by this Muslim leader, who was taken aback by Francis' greeting, "*May the Lord give you peace,*" which is similar to the traditional Muslim greeting. For several days, the Sultan pursued a dialogue with Francis, who was deeply impressed by the Muslim religious practices, especially the call to prayer. The Sultan offered Francis many gifts; all but one were declined by the Catholic friar. Francis did agree to accept an ivory horn used to make the Muslim call for prayer. In fact, upon his return to Italy, Francis used this very horn to call people to hear him preach. A tangible relic of this Dialogue can be found in the Quran (The Repast 5:82): "*And you will find nearer to the friendship of the believers those men who call themselves Christians. This is because among them are learned men and*

monks, and because they are not arrogant.”⁸⁹

This form of Dialogue saw ebbs and flows over the centuries. During the Second Vatican Council, convened during the early 1960s, all the Catholic Bishops of the world, in collegial teaching with Pope Paul VI, proclaimed, “... *the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place among whom are the Muslims: these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.*”⁹⁰ This same Council further proposed a “roadmap” for future practical collaboration by declaring: “*Over the centuries many quarrels and dissensions have arisen between Christians and Muslims. The sacred Council now pleads with all to forget the past, and urges that a sincere effort be made to achieve mutual understanding; for the benefit of all ..., let them together preserve and promote peace, liberty, social justice and moral values.*”⁹¹

At the final session of the Inter-Religious Prayer for Peace, held in Assisi on 26 October 1986, Pope St. John Paul II begged his fellow religious leaders, who represented most of the world’s major faith traditions, to move from words to actions capable of creating peace and thus eliminating the forced migration that flows from war and other social evils: “*There is no peace without a passionate love for peace. There is no peace without a relentless determination to achieve peace. Peace awaits its prophets. Together we have filled our eyes with visions of peace: they release energies for a new language of peace, for new gestures of peace, gestures which will shatter the fatal chains of divisions inherited from history or spawned by modern ideologies.*”⁹²

At the present time, Pope Francis has spared no effort to join other religious leaders in a just and equitable response to forced displacement of peoples. After traveling, together with the Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew to visit the refugees on the Island of Lesbos, the Pope offered to bring back three Syrian Muslim refugee families to be resettled with the help of the Catholic Church. I believe that this is the type of “real time, real life” dialogue that manifests the shared values and concerns of both Christians and Muslims who not only believe in the one God and Father of us all but who also put their faith into practice by welcoming the stranger and protecting the most vulnerable. It was this same spirit that motivated Pope Francis to share tears with Rohingya refugees and to beg their forgiveness in the name of all those who persecuted them. Subsequently, he met with leaders of faith from many traditions,

89. <https://sufiways.com/2016/05/02/st-francis-of-assisi-and-sultan-al-kamil-a-bold-christian-muslim-encounter/>

90. Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church, #16, November 21, 1964.

91. Vatican Council II, *Nostra Aetate* #3, October 28, 1965

92. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1986/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19861027_prayer-peace-assisi-final.html

and declared: *“This dialogue and cooperation [in the service of our human family] entails more than mere tolerance. It challenges us to reach out to others in mutual trust and understanding, and so to build a unity that sees diversity not as a threat, but as a potential source of enrichment and growth.”*⁹³

While traveling around the world to visit programmes sponsored by the International Catholic Migration Commission, or ICMC, I am filled with the hope that springs from such dialogue and cooperation. Moreover, I believe that our everyday collaboration among people of different faith communities already is promoting integral human development. These efforts, in turn, one day will transform migration into a free choice rather than a forced necessity for millions of people escaping religious and ethnic persecution, the destructive rages of war and conflicts, abject poverty, and discrimination based on ethnic, religious, social or political prejudice. I feel empowered to make such bold statements, since I have been privileged to witness the persuasive advocacy being advanced by my organization, in solidarity with a wide range of religious organizations, and together with many other people of good will, to promote the two UN Compacts on safe, regular, and orderly migration and on refugee movements. I can give testimony to the efforts of ICMC’s Muslim and Christian staff members, based in Jordan, Malaysia, and Pakistan who, together with refugees themselves, reach out to mend the deep scars of sexual and gender-based violence, especially among refugee women and children. In Islamabad, I marvelled at the creativity and genius of both Muslim and Christian refugee children when I joined them for an evening of art, poetry, and song. And, finally, on the Pakistan-Afghan border, when I entered each of the refugee camps in which ICMC sponsors medical care, livelihood training, and both social and legal assistance, I was filled with gratitude and joy, as the Muslim leaders in each camp met with me, the Catholic priest, and assured me that our ICMC programmes were much appreciated because *“You (ICMC) treat the refugees with respect and recognize their dignity, and you put the human person at the centre of all you do!”*

93. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/december/documents/papa-francesco_20171201_viaggioapostolico-bangladesh-pace.html

Panellist statement

Dr Roberto Savio

Founder of Inter Press Service and the Director of International Relations at the European Centre for Peace and Development

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank His Excellency Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim and Ambassador Jazairy for inviting me to this meeting, and congratulate the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue, which is one of the few actors for peace and cooperation between the Arab world and Europe. As a representative of global civil society, I think it will be more meaningful if I speak without the constraints of diplomacy, and I make frank and unfettered reflections.

The misuse of religion, the growth of populism and xenophobia, is a sad reality, which is not clearly addressed, and met with hypocrisy and not outright denunciation. Only now are the British realizing that they voted for Brexit, on the basis of a campaign of lies. But nobody has taken seriously Boris Johnson or Nigel Farage, the leaders of Brexit, after Great Britain has accepted to pay the cost of divorce of at least EUR 45 billion, instead of saving 20 billion, as claimed by the “*brexitters*”. And there are few analyses on why the regular behavior in politics is more and more a sheer calculation, without any concern for truth or the good of the country.

President Trump could be a good case study on the relation between politics and populism. A few days ago, the US declared that they are withdrawing from the UN Global Compact for Migration. This has nothing to do with the interest or the identity of United States, which has positioned itself as a country of immigrants. It has to do with the fact that this decision is popular with a part of the American population, which is voting for President Trump, like the evangelicals. I would like to highlight the message they are circulating, after the declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This is what is said in the Bible. If we recreate the world described in the Bible, Jesus will make his second coming to earth, and only the just will be rewarded. And therefore they think that Trump brings the world closer to the return of Christ, and therefore he acts for the good of their beliefs. Evangelicals are close to thirty million, and they strongly believe that when the Second Coming of Jesus will happen, he will recognize only them as the believers who are in the right path. Trump is not an evangelical, and he has shown in his life little interest in religion. But, like each of his actions, he is coherent with his views during the campaign, which brought all dissatisfied people to bring him to the White House. Everything he does is not in the interests of the world or of the United States. He is just focused on keeping the support of his electors. These do not come from big towns, from academia, from the media, from Silicon Valley. They come mainly from impoverished and uninformed

white electors, who feel left out of the benefits of globalization. They believe those benefits went to the elite, to the big towns and to the few winners, and believe that there is an international plot to humiliate the United States. So, the climate change is a Chinese hoax. Trump can well have a shocking approval of 32%, the lowest in history for a President of United States, during his first year. But 92% of his voters would re-elect him. And as only 50% of American vote, he can easily ignore general public opinion.

It is not the place here to go any further into American politics. But Trump is a perfect example to understand why a large number of Europeans, or even countries like Poland, Hungary and Czechia, are ignoring the decisions of the European Union on migrants, and why populism, xenophobia and nationalism are on the rise everywhere.

Fear has become “*the tool*” to get to power.

Historians agree that the two main engines of change in history are greed and fear.

Well, we have been trained, since the collapse of communism, to look to greed as a positive value. Market (not man or ideas), was the new paradigm. States were an obstacle to a free market. Globalization, it was famously said, would lift all boats, and benefit everybody. In fact, market without rules was self-destructive, and not all boats were lifted, but only yachts, the bigger the better. The richest become richer and the poor poorer. The process is so speedy that ten years ago the richest 528 people had the same wealth as that of 2.3 billion people. All statistics are clear, and globalization based on free market is losing some of its shine.

But meanwhile we have lost many codes of communication. In the political debate there is no more reference to social justice, solidarity, participation, equity, the values in the modern constitutions, on which we built international relations. Now the codes are competition, success, profit and individual achievement. In my lectures in schools, I am dismayed to see a materialistic generation, which does not care to vote, to change the world. And the distance between citizens and political institutions is increasing every day. The only voices reminding us of justice and solidarity are the voices of religious leaders: Pope Bergoglio [commonly known as Pope Francis], the Dalai Lama, Bishop Desmond Tutu and the Grand Mufti Muhammad Hussein, just to name the most prominent. And with media who are now also evolving on a market-based perspective as the only valid criteria, these voices are becoming weaker.

After a generation of greed, we have now entered in a generation of fear. We should notice that, before the great economic crisis of 2008 (provoked by greed: banks have paid until now USD 280 billion of penalties and fines), xenophobe and populist parties were always minorities (with exception of Le Pen in France). The crisis created fear and uncertainties, and then immigration started to raise, especially after the invasion

of Libya in 2001, Iraq in 2003, and we are now in the seventh year of the Syrian drama, which has displaced 45% of the population. Merkel is now paying a price for her acceptance of Syrian refugees, and it is interesting to note that the two-thirds of the votes to Alternative für Deutschland, the populist and xenophobe party, come from East Germany, which has few refugees but an income which is nearly 25% lower. Fear again, has been the engine for change of German history.

Europe was directly responsible for those migrations. A famous cartoonist from El Pais, el Roto, has drawn a cartoon where bombs fly in the air, and migrants' boats come from the sea. "*We send them bombs, and they send us migrants.*" But there is no recognition of this. Those who escape from hunger and war are now depicted as invaders. Countries who until few years ago, like the Nordic ones, were considered synonymous with civic virtues, and who spent a considerable budget for international cooperation, are now erecting walls and barbed fences. Greed and fear have been so successfully exploited by the new nationalist, populist and xenophobe parties, that now they keep growing at every election, from Austria to the Netherlands, from Czechia to Great Britain (where they created Brexit), and then Germany, and in a few months Italy. The three horses of apocalypse, which in the thirties were the basis for the Second World War: nationalism, populism and xenophobia are back with growing popular support, and politicians openly surfing on them.

But what is shocking is that now we have a new element of division: religion, which is widely used against immigrants and should instead unite us. Religion has always been used to obtain power and legitimacy. Common people never started the wars of religion in Europe. Princes and kings were often behind them. Few years ago we did commemorate the expulsion first of the Jews, and then of the Moors from Spain where they lived in harmony and peace with the Christians, forming a civilization of the three cultures. And few weeks ago, there was a great march in Warsaw - ignored by the media - with 40,000 people attending, many coming from all over Europe and United States. They marched in the Name of God and shouted "*death to Jews and Muslims*".

But while Protestants, Catholics, Muslims and Jewish religious leaders engage in a positive dialogue for peace and cooperation, a number of self-proclaimed defenders of faiths are bringing fear, misery and death. And it should be clear that we have no clash of religions. It is a clash of those who use religion to acquire power and legitimacy. And they ride an unrealistic dream. To return to a world, which is gone, where mines will reopen, the country will go back to its former glory: a world, which dreams not of a better future, but of a better past. Africa is going to double its population, with 80% of it under 35 years; while in Europe this figure is just 20%. There is no hope for Europe to be viable in a global economy and a competitive world without a substantial immigration. Yet, to speak about this in the political debate, is

now a kiss of death.

Mr President, let me conclude by stressing that we face a sad reality, which we cannot ignore any longer. Ideals have always been used to get support, even from those who did not believe into them. And historians teach us that in modern times humankind has fallen in three traps: In the name of God, to divide and not to dialogue; in name of the nation, often to rally support and bring citizens to wars; and now, in the name of profit. I think it is time to make new alliances, and launch a great campaign of awareness regarding false prophets, with mobilization of media, civil society and legitimate politicians, to educate citizens that immigration must be regulated, but is a necessity with which Europe must live.

We must set up a policy, and even if Trump leaves the Global Compact, like he left the Paris Agreement on climate change, he will remain an isolated voice while citizens strive for a better world, with no fears, and based on common values. We must take an unpopular but vital action in the fields of education and participation. It will be unpopular and difficult. But if we do not take this road, man, who is the only animal who does not learn from past mistakes, will go again through blood, misery and destruction.

Panellist statement

Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann

Permanent Observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta to UN Geneva

Excellencies,

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I wish first of all to thank Ambassador Idriss Jazairy for having invited me once again to participate in a panel discussion organized by the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue. The topic you have chosen is very timely indeed, as we are in the midst of the preparatory processes leading up to the adoption of the two Global Compacts, respectively on refugees and migration.

The detailed and well documented concept note before us, illustrates clearly how the unprecedented influx of migrants and refugees is affecting many societies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The Sovereign Order of Malta has been carrying out its humanitarian activities in this region for many years and as I have been asked to address the guiding theme “*An alternative to the liquid graves of the Mediterranean*”, I would like to share with you some initiatives we have taken to save lives and alleviate the suffering of those in desperate need of help.

Since 2008 medical teams of the Order of Malta’s Italian Relief Corps have been deployed on board the vessels of the Italian Coastguards and Customs Officers’ patrol boats in the southern Mediterranean and on board the vessels of the Italian Navy since 2014. This Volunteer Corps which consists of doctors and nurses provides first-aid and administers lifesaving therapies to the refugees crammed into unseaworthy boats arriving from North Africa and the Middle East. They have spent over 100’000 hours at sea and some 50 thousand persons have been saved in this operation, which was extended to the Aegean Sea when the flow of migrants and refugees from Turkey reached its peak between December 2015 and March 2016.

The cooperation with the Italian Navy has now been expanded by a medical training mission for future Libyan instructors as part of the European naval force operation EUNAVFOR MED-Sophia, launched with the aim of preventing migrant deaths in the Mediterranean sea, countering the criminal networks controlling human smuggling and trafficking and training naval personnel in Libya, departure point of the boats overloaded with migrants. Six health teams from the Order of Malta’s Relief Corps participated in the training of personnel from the Coast Guard and the Libyan Navy. The objective is to provide them with the abilities and skills necessary for coastal patrols to improve security in Libyan territorial waters and develop search and rescue capabilities and health practices useful for first emergency, so that they can save more lives at sea. Besides the Order of Malta, Frontex, the European Border and Coast

Guard Agency, UNHCR and IOM are participating in the training which is being carried out in various stages.

A further example of the Order of Malta's engagement in the Mediterranean is at the diplomatic level. Together with the British think tank "*Forward Thinking*" the Order established a working group in 2015 to discuss key humanitarian challenges related to migration flows. Four such meetings have been held, the most recent one three weeks ago in Tunis which focused on looking at the key challenges the country is facing from a Libyan perspective. Irregular migration, political instability, violation of human rights and the conditions in the detention centers, were extensively discussed. An ever-increasing corruption, the flourishing human trafficking and goods' smuggling businesses, the training of local authorities, cooperation with the Southern bordering countries, and the spreading of epidemics due to the bad hygiene conditions in many parts of the country were all topics raised by participants.

Representatives of the Libyan institutions, such as the High State Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, regional actors such as the Arab Maghreb Union, representatives of international organizations – IOM, the UN mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, - and of the EU, together with academics and law experts, all participated in a frank and comprehensive debate on the main challenges the country is facing. Ambassadors from some European countries such as France, Italy and Finland also gave their contribution to the two-day long discussion.

The fragmentation of the country was addressed by participants with representatives from the Southern region of Fezzan, pointing to the frequent abuses committed by local illegal militias and in expressing widely-shared concerns about the security situation. There was broad-based demand for urgent action to identify shared economic and political solutions to be endorsed by the international community. This was necessary to lead the country out of the deadlock which is gradually weakening its population, its living standards and its infrastructure. In this regard, number of recommendations emerged, including:

- Libyan authorities should, with UN assistance, improve the conditions in official detention centres, and where possible explore practicable alternatives to detention. Authorities could establish a joint task force to ensure that centres comply with Libyan law, evaluate what would be required for the Ministry of Social Welfare to provide protection for the most vulnerable migrants including women and children and victims of trafficking; and improve access to official detention centres for international organisations, who in turn could help meet the humanitarian needs of those held at the centres.
- Information databases should be established on irregular migration in Libya and

mechanisms to improve the sharing of information between Libyan authorities and the international community.

- The international community should establish centres in countries bordering Libya to the south through which irregular migrants could apply for formal channels of migration.
- The international community should strengthen efforts to create economic opportunities and development in source countries, increasing the assistance provided by the Italian Africa Fund and the EU's Trust Fund for Africa.
- Set up training initiatives for Libyan authorities on international law and promote awareness of human rights in Libya through education. Given the positive role they can play in changing attitudes in society, imams, religious leaders and scholars should be involved in these initiatives.

In his conclusion, the Order of Malta's Grand Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs said: *"It is very clear from our talks that there can be no solution without a political and multilateral shared approach. Nonetheless, there are some pressing humanitarian needs we need to urgently address. The international community must keep the focus on the target of the humanitarian assistance, the migrants and refugees detained on unclear legal grounds, but also on the hosting community which is in dire need of assistance"*.

A further initiative of the Order of Malta I wish to mention is the recent appointment of two Ambassadors at large tasked with combating human trafficking. One is based in Geneva to operate within the international organizations, mainly the UN, and the other in Lagos to work with local authorities in Africa. With projects both at local and diplomatic level, they will help strengthen the commitment of the Order of Malta in preventing the trafficking of humans and protecting the victims by intensifying relations with international stakeholders and raising awareness about this terrible blight that is increasing in scope and dimension. Criminal networks avail themselves of investors, recruiters, corrupted officers providing papers, informers for the passage through the borders, guides, debt collectors, money laundering operators. As the number of displaced rises in many parts of the world, the Order has witnessed this merciless phenomenon first-hand in its projects that help displaced persons.

With regard to the movement of people fleeing from conflict and war-related insecurity affecting countries in the Middle East, the Order of Malta carries out its humanitarian activities in countries of origin, transit and arrival. In Lebanon, Syria, Turkey and Iraq the focus is on emergency relief, providing medical, psychosocial and healthcare, the management of medical facilities and support to education facilities.

The assistance to migrants in Europe is particularly concentrated on integration.

In Germany, for example, we have set up a number of innovative models such as the creation of *integration services* to make migrants familiar with German society and culture. These units also generated a platform for Germans to meet individual migrants which in turn allowed for a totally different image of migration as opposed to fearing the influx of hundreds of thousands of foreigners. Looking for a long-term solution to help integrating refugees and migrants more easily into society, the Order's German Association has begun to employ and train so-called *Integration Guides* who support migrants and refugees in overcoming challenges of daily life in their new host country, such as finding appropriate schools and childcare, learning German, making purchases, visiting doctors, communicating with governmental authorities, screening for job possibilities and simply being part of society. Such interaction enables a two-sided exchange, giving refugees and migrants the possibility of being heard by having personal and familiar contacts, thereby safeguarding their dignity, and ensuring the participation of local communities. It also enables them to learn by experience what open society means, and be part of it. Furthermore, this kind of support by the civil society is transferable to governmental or institutional implementation in an engagement of private and public partnerships. Several German local and regional authorities have already adopted this approach to overcome language barriers with foreign-language speaking people.

In concluding I would like to express our hope that the coming negotiations on the Global Compacts will address the issues we are discussing to-day and will cover all dimensions of populations on the move in a holistic and comprehensive manner. We are also confident that the now widely recognized special role of *faith-based organizations* and *religious institutions* in the protection and integration of migrants and refugees will be an integral part in the multi-stakeholder, 'whole-of-society' approach endorsed by the General Assembly in the New York Declarations and applied during the consultations. As one of the initiators and as a signatory of the "*Charter for faith-based humanitarian action*" endorsed at the UN World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, the Order of Malta will continue to emphasize the particular strengths of faith and religion based actors. Their assistance responds not only to material demands, but combines technical care with an ethical and spiritual dimension ; through their local roots they are well placed to interact with their communities in affected areas, thereby playing a crucial role in organizing help and promoting peace. In our experience, the cooperation in the humanitarian field of faith-based institutions also creates a bond of mutual trust and confidence among people of different religions.

Panellist statement

Mr Edouard Rodier

Director of the Norwegian Refugee Council's Europe Office

Excellencies, esteemed colleagues and friends,

I am very pleased to be here today to contribute to this important and very timely initiative. Some of you are probably back from Mexico where you discussed the outcomes and took stock of months of discussions on the Global Compacts. NRC has been highly involved in that process of course and will remain mobilized and active in the discussions. At the same time, the process on the compact must nourish and needs to be fuelled by other streams of thoughts and discussions such as the one we have today.

Human mobility has become a common feature, a reality on the ground. The “Geneva declaration” gives us an additional opportunity to consider the growing tensions between our Northern fortresses jealously defending their comparative advantage and the rest of the world. Surely, many of us would agree that the solution cannot be about developing protectionism and championing unilateralism. Denial is rarely the answer.

We live in a globalized world: where information is everywhere; where millions of families are fearing for their lives or starving while at the same time they can watch broadcasted fictions featuring attractive western ways of living. Every year, millions are forced away from their homes, their cities, their countries. They escape persecutions, starvation or misery. Those who are reaching Europe are clamoring for a better life: a life where without fear, where fundamental rights are protected, where dignity is restored.

I have been asked today to comment on the EU response to the migrant and refugees crisis. **Unfortunately, the management of this crisis, from the EU side, has mainly been about trying to “stem the flow” and “externalizing solutions”.**

Stemming the flow: the “sad bargain”

Last April, I had the chance to attend the Senior Official Meeting in Malta together with ICMC and African representatives and to provide a civil society’s perspective to the Valletta process that was meant to create a frame for EU/Africa collaboration based on 5 pillars:

- Addressing root causes of instability and irregular migration;
- Legal migration and mobility;
- Protection of displaced and asylum seekers;

- Fight against irregular migration, migrants smuggling and human trafficking;
- Return, readmission agreements.

In practice: pillars 2 and 3 (legal migration routes and protection) were largely neglected to the benefit of the others. African countries emphasized the need for more aid while European representatives focussed on the fight against irregular migration and on returns.

Aid versus returns is what I would describe as a “sad bargain” that largely neglects the reality and the complexity of the situation and completely overlooks the needs and interests of the people we are talking about.

Migrations are here to stay

While we appreciate the political sensitivity of the topic, we need to acknowledge that solutions cannot be found in a denial of this fact: **migrations are here to stay**.

Even if NRC, due to its institutional commitment to preventing and responding to forced displacement has focussed its efforts primarily on the development of the refugee compact, we praise and support the Global Compact for Migration as it aims at filling the gap by setting a comprehensive framework for international cooperation on migrants.

Initiatives like the one we are supporting today are useful as they re-emphasize the need to promote the protection of people on the move and contribute to the ongoing global efforts to restore their rights.

The EU response

When it comes to the refugee crisis, the EU’s response has been immensely harmful, not only to the people but to their rights. Every step taken by the EU to seal off its borders has contributed to denying refugees the right to seek refuge in another country. The example of the Syrian crisis is compelling:

- As a result of an immense effort, **Lebanon’s capacities to support refugees have been saturated for years.** Clearly, if refugees cannot transit through Lebanon towards Europe, what choice Lebanon really has but to close its borders in order to preserve its own national stability?
- **One the positive side**, some good measures have been taken by the EU when preparing the EU Compacts. These have led to tangible results notably in Jordan where it promoted measures to facilitate access to jobs and education for refugees. These were paramount to ensure the conditions for a durable stay.
- But even in the **EU Compact process**, the idea remained to keep refugees away and Syria’s neighbouring countries have continued to be those taking a largest

share of responsibility in the response to the refugee crisis.

- The pressure on the local populations and their governments has remained extremely high in these countries, which make us fear that any improvement of situation inside Syria may create an **irresistible pressure to send back refugees** even if conditions for safe, dignified and sustainable returns are not there yet.

The EU's main response to the crisis has been to externalize, and while doing so largely failed from its responsibility to the extent that many prefer talking about a **political crisis** than a migration or refugee crisis, when it comes to the EU.

Clearly, the wealthy EU could welcome and host large populations seeking for a better life. In fact, many are making the case that it would be in **aging Europe's** best interest.

I would argue that this is an identity crisis. I am sitting in Brussels that hosts the governing bodies of the EU, ruled by the Lisbon Treaty (2009) that states : *“The European Union’s fundamental values are respect for human dignity and human rights, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law (...)”*. and that *“The main goal of the European Union is to defend these values in Europe and promote peace and the wellbeing of the citizens.”*

Concluding remarks:

The EU's response to the refugee and migrant crisis has made these values sound strangely disconnected from the reality. A responsible approach to European fundamental principles cannot be about externalising the response or organizing large money transfers to support the efforts of others.

Principles and charters are meant to create a frame for our actions. It is in time of crisis that they are put to the test. That we reveal who we are. The recent decision from the US administration to pull out from the CRRF creates a very poor environment for refugees and should call for Europe to take back its leading role in the defence of refugees' rights.

Currently, it is difficult to see where else we can find champions. EU leaders are struggling to reconcile their values and the political pressure from their electorate. **That leaves it to us, the civil society, to support them by proposing ways, exploring options, supporting initiatives.**

This is what the Norwegian Refugee Council has been doing for years in the field when assisting and protecting victims of situation of displacement and what we are doing here in Geneva by contributing or steering many discussions in relation to the Global Compact and promoting notably the inclusion in the compact of a responsibility sharing mechanism, monitored by a new global platform group as a

way to hold member States accountable.

This is also why this new *Declaration* today needs to be supported as it contributes to mobilization and provides us an additional opportunity to confront ideas and formulate propositions.

I am therefore looking forward to our discussions today.

Thank you.

Panellist statement

Ms Dina Ionesco

Head of IOM's Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division

Introduction:

1. Understanding the complex equation that relates climate change, environment, disaster and human mobility, with a focus on the region of interest to us today, the MENA
2. Some examples from the region to illustrate the issues and how we address them
3. Why is this a migration policy issue?

The presentation is based on IOM's work on Migration, Environment and Climate Change (MECC): intergovernmental, connecting policy and practice, producing evidence to inform policy, and offering a unique space as the only organization with a fully-fledged division on MECC.

1. A complex equation well exemplified in the MENA region that is projected to be one of the most affected regions by climate change

a.

- I. Multi causality and equation with many variables and unknowns
- II. Internal and regional
- III. Exposure vs migration
- IV. Vulnerability vs empowerment
- V. Impacts of migration on environment and of environment on migration

b.

- I. Complexity of human mobility
- II. Internal, intraregional
- III. Pastoralism
- IV. Urbanization
- V. Current migration dynamics in the MENA are an extension of a long tradition of mobility, MENA being one of the world's most important migratory hubs, due to its location between two major destinations of international migration: Europe and the Persian Gulf.

c. It is difficult to isolate the impact of climatic conditions from other possible factors of migration, hence the difficulty to establish an environmental migrant status

- Climate change is *already* affecting the MENA region in dire ways and its impacts are expected to accelerate:

Rising temperatures, heat stress, drought and desertification

- ◆ The region is already under heat stress and climate change will push such temperatures to the extremes unbearable for the human body most of the year.
- ◆ It will cause extreme heat to spread across *more* places for *longer periods of time*, making some regions unliveable and reducing areas for agriculture.
- ◆ Recurrent droughts, accelerated desertification.
- ◆ Cities will feel an increasing heat island effect and most capital cities in the Middle East could face four months of exceedingly hot days every year.
- ◆ Rising temperatures will put intense pressure on crops and already scarce water resources, potentially increasing migration and the risk of conflict.

Water scarcity

The Middle East and North Africa is the most water-stressed region in the world.

- ◆ The combination of rapid population growth and urbanization will put increased pressure on already scarce natural water resources.
- ◆ With rainfall projected to decline by 20 to 40% in a 2°C hotter world, and up to 60% in a 4°C increase, the region's capacity to provide water to its people and economies will be harshly tested.

Coastal erosion, sea level rise, ocean degradation, ecosystem loss

Loss of livelihoods

- ◆ With 70 percent of the MENA region's agricultural production rain-fed, the sector is highly vulnerable to fluctuations in temperature and precipitation as a result of climate change.
- ◆ Impacts will vary, but it is often poorer, rural communities that are hit hardest by lost crops and livestock.

2. Examples

Environmental migration is already taking place in the MENA region although barely documented.

- Climate change and migration are major concerns in the MENA region, yet the empirical evidence on the impact of climate change and extreme weather events on migration remains limited.
- Unbalanced regional distribution of MECC data: University of Neuchatel recorded 447 empirical studies on migration and environment published across the globe between 1980 and 2014, with only 8 studies focusing on the Middle East (=MENA has received less attention).
- Internal displacement in the MENA region due to natural disasters (IDMC, 2017): only 0.5% of the global displacements due to disasters (0.1m people).
- MENA also includes many pastoralist and nomadic populations, which are tradi-

tionally mobile populations.

- Rural residents are clearly aware of climate change. They perceive a shift in climatic conditions that affects their livelihood due to deteriorating agricultural conditions. Among households affected by climate change, migration appears to be more of a strategy of last resort.

Concrete examples:

- ♦ Egypt: Tales of the Two Cities
- ♦ Assessing the Evidence: Migration, Environment and Climate Change in Morocco
 - On the one hand, environmental and climatic factors account for migration to Morocco from sub-Saharan and movements out of and within the country, especially to the major coastal cities; and on the other, they also put further pressure on natural resources in the most part of rural areas. With the severe impacts of climate change expected to rise in intensity in the coming decades, sudden-onset events, such as floods and storms, as well as slow-onset processes, such as droughts and desertification, will further intensify these movements and challenge local and national policymakers.
- ♦ Atlas of Environmental Migration
 - Kerkennah Islands are a group of islands near the coast of Tunisia. The local population depends mainly on fishing activities. However, unsustainable fishing practices led to the overexploitation and depletion of fisheries. Decreased incomes have pushed families to seek better livelihoods on the mainland and in Europe. On one occasion in 2012, more than 600 families left Kerkennah for Europe by boat.
- ♦ Water scarcity as a long-term driver of rural-urban migration in Syria.
- Egypt and Tunisia to include climate migration in its NDC:
- ♦ Egypt:
 - Sea-level rise by 50 cm can lead to serious impacts on low-level lands in Delta and adjacent highly populated cities such as Alexandria and Port Said. Consequently, this will result in a more significant challenge, which is the migration of people from the affected areas to other areas, thus affecting the efficiency of different services and increasing the financial cost required for their development.
 - Develop systems, programs and policies to protect rural community and support its adaptive capacity to the expected trend in land use change, plant and animal production, and internal migration due to climate change.
- ♦ Tunisia:

- Population stabilization and prevention of rural de-depopulation

3. Policy responses

- Build on regional frameworks
- A climate response (UNFCCC, Paris Agreement, Marrakesh, Taskforce on Displacement, including the NDCs)
- A migration response (GCM to support people to move in dignity, green returns, etc.)

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Panellist statement

Ms Christine Goyer

UNHCR Senior Protection Officer Mixed Migration

Working environment

- Intensified violence, sectarian strife, and an escalation of human trafficking and people smuggling in 2016 led to increasing levels of displacement across the Middle East and North Africa region.
- Of the estimated 67.7 million people worldwide of concern to UNHCR, more than 28 per cent are in this region, including 2.6 million refugees, 15.1 million IDPs and returnees, and an estimated 372,500 stateless.
- UNHCR and its partners are faced with the continued imperative of addressing the needs stemming from three system-wide. Level 3 emergencies in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), and Yemen. Providing protection and advocating for protection space, supporting access to asylum, expanding opportunities for durable solutions for refugees and IDPs, and strengthening support for the IDP response, are UNHCR's priorities. The Office worked with partners to maximize the delivery of assistance and protection to the most vulnerable, providing shelter, core relief items (CRIs), and cash-based interventions in camps and urban settings.

Maintaining protection space and supporting access to national asylum systems

- **Registration:** individual biometric registration for Iraqi, Syrian and other refugees in the region; support to authorities in Turkey for the verification and upgrade of the registration data for Syrian refugees; in 2017, expanded or enhanced its use in Algeria, Israel, Kuwait, Mauritania, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. All UNHCR operations in the Middle East and North Africa, with the exception of Libya, now use identity-based management systems.
- Prioritized efforts for the registration and documentation of births; identification and assistance to UASC. UNHCR and partners have significantly reduced the percentage of Syrian refugee children born in the region without any form of identity document from about 35 per cent in 2012 to 3 per cent in 2016.
- In NA, advice and support training for government officials to gradually put in place a **national asylum legislation** and hand over registration and RSD processes.
- **Strengthened protection monitoring:** systematic data collection by community-based actors, and analysis.

- Network of over 350 community centers and mobile teams in pursuit of **sustainable protection responses** capable of addressing child protection and SGBV concerns. Across the Middle East and North Africa in 2017, over 1,100 individuals, including refugees, IDPs and members of host community, volunteered to support protection responses.
- Support to Syrian refugees' access to livelihoods: work permits issued to 37,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan, 13,000 in Turkey; Syrian refugee medical professionals and teachers were permitted to provide services to refugee communities in Turkey.

Strengthening refugee protection in mixed movements

Central Med route remained the main channel used for people trying to reach Europe from Africa. More than 162,965 arrivals in Europe by sea in 2017, majority departing from Libya. At least 3,000 people were reported to have died or gone missing in the Med.

- The number of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants using the **eastern Mediterranean route** (from Turkey to Greece) dropped significantly following the simultaneous effective closure of the Balkans route and the European Union-Turkey statement of March 2016.
- In view of large-scale irregular mixed movements, and to prevent *refoulement*, UNHCR worked to safeguard access to territory, ensuring rescue at sea and protection for people of concern.
- In **Libya**, the Office strengthened cooperation with the Libyan Coast Guard and immigration authorities by establishing six additional health posts at disembarkation points, to provide emergency assistance to those rescued at sea.
- In addition, UNHCR successfully advocated the release from detention of 950 people in need of international protection so far in 2017 and provided life-saving humanitarian assistance at twelve points of disembarkation, following rescue or interception at sea.
- In **Tunisia**, UNHCR continued to provide capacity building to the authorities to improve monitoring at the border with Libya and strengthen capacity for rescue at sea.

Providing safety from violence and exploitation

- Child protection and the prevention of, and response to, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) are key elements of UNHCR's operations in the region. In 2016, almost 700,000 girls and boys in the region benefited from the organization's child protection, psychological and social support programmes. Some 131,500

survivors of SGBV, including men and boys, were given access to multi-sectoral services.

- A specific focus on children and youth remained an important element of the response throughout the region, including addressing longer-term care arrangements and durable solutions for unaccompanied and separated children, addressing child labour, and improving children's access to safe learning environments.
- Furthermore, UNHCR continues to promote active and equal participation by women in leadership and management structures and equal access to livelihood opportunities, especially for women heads of households.

Pursuing durable solutions

- Together with resettlement countries and other partners, UNHCR continues working towards durable solutions for an increasing number of vulnerable refugees. In 2017, based on robust and harmonized methodologies to identify the most vulnerable, some 63,510 refugees from the region had their applications for resettlement submitted, and 56,011 departed to 45 countries, including 36,339 Syrian and 2,441 Iraqi refugees.
- Furthermore, UNHCR continues advocating alternative pathways for the admission of refugees to third countries, including the use of humanitarian visas, community based private sponsorship, labour mobility schemes, and family reunification.

Building partnerships with local organizations and civil society

- UNHCR enhanced strategic partnerships in the region, including cooperation with regional organizations such as the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, academic institutions, the media and the private sector.
- UNHCR's partnership strategy in the Middle East and North Africa region follows the "*whole of society approach*" under the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted at the United Nations General Assembly high-level meeting in September 2016; and focuses on establishing robust and comprehensive partnerships for a sustainable humanitarian response and a greater beneficial impact on people of concern.
- The strategy prioritizes partnerships with national and local authorities, international organizations, international financial institutions, regional organizations, and civil society partners, including faith-based organizations, academia, the private sector, media and refugees themselves.
- In Syria, UNHCR extended its partnership network to encompass new international

and national NGOs, tripled its existing network of community centres, established 25 mobile units to cover new locations and emergencies, and vastly expanded the outreach volunteer programme. The mobile units played an important role in disseminating information on available services, and in identifying needs and providing essential responses, including in evolving situations such as in eastern Aleppo.

- UNHCR held consultations with over 150 stakeholders in the region with a view to establish the Middle East and North Africa Civil Society Network for Displacement. It aims to amplify the voice of civil society in the region and to further strengthen advocacy on displacement issues, build national non-governmental response capacities, and share lessons learned on an array of issues, including emergency response and protection. Engagement with academia in the region was also strengthened.

ANNEX II

**2017 GENEVA DECLARATION: “MOBILITY AND HUMAN
SOLIDARITY, A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR
EUROPE AND THE MENA REGION”**

Geneva declaration: Mobility and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region

	<p>GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE مركز جنيف لحقوق الإنسان والحوار العالمي CENTRE DE GENÈVE POUR LA PROMOTION DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET LE DIALOGUE GLOBAL In special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations Bénéficiant du Statut consultatif spécial auprès du Conseil économique et social des Nations Unies</p>	<p>Rue de Vermont 37-39 CP 186, 1211 Geneva 20 Switzerland Tel: +41 (0) 22 748 27 80 Email: info@gchragd.org Web: www.gchragd.org</p>
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	<p><i>Solid^Ascension</i> Pour une éducation solidaire en milieu populaire</p>
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The co-signatories of this declaration adopted during the panel debate entitled *“Migration and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region”* organized on 14 December 2017 at the United Nations Office in Geneva hereby agree to the proclamation of the following declaration:

“We take note of the fact that mobility has become a global issue affecting every corner of the world of which approximately 1 billion people are on the move encompassing migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection as well as internally displaced persons;

“We acknowledge that migration is part of globalization and remains a positive factor to achieving sustainable development in line with the provisions set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

“We recognize that the unprecedented rise and forced displacement of people on the move is a global problem requiring global solutions and should not merely be considered as a ‘neighborhood’ and/or regional problem limited to a given geographical area;

“We welcome the adoption of the 2016 New York Declaration on 19 September 2016 at the United Nations Summit calling for the adoption of a Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration and a Global Compact on Refugees to guide the member States of the United Nations and international decision-makers in their efforts to promote safe, orderly and regular migration and to respond to the plight of displaced people worldwide as set out inter alia in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF);

“Owing to the lack of a unified global response to address the plight of migrants and of refugees, we deplore the rise of migrant and refugee deaths in the Mediterranean Sea and other major international migration corridors in the Balkans and in North Africa;

“We condemn the growing instability witnessed in the MENA region owing to the rise of extremist and violent groups and foreign interventions fueling insecurity and instability thus forcing people to flee their home societies;

“We warn against the adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation in the Sahel region exacerbating the living conditions of millions of people, often causing conflict and forcing people to flee thus increasing the numbers of people on the move. In this regard, we call upon international decision-makers to put stronger emphasis on addressing the adverse impact of climate change on human mobility in future consultation processes related to migration and displacement;

“We underline that policing and over-securitized migration is not the solution to address the plight of people on the move and are contradictory to the founding

principles of globalization, non-discrimination and non-rejection. Concerted efforts must be taken to reduce the use of restrictive and over-securitized migration policies. In a globalized world, absence of response to the situation of refugees creates instability which spreads across borders and does not spare countries restricting or refusing access to refugees;

“We recall that hosting refugees is a legal and moral obligation as they are defined as those who are outside their country of origin who are in need of international protection because of a serious threat to their life, physical integrity or freedom in their country of origin as a result of persecution, armed conflict, violence or serious public disorder against which the authorities in their home country cannot or will not protect them as recalled in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and other relevant legal instruments;

“We call attention to the campaign of fear against refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, in many parts of the world, aiming at reducing, or rejecting, legal obligations, and at undermining the principles of solidarity and respect of human rights, as enshrined in national constitutions, national legislation, international covenants and in the Charter of the United Nations. This campaign of fear is growing, challenging the legitimacy and mandates of multilateral institutions, and restoring previous nationalistic reactions that constitute direct threats to peace and international cooperation;

“We note that 60% or more of refugees worldwide are currently of Muslim origin and warn against defamatory conflation between terrorism and refugees and asylum-seekers. We deplore all similar attempts to criminalize undocumented migrants and asylum-seekers regardless of religion, ethnicity, culture, nationality and/or geographic origin;

“We call upon international decision-makers to promote the restoration of peace and of stability to the South and to the East of the Mediterranean Sea to promote safe, orderly and regular migration and to increase livelihood options in countries of origin. We acknowledge the need to support poorer countries that bear the brunt of the burden of hosting refugees;

“We deplore the appalling conditions at detention and custody facilities in some transit countries of migration in which undocumented migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers are denied the right to asylum and have their human rights violated owing to abuse, extortion and lack of access to food, medicine and sanitation. We echo the views of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights HE Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein⁹⁴ who stated on 14 November 2017 that conditions at detention and custody

94. UN News Centre 2017. “Libya’s detention of migrants ‘is an outrage to humanity,’ says UN human

facilities in Libya are ‘an outrage to humanity’;

“We urge international decision-makers to provide special priority in funding to countries in the Sahel region that are victims of persistent economic difficulties combined with the adverse effects of climate change on standard of living;

“We call for continued dialogue between countries in Europe and in the MENA region to identify equitable burden - and responsibility-sharing mechanisms guided by the principles of human solidarity, impartiality, non-rejection, non-refoulement, non-discrimination and justice in recognition of the fact that the arrival of displaced people in the European Union constitute about 0.2%⁹⁵ of its population as compared to approximately 25%⁹⁶, 20%⁹⁷ and 3%⁹⁸ respectively of the populations of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey to cite but a few telling examples;

“We emphasize the need for intensified global action to identify joint solutions to the unprecedented movement of people and to find common ground in identifying a global framework to respond to the plight of migrants and of refugees in the MENA region;

“We appeal to international decision-makers to meet the funding requirements set forth by the United Nations in the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan and in the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan as these response plans remain underfunded. We likewise urge decision-makers to meet all other funding requirements identified by the United Nations in relation to addressing the acute humanitarian needs of refugees worldwide;

“In this regard, we warn against the ‘globalisation of indifference’ concerning refugees as highlighted by HH Pope Francis on 08 July 2013⁹⁹;

“We call upon host countries to promote the resilience of their societies so as to enhance the integration and inclusion of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in line with the provisions set forth in Sustainable Development Goal 16;

“We call for the establishment of a Global Charter to enhance the protection of people on the move including in particular the recommendations identified during the

rights chief Zeid.” 14 November. Accessed on 23 November 2017. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58084#.Wg2Gr1WnGUk>

95. Matringe, Jean 2017. “Errements de la politique migratoire de Bruxelles” in *Le Monde Diplomatique*. May 2017.

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99. Vatican Radio 2013. “Pope on Lampedusa: ‘the globalization of indifference.’” 08 July. Accessed on 23 November 2017. <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-on-lampedusa-the-globalization-of-indifferenc>

consultation phases of the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees;

“We call upon all member States of the United Nations to contribute to the realization of the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees through dialogue, consensus-building and mutual engagement and to refrain from undertaking any actions that may undermine the joint efforts of the global community to present a framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migrants and human mobility:

“We underline that humanitarian responses to refugee flows call for long term action that must enable people in distress not just to survive but to have access to income generating activities in recognition of their productive function and to education in recognition of the fact that close on half of displaced people are under 18 years of age;

“We also call upon member States of the United Nations to cooperate with the International Organization for Migration, the UNHCR and other organizations to facilitate the voluntary return and reintegration of migrants, refugees including asylum-seekers to their countries of origin;

“We call for the establishment an inter-agency Task Force including the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society organizations as well as think tanks from the MENA and the European regions to coordinate the implementation of the recommendations set forth in the Global Compact for Migration and in the Global Compact on Refugees.”

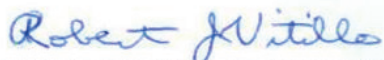


HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim, *Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue*



HE Ambassador Idriss Jazairy, *Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for Human*

Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue



Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo,

Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)



Dr Roberto Savio, *Founder and President Emeritus of Inter Press Service (IPS). Director for International Relations of the European Centre for Peace and Development*



HE Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann, *Permanent Observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta*



Dr Alfred de Zayas, *United Nations Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order*



Mr Edouard Rodier, *Director of the Norwegian Refugee Council's Europe Office (NRC)*



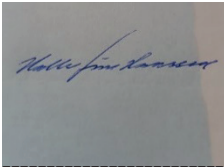
H. E. Ambassador George Papadatos, Head of the European Public Law Mission in Geneva



Mr Ramesh Jaura, *President of the Global Cooperation Council and the Director General
Chief Editor of the International Press Syndicate*



Dr Oreste Foppiani, *Head of the Department of International Relations
Associate Professor of International History & Politics Webster University Geneva*



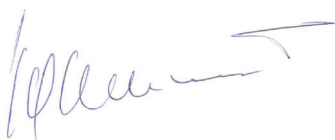
Mr Halle Jørn Hanssen, *journalist and author based in Norway*



Mr David Koros, *Director of the African Centre Against Torture (ACAT)*



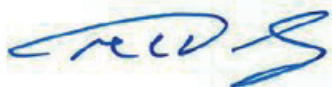
Ms Ngoneh Panneh, *Founder and President of Citizens United Switzerland*



Academician **Prof. Dr Negoslav P. Ostojić**, *Executive Director of ECPD UN University for Peace*



Ms Samar Muhareb, *Chief Executive Officer of Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development*



Reverend Mike Deeb, *Permanent Delegate of the Dominican Order to the United Nations*



Dr Ibrahima Guissé, *Chief Executive Officer of Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (RADDHO)*



Mr Joseph Désiré Zebaze, *National Coordinator of the Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organizations*



Mr Manou Nabara Hamidou, *President of Jeunesse-Enfance-Migration-Développement (JMED)*

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large loop and a horizontal line extending to the right, positioned above a dashed horizontal line.

Mr Hacen Mohammadi, *President of Solidascension*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gibril Deen" in a cursive script, positioned above a dashed horizontal line.

Mr Deen Gibril, *President of the Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organisation*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raimondo Schiavone" in a cursive script, positioned above a dashed horizontal line.

Mr Raimondo Schiavone, *President of the Arab Italian Center for the Mediterranean - Sardegna*

VOLUME II:
PROTECTING PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: IDPs IN THE
CONTEXT OF THE REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CRISIS

FOREWORD

The human rights situation of IDPs has increasingly climbed up the ladder of decision-makers' agenda in view of the unprecedented acuteness of the combination of armed conflict, violence and climate change during the recent decades. It was only in 1998 that a separate international protection framework on IDPs, referred to as the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, became a reality. Before that, IDPs were merely considered as 'internal' or 'forgotten' refugees. The same year, the UN Interagency Standing Committee took the initiative to set-up and establish IDMC to address the insufficient and *ad hoc* assistance channelled to IDPs whose *ad hoc* nature is a mismatch with situations of prolonged and enduring displacement. Since then, the human rights and humanitarian situation of IDPs have been the centrepiece of debate in relation to the interplay between concepts of protection and of displacement in international human rights and refugee law.

The present publication entitled "*Protecting people on the move: Internally displaced persons in the context of the refugee and migrant crisis*" summarizes the panel proceedings of the 21 March 2018 panel debate that was organized by the Geneva Centre and IDMC on this theme. The first part of the publication offers a summary of the statements that were made by high-level panellists representing the Norwegian Refugee Council, IDMC, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to UN, Geneva, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and ADA University – established under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan – on the causes and the consequences of forced displacement of IDPs in Syria, Iraq and Azerbaijan.

During the panel deliberations, it was emphasised that the migrant and refugee crisis cannot afford without major peril to ignore the causes and consequences of forced internal displacement. A holistic solution to the unprecedented rise of people on the move must recognise the multicausality of displacement resulting from conflict, violence, climate change and other related factors. Today's IDPs could become tomorrow's refugees or migrants as causes of displacement often overlap for these types of people on the move. Ignoring the human rights situation of IDPs – it was remarked - could give rise to a new wave of people on the move across borders.

This was notably the case in Syria and in Libya where IDPs were often left with no other option than to leave their home societies and seek refuge and protection in other countries. Nonetheless, the example of Azerbaijan – a country where nearly 10% of the population were once IDPs – illustrates that once IDPs are put at the centre of decision-making processes, durable solutions to address their humanitarian and human rights situations yield positive results. Baku has implemented – in this connection - policies and programmes to enhance the social and economic status of IDPs. Measures have also been taken to put in place durable reintegration policies to integrate IDPs as equal citizens in the Azerbaijani society. They now benefit from legislative provisions allowing for equal access to adequate standard of living, employment and livelihood opportunities, social security, access to education, health services and participation in public and political life. The lessons learned from Azerbaijan offered the panellists and the audience important insights on the solutions required to address the long-term needs and priorities of IDPs.

In the second part of the publication, the Geneva Centre and IDMC has jointly conceptualized on the long-term challenges related to internal displacement. In this section, the solutions required to enhance the protection of IDPs have been assessed in light of the debates held during the formal consultations on the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Migration. The right time has therefore come to evaluate how the humanitarian and operational responses to IDPs can become more inclusive and efficient to address their long-term needs and priorities. The 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement likewise serves as an opportunity to discuss how the next 20 years are going to look like. Therefore, the purpose of the joint study is to guide decision-makers and human rights experts in their future endeavours to implement norms and standards on IDP protection in theory and in practice.

Lastly, the Geneva Centre will continue to remain an active voice in appealing to decision-makers to enhance the protection of people on the move. On 25 June 2018, the Geneva Centre organized a World Conference entitled “*Religions, Creeds and Value Systems: Joining Forces to Enhance Equal Citizenship Rights*” at UNOG under the Patronage of HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. During this major international conference - which included renowned religious and lay leaders from every region of the world – the human rights situation of migrants, refugees and IDPs was once again addressed by the Geneva Centre. During this debate, it was stressed that the promotion of equal and inclusive citizenship rights could contribute to the realization of peaceful, harmonious and tolerant societies in line with SDG 16 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The World Conference outcome publication will therefore serve as another opportunity for decision-makers to assess the required policy changes, at grassroots level, to advance the social and

economic status of IDPs in situations of protracted displacement.

By Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim
*Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights
Advancement and Global Dialogue*

19 December 2018

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE PANEL MEETING¹⁰⁰

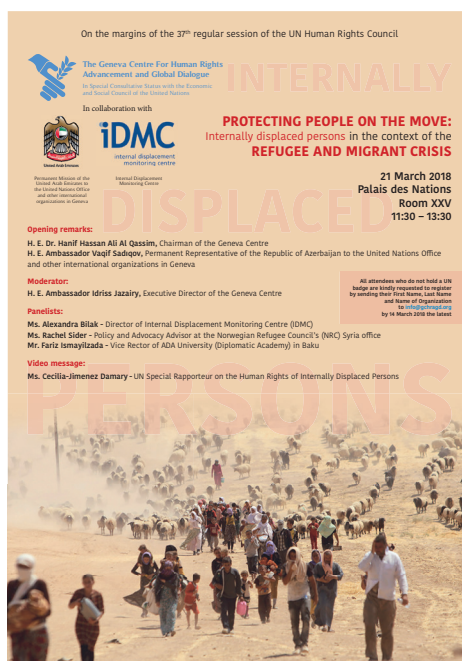
100. The present report provides a summary record drawn up by the Geneva Centre on the discussions which took place during the panel meeting at UNOG. It does not commit the authors of the remarks themselves whose statements, which were recorded, are reproduced in full in Annex I to the report

On 21 March 2018, the Geneva Centre organized a panel debate – as a side event to the 37th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council - in collaboration with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (hereinafter “IDMC”) entitled: “*Protecting people on the move: Internally displaced persons in the context of the refugee and migrant crisis.*” The debate was held at UNOG from 11:30 to 13:30 in room XXV.

The aim of this panel debate was to discuss the issue of internal displacement from a global perspective, offering insights into how it fits within broader policy debates on refugees and migration. The discussion then focused on the challenges in protecting and ensuring the safe return and reintegration of IDPs through several case studies, including Iraq and Syria. Azerbaijan provided practical insights on the lessons that can be learned from assisting and supporting IDPs in protracted conflict situations.

The 21 March symposium built on the outcomes identified in the conference organized by the Geneva Centre - in collaboration with IOM, UNHCR, the International Catholic Migration Commission, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Permanent Observer Mission of the Sovereign Order of Malta to UN Geneva and the European Centre for Peace and Development - on 14 December 2017 at Palais des Nations in Geneva on the theme of “*Migration and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region*”.

The concept note of the 14 December panel debate highlighted that the issue of forced displacement of IDPs was becoming a subject of growing concern and that a separate panel debate would be organized with IDMC to analyse the causes and the consequences of forced displacement of IDPs. In this connection, the 14 December 2017 and 21 March 2018 panel debates, provided a 360-degree assessment of the impact of the inflow of people on the move encompassing migrants, refugees and



IDPs in the context of the UN consultation phase during 2018 of the preparation for the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Migration. Both panel debates likewise contributed to the agenda of the Geneva Centre's World Conference entitled "*Religions, Creeds and Value Systems: Joining Forces to Enhance Equal Citizenship Rights*" that was held on 25 June 2018 at the United Nations Office in Geneva under the Patronage of **HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**.



The Executive Director of the Geneva Centre Ambassador Idriss Jazairy moderated the panel debate, which was attended by Ambassadors and other representatives from the Permanent Missions of Australia, Egypt, Norway, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, the Maldives, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United States (US), Iraq, Austria, Switzerland, Germany,

France, Armenia, Oman, Malta, Pakistan, Jordan and Nigeria. Representatives from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Sovereign Order of Malta were likewise present at the debate. In this connection, Ambassador Jazairy reminded the audience that the "*aim [of the meeting] is to encourage global dialogue on justice, tolerance and human solidarity as well as to promote cooperative relations between stakeholders involved*". He added that "*today's panel debate will serve as a model for future dialogue between decision-makers of Europe and the Middle East and NGOs to discuss and identify solutions to issues of mutual concern such as the forced displacement of IDPs*."

When introducing the keynote speakers of the panel debate, the Geneva Centre's Executive Director underlined that their expertise on the causes and consequences of internal displacement will contribute to a "*constructive and open dialogue about the solutions required to enhance the protection of IDPs in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis*."

Chairman of the Geneva Centre: How can forced displacement of IDPs in the 21st century be possible?

In his opening remarks, the **Geneva Centre's Chairman HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim** highlighted that internal displacement affects more than 40 million people worldwide. In the context of the Middle East and North Africa, Dr Al Qassim reminded the audience that there are more than six million IDPs in Syria, whereas in

neighbouring Iraq, this phenomenon affects more than three million IDPs caused by protracted civil war and armed conflicts. *“We must remind ourselves to pause as we consider the magnitude of human suffering embedded in these numbers,”* underlined Dr Al Qassim in his assessment of the scope and severity of the Syrian displacement crisis.



The Geneva Centre’s Chairman likewise highlighted other factors contributing to the protracted nature of forced internal displacement. He stated that *“climate change and environmental degradation likewise contribute to forced displacement”* as well as *“inflation, food shortages and water-stress.”* These further exacerbate the situation of IDPs in Syria and in Iraq. Although *“we*

are assaulted daily with these facts” – he said –, the global community is growing weary of the tragedy and their sufferings are forgotten. Dr Al Qassim asked the audience: *“how is this possible in the 21st century?”* He appealed to decision-makers worldwide to not turn a blind eye to forced displacement of IDPs in the Middle East as the *“situation will only deepen the problem by triggering new waves of people on the move.”*

In order to find adequate solutions to alleviate the plight of IDPs and to identify more efficient policy-responses to forced internal displacement, the Geneva Centre’s Chairman asserted that the focus on Azerbaijan – as a best-practice case study – *“will broaden the scope of solutions to promote and advance the human rights of IDPs and people on the move.”* The lessons learned from Azerbaijan could enable policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders to review the solutions required to enable IDPs to *“enjoy equal access to human rights and fundamental freedoms”* in protracted displacement situations. Dr Al Qassim concluded his statement highlighting that the Geneva Centre remains committed to address the human rights situation of people on the move encompassing migrants, refugees and IDPs. *“Societies that demonstrate respect for social justice are the ones most likely to be winners in the long run,”* the Geneva Centre’s Chairman concluded.

Ambassador Sadiqov: The magnitude and complexity of internal displacement does not galvanize international attention

The Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan **HE Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov** recalled that there are more IDPs than refugees worldwide. Despite

the fact that there are twice as many IDPs than refugees in the world, IDPs are not entitled to protection under the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, as addressing the causes and consequences of forced displacement of IDPs remains primarily a sovereign and an internal issue. Ambassador Sadiqov underlined that the system of the United Nations has been construed in such a way that displacement issues involving trans-border migrants and refugees receive higher priority.



In this connection, he said that: *“The magnitude and complexity of internal displacement does not unfortunately galvanize the international attention it actually deserves. However, the real facts that we are dealing with – the real situation in the world - shows that the major victims these days are the so-called IDPs.”* He appealed to policy makers and media outlets to

pay greater attention to the human rights situation of IDPs as *“without the right and timely protection for IDPs today”* – he noted – *“they will become refugees tomorrow.”* Ambassador Sadiqov likewise stated that the government of Azerbaijan upholds the view that much more is needed to elevate the issues facing IDPs within the UN system and to re-assess approaches to address the root-causes of internal displacement at all levels of decision-making.

Referring to the situation in his own country, the speaker said that the government of Azerbaijan has invested about USD six billion over the last 20 years to alleviate the suffering of IDPs residing in the country. To illustrate this with relevant examples, Ambassador Sadiqov highlighted that the government of Azerbaijan decreased the unemployment and poverty rates of IDPs from 49% to 5% and that IDPs have been provided with normal housing in settlements built and funded by the government.

He concluded his statement by reiterating the importance of the 21 March panel debate on IDPs. Ambassador Sadiqov said: *“That’s why I hope that this discussion today will help us in finding ways, or discussing the ways, to strengthen our joint efforts to protect and to assist IDPs and to keep this issue high on the national and the international agenda including the UN.”*

UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs: Forced displacement of IDPs are part of mixed migratory flows

In a special video message delivered to the co-organizers of the symposium, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)



Mrs Cecilia-Jimenez Damary, observed that the interplay between the migration and refugee crisis and that of IDPs are interwoven and related to one another. Following her recent country visit to Libya, Mrs Damary noted that there was an increase of Libyans in the mixed migratory situation of migrants and refugees arriving in Italy. The UN Special Rapporteur highlighted that

she had called upon the Government of National Accord of Libya *“to prevent internal displacement and to protect IDPs”* and to *“not contribute to the continuing migratory and refugee flows to Europe.”*

In Iraq, the military defeat of DAESH has resulted in the forced displacement of nearly one million people. Although some returns of IDPs are possible, *“many other IDPs from the conflict zones are facing protracted displacement conditions in remaining camps and host societies, sometimes for prolonged periods starting with their very initial displacement,”* stated the UN Special Rapporteur in her video statement. *“The situation of hundreds of thousands of IDPs in Iraq, which has actually caused a lot of the migration and refugee situation as well, remains a source of considerable concern,”* she added. In view of these observations, it was suggested that there were various overlapping factors, which could *“link internal displacement with migration and refugee flows.”*

To address the human rights concerns of IDPs, the UN Special Rapporteur called for the need to implement the principles enshrined in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. In this regard, a letter was sent to different stakeholders participating in the negotiations on the Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees during which she had appealed to decision- and policy-makers to address forced displacement of IDPs. *“In all our joint endeavours, let us remember though that IDPs are the rights-holders and that they should always participate in all decision-making processes and in the decisions that concern them themselves.”* she concluded in her video message.

Protracted internal displacement in Syria: a direct cause of the volatile security situation

Ms Rachel Sider - Policy and Advocacy Advisor at the Norwegian Refugee Council’s (NRC) Syria office - offered her compelling insights on the situation of IDPs in the war-torn country. She remarked that an estimated 2.9 million new displacements of Syrian IDPs were reported in 2017 and that 600,000 Syrians had already returned



to their home societies in an attempt to rebuild their communities. However, for every Syrian refugee or IDP who returned home in 2017, *“a further three were newly displaced”* she said. Protracted internal displacement was therefore a direct cause of the precarious and volatile security situation in Syria. Ms Sider added: *“In practice, many Syrian refugees and IDPs are increasingly*

returning to situations which are far from safe. In many instances, returnees have faced further displacement, or even worse, injury or death.”

In this connection, the NRC’s spokesperson underlined that the longer refugees and IDPs remain outside their home country or home areas, the lower the chances are of them returning to their home societies. Therefore, in order to address the protracted nature of internal displacement, it was recommended that humanitarian and development actors enhance their efforts to address the human rights situation of IDPs. It was also underlined that the *“scenario of positive return”* could only become a reality once the *“threat or danger that caused refugees or IDPs to leave their homes, has ceased to exist.”* Ms Sider also called upon the government of Syria to incorporate the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into their *“strategy for recovery, durable solutions and national legislation”* and to give access to NGO partner organisations to deliver the required humanitarian assistance to IDPs.

The **Executive Director of the Geneva Centre** complemented these observations stating that greater solidarity is expressed to the sufferings of IDPs that are given strong vocal expression than to those that are silent. IDPs dying from a *“silent death”* through sanctions – as witnessed in Syria – are in a no less cruel situation than those deaths associated *“with high levels of decibels.”* It is thus key to steer clear from the politicization of issues related to the human sufferings of IDPs, Ambassador Jazairy suggested in his reaction to Ms Sider’s presentation.

Azerbaijan’s role in addressing protracted internal displacement serves as a best-practice model

In his statement, **Mr Fariz Ismailzade**, the Vice Rector of ADA University (Diplomatic Academy) in Baku, explained how the government of Azerbaijan has been addressing the human rights situation of IDPs since the beginning of the 1990s. The country has experienced, he said, one of the highest per capita number of IDPs and refugees in the world. In the initial phase of the outbreak of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, one million, out of the country’s seven million people, were considered as either refugees or IDPs

during the beginning of the 1990s.



Mr Izmailzade indicated that his country has focussed on three areas; enhanced access to adequate housing facilities, to education and to employment. In this connection, the speaker stated that IDPs in Azerbaijan experienced, in the early stage, inadequate access to basic sanitary conditions as well as to basic food and water. As short-term solutions, the government of

Azerbaijan had to house IDPs in railway carriages, university dormitories, dugouts and tent camps. In this regard, Mr Izmailzade praised the efforts of the United Arab Emirates, IOM, UNHCR and USAID - to address the housing situation of IDPs in the country, to provide basic relief services and to offer humanitarian assistance to people in need. Once Azerbaijan struck oil, it became part of the country's national policy – as exemplified in the election campaign of President Ilham Aliyev – to offer IDPs access to quality and modern housing. The country's economic upswing had also enabled the government to exempt IDPs from paying for electricity, water and gas through State subsidies.

In addition to providing affordable housing options to IDPs, the speaker drew attention to the efforts made by the government to enhance access to education. He mentioned that Baku offers free access to education to IDPs at secondary school and university levels. This approach had enabled the government to eliminate *“the rise of extremist and radicalist ideas.”*

In conclusion, Mr Ismailzade stated: *“I think some of the policies and lessons from Azerbaijan are applicable - not only in the case of Middle Eastern countries in hotspots like Syria, Libya, Iraq but beyond.”*

Prolonged internal displacement affects local communities and national economies

In her statement, Ms Alexandra Bilak, the Director of IDMC, recalled that there are more IDPs than refugees worldwide and that *“the numbers speak for themselves.”* On an average – she said – there are 25 million people displaced every year. A new phenomenon – which has increased in force recently – is the number of internal displacements happening owing to climate change and environmental degradation. For this reason, internal displacement does not affect only countries witnessing armed conflict and wars, but also countries affected by drought, hazards, storms and floods.

“Internal displacement is widespread but its causes, patterns and impacts are also very deeply rooted and very diverse,” Ms Bilak underlined.



In view of this situation, the IDMC Director appealed to the global community to refocus their attention on IDPs. Leaving internal displacement *“unresolved is likely”* to result in spill-over effects across borders and to worsen social impact on societies. It was recommended to *“start measuring the longer-term cumulative impact of these effects of internal displacement”* so as to

identify long-term durable solutions to address *“the structural issues at the roots of displacement.”* In many cases – it was noted – *“today’s IDPs”* become *“tomorrow’s refugees and migrants”* owing to lack of livelihood opportunities for returning IDPs as witnessed in Iraq and Libya.

For these reasons, the IDMC Director called for a more *“joined up and coordinated data system”* to track IDPs in the entire displacement trajectory. Internal displacement should not only be treated as a humanitarian issue, but also as a political and a development issue. A suitable approach, therefore, would be to demonstrate that there are long-term consequences to forced internal displacement affecting local communities and national economies. Assessing the causes or mitigating the effects of forced internal displacement should be included as an embedded and integral part of *“national government development plans and poverty reduction strategies.”* National and international support must *“be mobilized”*, in this regard, to address the long-term adverse impact of forced displacement.

Following the presentation by IDMC’s Director, **Ambassador Jazairy** complemented the inputs made by suggesting that decision-makers identify a common framework to address the plight of IDPs. *“A constructive and open dialogue about the solutions required to enhance”* - he noted – *“the protection of IDPs in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis”* is of central importance. Donors should also enhance their efforts to address the situation of IDPs in low and middle-income countries to avoid that *“today’s IDPs become tomorrow’s refugees,”* the Geneva Centre’s Executive Director said. For her part, **Ms Sider**, Policy and Advocacy Advisor of the NRC’s Syria Office, also called for a strengthened role of governments in addressing the causes and consequences of forced displacement of IDPs. She said: *“Without government leadership to ensure respect for and protection of the displaced, it will be a much longer road towards distant durable solutions.”*

Interactive debate with the audience

Distinguishing between different types of people on the move



Following the keynote speakers' statements, the moderator of the panel debate opened the floor for an interactive debate session with the audience. The European Public Law Organization's Head of Delegation and Permanent Observer in Geneva **Ambassador George Papadatos** asked the panellists to provide their inputs on the differentiating factors between IDPs and

refugees. **IDMC's Director** remarked that the critical element to distinguish between an IDP and a refugee, is the crossing of an international border. In relation to IDPs, it is the responsibility of national governments to address the plight of its citizens who are internally displaced within the borders of the country: in the case of refugees, international protection mechanisms are in place to address their situations. Ambassador Sadiqov added his voice to the debate stating that there are three types of displaced people – IDPs, refugees and economic migrants – in Azerbaijan. Legislation is in place to deal with the human rights situation of IDPs and refugees. However, the arrival of economic migrants to Azerbaijan is a new phenomenon for the country, Ambassador Sadiqov said.

A peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is crucial to ensure the safe and peaceful return of IDPs



During the interactive debate, the Permanent Mission of Armenia informed the audience that Yerevan attaches great importance to addressing the human rights situation of IDPs. In her statement, the speaker reiterated the importance of identifying a peaceful solution to the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh with Azerbaijan so as to address prolonged internal

displacement and to identify durable solutions to the human rights situations of IDPs. These elements – the speaker said - are consistent with the efforts carried out by the OSCE Minsk Group to mediate a peaceful solution between Yerevan and Baku for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The UAE has emerged as an active donor to address the human rights situation of IDPs



The UAE highlighted that the country had emerged as an active donor in providing assistance to communities worldwide affected by conflict, natural disasters and poverty. It was stated that the UAE is actively involved in facing the complexity of increasing humanitarian crises all over the world and had become, under the leadership of its President, His Highness Sheikh

Khalifa bin Zayed, a major donor country.

The country is now ranked – it was noted - among the top-20 humanitarian aid donor countries in the world. The UAE is strongly committed to pursuing its humanitarian relief and development assistance programmes for IDPs in many countries, which are conducted either directly by the government and its affiliated organizations or through the United Nations and other concerned international organizations. To illustrate this role with examples, the speaker stated that programs are in place in countries such as Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, as well as in Sahel countries, to address the plight of displaced people.

In conclusion, the speaker called for conflict prevention and early warning systems, increased development investment in countries of origin and a more nuanced understanding of why people cross borders. *“By understanding and addressing causes and drivers of internal displacement, we will be able to tackle the global refugee and IDPs crisis,”* the representative of the UAE Permanent Mission to UN Geneva concluded.

Non-State actors can play a positive role in addressing the adverse impact of internal displacement



In her statement, **Geneva Call’s Thematic Legal Adviser Ms Carla Ruta** touched upon the aspect of the involvement of non-State actors - who are parties to an armed conflict – in addressing protracted cases of internal displacement. The speaker suggested that it is crucial to engage in direct

humanitarian dialogue with armed non-State actors to ensure better respect for international humanitarian law and to incentivize them not to play a negative role during the displacement cycle. For instance, Geneva Call's representative said that non-State actors could facilitate access of humanitarian actors to displaced people and treat them humanely. They could also facilitate – she noted – the voluntary and safe return of displaced populations. In conclusion, it was suggested that States allow humanitarian actors to engage in humanitarian dialogue with armed non-State actors.

In reaction to this statement, the **moderator of the panel debate, Ambassador Idriss Jazairy**, echoed the remarks made by the speaker re-iterating the importance of involving affected parties in identifying durable solutions to address the human rights situation of IDPs.

Displacement related to violence and climate change: Where do we draw the line?



The Global Migration Policy Associates speaker requested the panelists to clarify whether distinctions are made in providing protection and assistance between different types of displaced people, according to whether they are related to climate change or to violence. In addition, the speaker requested the panellists to offer their viewpoints on the type of

legal protection that should be contemplated for displaced people.

In reaction to this contribution, **Ambassador Jazairy** remarked that it is difficult to identify the specific cause of a particular situation involving internal displacement as there is a whole series of causes contributing to this situation. In the case of Syria – he said – armed conflict is one major cause. He stated that one should not neglect the adverse impact of unilateral coercive measures on the Syrian economy and on its middle class – affecting income-generating activities – and the numerous cases of drought that have affected Damascus in the recent years.

Mr Izmailzade added his voice to the debate stating that violence-related displacement is often given priority over environmental related displacement, as it is difficult to anticipate and to measure the long-term adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation. In addition, short-term solutions can also be applied to IDPs affected by climate change as they can be relocated to other parts of a country,

which are less prone to climate change and environmental degradation. In addition, Mr Izmailzade stated that – in the case of Azerbaijan - environmentally affected IDPs are much lower in numbers than violence-related IDPs.

IDMC's Director contributed to this debate stating that the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement consider both elements – violence and environmental related – as causes of internal displacement. As such, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement apply a protection framework for displaced people affected by these causes, she said in her reaction to the questions put forward by the representative of the Global Migration Policy Associates.

Concluding remarks from the Geneva Centre's Chairman and Executive Director



The **Chairman of the Geneva Centre** thanked the distinguished panellists for their participation and insightful presentations. Dr Al Qassim praised the efforts of Azerbaijan to address the human rights situation of IDPs in the country. He deplored the attempts by violent extremist groups – in Libya, Syria and Nigeria – to stage and carry out systematic

attacks against IDPs in temporary camps. In conclusion, Dr Al Qassim reiterated the importance of addressing causes and drivers of internal displacement so as to address the migrant and refugee crisis as well as situations of internal displacement worldwide.

Following the Chairman's concluding remarks, the **moderator of the panel debate** concluded the panel debate and reiterated the importance of facilitating the exchange of views between decision-makers of the Global North and the Global South to address issues of mutual concern. "*Building bridges, finding common language and joining forces*" is key – Ambassador Jazairy said – to identifying mutual win-win solutions on issues of broader interest. He concluded his statement by thanking countries from WEOG (Western European and Others Group) for their participation, reiterating the Centre's ambition to identify and to address themes of mutual and broader interest to developed and developing countries.

DRAWING LESSONS FROM THE PANEL MEETING

SYNOPSIS

The purpose of this study is to assess the causes and consequences of internal displacement in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis. It demonstrates that the push and pull factors of forced displacement of IDPs in the Arab region exacerbate migrant and refugee inflows to Europe. Although all people on the move share somewhat the same plight, different remedies are applied to address long-term humanitarian needs of IDPs. This is primarily related to political sensitivities as well as legal and institutional constraints in providing an adequate protection and assistance framework prior to, during and in the aftermath of internal displacement. Upon examination of the predicaments of IDPs in Syria, Iraq and Azerbaijan, the study demonstrates that prolonged internal displacement results in long-term adverse impact on societies from economic, social and political standpoints. Such impacts overlap at various levels and during different phases of internal displacement cycles. In conclusion, the paper suggests that the long-term solution to enhance the protection of IDPs in conflict- and disaster-settings rests on the ability of stakeholders to develop efficient policies to prevent and reduce internal displacement, to consider the latter as an issue in its own right rather than as a sub-issue of refugee protection and to address its political sensitivities of the “*sovereignty as a responsibility*” argument.

INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that there are more than 65 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide. The need for humanitarian assistance to refugees and IDPs has reached levels never witnessed in the past. A multitude of factors contribute to the exacerbation of this phenomenon. Violence, armed conflict, social unrest, persecution and instability trigger involuntary population movements. Climate change and environmental degradation are likewise major drivers of forced displacement. In addition, famines and food crises also force people to move to seek better livelihood options. In many instances, forcibly displaced people decide to cross an international border so as to seek refuge and protection in a neighbouring or in a more distant country. In international law, they are then referred to as refugees. According to UNHCR, they number 25.4 million people. International legal frameworks, such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, provide rights and obligations of duty-bearers and duty-holders to ensure that international standards on refugees’ protection are respected, upheld and safeguarded. In other words, they constitute people on the move with protected status.

However, amid crisis and conflict, millions of destitute and forcibly displaced people decide to stay in their home societies as they are often not in a position to cross an international border to seek safety and protection. This group of forcibly displaced people are referred to as IDPs. Paragraph 2 of the 1998 The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement¹⁰¹ defines IDPs as: “*persons or group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situation of generalized violence, violation of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed internationally recognized State border.*”

Unlike refugees, IDPs remain displaced in their own countries. Governments bear the primary responsibility for providing refuge and protection to IDPs. The principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, enshrined in international law¹⁰², grant national governments the right to take all necessary measures to guarantee the right of their own citizens without external interference. However, in situations of armed conflict and violence, governments often fail to carry out their obligations towards IDPs owing to the collapse of State power, to instability or to weak governance. Governments can also be the cause of displacement themselves as witnessed in Myanmar with the expulsion of the Rohingya minority in the State of Rakhine. In addition, there is no international legal convention for addressing internal displacement. There is likewise no UN agency to deal with forced displacement of IDPs. In the case of refugees and migrants, UNHCR and IOM respectively are the two leading UN agencies that address matters relating to these groups of people on the move. IDPs outnumber refugees. They constitute the most vulnerable segment of people on the move.

I: INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Forced displacement of IDPs is becoming an issue of great concern. The total global number of IDPs has been roughly twice that of refugees in recent years. The gap between estimates for the two groups globally has been growing over the last 20 years. In its 2018 Global Report on Internal Displacement, IDMC reported that approximately 40 million people were living in internal displacement across 143 countries and territories as of the end of 2017¹⁰³. In the same year, **30.6 million new cases of internal displacement**¹⁰⁴ were reported that combined two categories of

101. UN Economic and Social Council, “*Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*,” 11 February 1998. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G98/104/93/PDF/G9810493.pdf?OpenElement>

102. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the UN Charter: “*All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.*”

103. Ibid

104. IDMC, “Global Report on Internal Displacement 2018,” 16 May 2018. Accessed 28 September 2018 <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2018/>

internal displacement. The **first category** concerns conflict-related IDPs and affects **11.8 million people**¹⁰⁵. The most conflict-prone countries in the world are: Syria (2.9 million), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2.2 million), Iraq (1.4 million), South Sudan (857,000), Ethiopia (725,000), the Philippines (645,000), the Central African Republic (539,000), Afghanistan (474,000), Somalia (388,000) and El Salvador (296,000). These countries make up the bulk of the number of IDPs worldwide¹⁰⁶. Out of this number, it is worth noting that nearly 1/3 of internal displacement associated with conflict and violence are from the Middle East region¹⁰⁷. The reason for this can be ascribed to the Syrian civil war that has now entered its seventh year. In addition, the surge of inter-sectarian violence and extremist violence in Iraq has been on the rise in recent years. Without a political solution to these conflicts and a global platform to address violent extremist groups, the Middle East will continue to remain a hotspot for internal displacement.

The second category of internal displacement concerns natural disasters and environmental hazards. **In 2017, IDMC reported 18.8 million new cases of internal displacement** of this category.¹⁰⁸ The following countries were the most affected: the People's Republic of China (4.5 million), the Philippines (2.5 million), Cuba (1.7 million), US (1.7 million), India (1.3 million), Bangladesh (946,000), Somalia (899,000), Viet Nam (633,000), Ethiopia (434,000) and Nepal (384,000).¹⁰⁹ Inevitably, internal displacement of people related to natural hazards, climate change and environmental degradation has become a major cause of concern worldwide. The number of disaster-related displacement exceeds likewise the number of conflict-related displacement. The adverse impact of climate change predominantly affects developing countries although the US and the People's Republic of China have likewise witnessed an increase in natural disasters affecting millions of people. On 21 August 2017, the renowned global news agency Inter Press Service published an article entitled "*Climate Migrants Might Reach One Billion by 2050*"¹¹⁰." In this article, it predicted by referring to a study carried out by the Institute for Environment and Human Security of the United Nations University that the scope and depth of climate change have the potential to affect the livelihood options of millions of people in every region of the world. Environmental degradation and climate change will therefore continue to push millions of peoples from their homes and cause more

105. Ibid

106. Ibid

107. Ibid

108. Ibid

109. Ibid

110. Inter Press Service, "*Climate Migrants Might Reach One Billion by 2050*," 21 August 2017. Accessed 19 April 2018 <http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/08/climate-migrants-might-reach-one-billion-by-2050/>

displacement in the coming years. This issue is a reminder that migration is not an exogenous variable but that it is one that is influenced by policies of destination countries. If the latter do not face up to their responsibilities, the Northward trek of people from the Global South will thus exceed one billion by 2050.

II: THE 1998 GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT, THE BLUEPRINT FOR ADDRESSING INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

In 1993, the Commission of Human Rights requested the former representative of the UN Secretary-General on IDPs, Mr Francis M Deng (from The Sudan), to prepare a study on international legal standards for the protection of IDPs. This request was made in the context of the post-Cold war era characterized by the fragmentation of multinational States - affecting the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia - which led to the outburst of national, religious and ethnic conflicts in the early 1990s. It resulted in the forced expulsion of a large number of people as witnessed in Azerbaijan, Russia, Georgia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Moldova. In 1995, Mr Deng published his first volume assessing existing international legal framework and legal norms regarding the protection of IDPs and forced internal displacement. In this report, he concluded¹¹¹, *inter alia*, that:

“In the rare instance where a genuine emergency exists that does not reach the level of an armed conflict, internally displaced persons may be left without legal protection because a State may derogate from certain human rights obligations that are key to life-essential protection.”

In the second volume of 11 February 1998 entitled “*Compilation and analysis of legal norms, part II: Legal aspects relating to the protection against arbitrary displacement*,” Mr Deng observed¹¹²:

“It is necessary to define explicitly what is at present inherent in international law - a right to be protected against arbitrary displacement. In particular, this should specify the impermissible grounds and conditions of displacement, and the minimum procedural guarantees that should be complied with should displacement occur.”

Further to the findings of the reports of Mr Deng, the Commission of Human Rights and the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 1996/52 on IDPs. In operative

111. UN Economic and Social Council 1995. “Further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the question of the programme and methods of work of the Commission: Human rights, mass exoduses and displaced persons.” Page 104. Accessed 28 October 2018 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G95/146/89/PDF/G9514689.pdf?OpenElement>

112. UN Economic and Social Council, “Compilation and analysis of legal norms, part II: Legal aspects relating to the protection against arbitrary displacement.” Page 21. 1998. Accessed 28 October 2018 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G98/104/87/PDF/G9810487.pdf?OpenElement>

paragraph 9¹¹³ of the said resolution, the UN called for the development of “*an appropriate framework*” for the protection of IDPs. This task was consequently carried out by Mr Deng and the prominent Swiss lawyer and humanitarian expert Mr Walter Kälin. It subsequently resulted in the formulation of the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (hereinafter *The 1998 Guiding Principles*) which were presented to the UN Commission on Human Rights the same year. In short, the 1998 Guiding Principles stipulate a comprehensive framework for the protection and the enjoyment of basic human rights and principles in line with existing human rights, humanitarian and refugee law. The 30 principles of the 1998 Guiding Principles on IDPs are thus the blueprint for guaranteeing the protection of IDPs in all phases of “*displacement as well as during return or resettlement and reintegration*”¹¹⁴.

As the 1998 Guiding Principles are non-binding and constitute as such soft law, efforts have been undertaken by States and inter-governmental organizations to incorporate relevant provisions in national legislation as well as in regional policies concerning internal displacement. For instance, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States¹¹⁵, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe¹¹⁶, the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions¹¹⁷, the UN’s Inter-Agency Standing Committee¹¹⁸, the Council of Europe¹¹⁹ and the African Union¹²⁰ have either endorsed the 1998 Guiding Principles

113. UN Commission on Human Rights, “Internally displaced persons. Commission on Human Rights resolution 1996/52.” Page 3. Accessed 28 October 2018 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3dda4fb04.html>

114. UN Economic and Social Council, “1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,” 11 February 1998. Accessed on 28 September 2018 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G98/104/93/PDF/G9810493.pdf?OpenElement>

115. OAS, “*Declarations and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly*,” 5-7 June 2011. Accessed 25 October 2018 www.oas.org/consejo/sp/ag/documentos/ag05445e04.doc

116. OSCE, “*Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/03 on tolerance and non-discrimination*,” 2 December 2003. Accessed 25 October 2018 <https://www.osce.org/mc/19382>

117. Asia Pacific Human Rights Information Centre, “*The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions: 10th Annual Meeting*,” September 2005. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section2/2005/09/the-asia-pacific-forum-of-national-human-rights-institutions-10th-annual-meeting.html>

118. UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, “*IASC Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters*,” January 2011. Accessed 28 September 2018 https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IDPersons/OperationalGuidelines_IDP.pdf

119. Council of Europe, “*Europe’s duty to internally displaced persons*,” 29 May 2018. Accessed 25 October 2018 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/europe-s-duty-to-internally-displaced-persons?inheritRedirect=true>

120. African Union, “*Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region*,” 14-15 December 2006. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://www3.nd.edu/~ggoertz/rei/rei245/rei245.02t1.pdf>; African Union, “*African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displacement Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention)*,” 23 October 2009. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-per->

or encouraged member States to adopt relevant national legislation and/or policies in compliance with international standards on IDP protection and internal displacement. In this connection, the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, commonly referred to as the 2009 Kampala Convention¹²¹, establishes a “*legal framework for preventing internal displacement, and protecting and assisting internally displaced persons in Africa.*” The enactment of relevant legislation and rules to address the human rights situation of IDPs illustrates the fact that States and inter-governmental organizations remain committed to taking relevant measures to address the root-causes of forced internal displacement.

In addition to existing legal frameworks, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the UN and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals¹²² (hereinafter *SDGs*) recognises the nexus between sustainable development and internal displacement. In this context, several SDG goals are key to identify durable solutions to address the adverse human rights situation of IDPs. Although these indicators do not specifically refer to internal displacement, they relate to the many challenges IDPs face in conflict- and disaster-settings such as: i) SDG 1: No poverty; ii) SDG 2: Zero hunger; iii) SDG 3: Good health and well-being; iv) SDG 4: Quality education; v) SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation; vi) SDG 10: Reduced inequalities; vii) SDG 13: Climate action; viii) SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and; ix) Partnership for the implementation of these goals.

III: RESPONSIBLE SOVEREIGNTY IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

The protection of human rights remains a key guiding principle for the UN and its 193 member States. It is referred to in the UN Charter where one of its main purpose is to promote and advance “*human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.*”¹²³ The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹²⁴ stipulates that signatories must commit “*their faith in fundamental human rights.*” It is generally understood that a sovereign State has the primary

[sons-africa](#)

121. African Union, “African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa,” October 23 2009. Page 4. Accessed 28 September 2018 https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7796-treaty-0039_-_kampala_convention_african_union_convention_for_the_protection_and_assistance_of_internally_displaced_persons_in_africa_e.pdf

122. UN, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” 2015. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

123. UN, “Charter of the United Nations,” 24 October 1945. Accessed 28 October 2018 <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>

124. UN, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” 10 December 1948. Accessed 28 October 2018 <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

responsibility to protect its own citizens and all persons under its jurisdiction. According to the British scholar, Professor Martin Dixon¹²⁵, there are three principles related to jurisdiction. Firstly, the jurisdiction to prescribe which means that a State cannot exercise jurisdiction in another State.¹²⁶ Secondly, that a State has the right to enforce that jurisdiction through operation of organs like police and judiciary.¹²⁷ Finally, that the jurisdiction of a State is absolute and complete.¹²⁸ This illustrates that every matter within a State is to be enforced by that State and not by other States. The Westphalian principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty are derived from this perception and laid down for external application in, *inter alia*, article 2, paragraph 4 of the UN Charter and in UN General Assembly Resolutions 2625¹²⁹ and 3314¹³⁰. These principles contribute to international stability and ensure that borders are defined and that States can exercise their power externally and internally *vis-à-vis* other actors without external interference.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the protection of human rights evolved to become a moral barometer and a global ideal for many States in their endeavours and aspirations to promote and advance human rights. However, in some instances, States arrogate to themselves a right to engage in the use of force – which is incompatible with for instance articles 2, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the UN Charter – to intervene and to respond to human rights violations. The only exception to this *jus cogens* prohibition is article 51 of the UN Charter in cases of self-defence, and then only temporarily, until the Security Council becomes seized of the matter as stipulated in article 12 of the UN Charter. It is also manifested that universalism of human rights can be achieved either by coercive pressure or voluntary agendas permitting sovereign States to support and endorse human rights norms. This view is problematic as States not adhering to this view may risk being disenfranchised and marginalized from international politics and this may hamper their further integration into globalization. In other words, “*the rights of people transcend frontiers and that their human rights should be protected*,” as highlighted¹³¹ by Mrs Roberta Cohen the former Co-Director of the Brookings Institution-Johns Hopkins SAIS Project on Internal Displacement. This dilemma was for instance put into practice in the armed conflicts of East Pakis-

125. Martin Dixon, “*Textbook on International Law*.” Pages 143-144. 2007. Sixth edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

126. Ibid

127. Ibid

128. Ibid

129. The 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

130. The 1974 Definition of Aggression, United Nations General Assembly Resolution.

131. Roberta Cohen, “*Sovereignty as Responsibility: The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. A public lecture by Roberta Cohen*.” December 5 2003. Page 2. Accessed 26 October <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/20031205.pdf>

tan (Bangladesh), Timor-Leste, Crimea, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Serbia, Kosovo and Crimea, to name but a few, that witnessed large-scale displacement of IDPs and military interventions from external parties.

When applied in the context of internal displacement, the human rights protection of IDPs thus remains the internal and domestic matter of sovereign States. The non-binding nature of the 1998 Guiding Principles reflects many of the matters highlighted in the aforementioned paragraphs: matters related to sovereignty, domestic jurisdiction and internal affairs must be weighted up against the protection of human rights and basic fundamental freedoms. For instance, principle 25, paragraph 2, of the 1998 Guiding Principles stipulates¹³²:

“International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors have the right to offer their services in support of the internally displaced. Such an offer shall not be regarded as an unfriendly act or an interference in a State’s internal affairs and shall be considered in good faith. Consent thereto shall not be arbitrarily withheld, particularly when authorities concerned are unable or unwilling to provide the required humanitarian assistance.”

The subsequent paragraph¹³³ of the said principle likewise appeals to governments and decision-makers to *“grant and facilitate the free passage of humanitarian assistance and grant persons engaged in the provision of such assistance rapid and unimpeded access to the internally displaced.”*

In other words, this suggests that State sovereignty includes responsibility and accountability to its own citizens¹³⁴: in situations of dire human rights and humanitarian situations, it is the duty of governments to collaborate and facilitate the support of international relief and aid organizations so as to identify durable solutions to displacement. The real limits of the principles of national sovereignty and territorial integrity in conflict-prevention settings encompass the right and duty of governments to contribute to conflict prevention, to prevent displacement and to minimize its effects. As underlined during the panel debate, the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan

132. UN Economic and Social Council, “1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,” 11 February 1998. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G98/104/93/PDF/G9810493.pdf?OpenElement>

133. UN Economic and Social Council, “1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,” 11 February 1998. Accessed 28 September 2018 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G98/104/93/PDF/G9810493.pdf?OpenElement>

134. This concept was initially developed by Professor Amitai Etzioni in his journal article entitled “Sovereignty as Responsibility” <https://www2.gwu.edu/~ccps/etzioni/documents/A347a-Sovereignty-as-Responsibility-orbis.pdf>. The concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and remedial secession have likewise influenced contemporary discussions on the limitations and the scope of the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

benefitted from the support of different aid and relief organizations to accommodate the humanitarian needs of IDPs in the early stages of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia¹³⁵. In addition, NRC has been one of the very few humanitarian relief organizations that have provided aid and relief to destitute and impoverished IDPs across Syria. Much of their work relies on cooperation with local partners as well as with local authorities on the ground so as to ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered to those affected by the armed conflict¹³⁶.

IV: CASE-STUDY ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN CONFLICT- AND DISASTER-SETTINGS

In order to further explore the causes and consequences of forced displacement of IDPs in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis, the 21 March 2018 panel debate resorted to a case-study methodology to assess relevant cases of internal displacement. The present analysis examines the different push and pull factors contributing to the forced displacement of IDPs in Syria, Iraq and Azerbaijan and the solutions adopted by decision-makers to identify long-term solutions to address protracted cases of internal displacement.

V: IDPs IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

The situation in Syria remains a major humanitarian challenge. It is referred to by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs¹³⁷ as “*the largest protection crisis of our time*.” The former UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation of IDPs, Dr Chaloka Beyani¹³⁸ stated in his report of 5 April 2016 – following a country visit to Syria – that the situation of IDPs in the country is “*grave and potentially life threatening*.” It is worth noting that the number of IDPs in Syria has exceeded the number of refugees who have fled the country as a result of the protracted conflict. Violence and armed conflict have rendered many areas unsafe for IDPs to return to owing to the lack of safety and adequate infrastructure resulting, *inter alia*, from the imposition of unilateral coercive measures on the country. The majority of IDPs live in areas affected by violence and conflict which makes their protection challenging and

135. These essential points were highlighted by HE Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to UN Geneva and Mr Fariz Ismayilzade, Vice Rector of ADA University, in Azerbaijan.

136. These essential points were highlighted by Ms Rachel Sider in her presentation during the panel debate.

137. Relief Web, “Syria Crisis: 2018 Needs Overview and Funding Requirements [EN/AR],” 23 April 2018. Accessed 26 October 2018 <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syria-crisis-2018-needs-overview-and-funding-requirements-enar>

138. UN General Assembly, “Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons on his mission to the Syrian Arab Republic,” 05 April 2016. Page 5. Accessed 26 October 2018 <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/G1606854.pdf>

complicated as humanitarian relief organizations are unable to provide development aid to IDPs¹³⁹. Numerous IDPs also lived and continue to live in besieged areas and are thus prone to increased vulnerability. According to IDMC, more than 4.5 million Syrians lived once in hard-to-reach and besieged areas whereas approximately 1.4 million people lived previously in DAESH-controlled territories¹⁴⁰.

Although the military conflict in Syria is coming to an end, the situation of IDPs in the country remains problematic as different factions continue to control some expanses of territory. This is notably the case in the regions of Afrin and Idlib as well as in the territories controlled by the “*Democratic Federation of Northern Syria*.” In many instances, it has also been reported that IDPs are vulnerable to sexual assaults, physical attacks, forceful disappearances, torture and other forms of ill-treatment. As part of the survival strategy of IDPs, they tend to move primarily to urban centres and rural areas inhabited by their nearest kin-members. However, the accumulation of IDPs in urban centres has resulted in overpopulation and has given rise to a food crisis. According to IDMC’s latest report on humanitarian needs in Syria, more than one million IDPs live in collective shelters, which amount to internal refugee camps¹⁴¹. In the Idlib region in northern Syria, there are more than two million IDPs who live in hard-to-reach and besieged areas. The UN has warned that Idlib could become Syria’s next hotspot for internal displacement if the armed conflict is not settled on peaceful terms¹⁴². However, the September 2018 Turkish-Russian brokered agreement for Idlib has brought short-term stability to the region and the IDPs trapped in the opposition bastion. Despite this positive development, it remains to be seen whether a long-term peaceful solution can be found with regard to the demilitarization of the last opposition stronghold in northern Syria.

Other factors also contribute to the exacerbation of the adverse impact of internal displacement in Syria. In combination with the lack of access to resources, a severe economic crisis and international sanctions¹⁴³ imposed on Syria, a humanitarian disaster is threatening the well-being of millions of Syrians as exemplified by the

139. Hajzmanova, Ivana, “Syrians at the berm: surviving in nightmarish conditions and with an uncertain status.” 04 October 2017. Accessed 26 October 2018 <http://www.internal-displacement.org/library/expert-opinion/2017/syrians-at-the-berm-surviving-in-nightmarish-conditions-and-with-an-uncertain-status>

140. IDMC, “2017. Humanitarian needs overview.” Pages 6-7. December 2016. Accessed 26 October 2018 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_Syria_hno_161205.pdf

141. IDMC, “2017. Humanitarian needs overview.” Page 5. December 2016. Accessed 26 October 2018 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_Syria_hno_161205.pdf

142. Patrick Wintour, “UN warns Idlib could be next Syrian disaster zone in ‘marathon of pain’,” *The Guardian*, 25 April 2018. Accessed 26 October 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/25/top-un-officials-voice-fears-of-new-aleppo-in-syrias-idlib-province>

143. This key point was highlighted in his inaugural address during the opening ceremony of the panel debate

Geneva Centre's Executive Director Ambassador Idriss Jazairy in his statement during the debate. Against this background, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN estimates that hunger might affect “*more than half of the population*” as they are “*unable to meet their daily needs due to factors including heavily constrained humanitarian access*”¹⁴⁴. IDMC also estimates that more than 13 million people at one stage were in need of humanitarian assistance and that 2/3 of the population lived in extreme poverty¹⁴⁵. To add more fuel to the complexity of the situation regarding the forced displacement of people in Syria, climate change and environmental degradation have also contributed to aggravating the situation and are forcing people to hit the road. The research study “*Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought*” highlighted that the adverse impact of climate change and environmental degradation exacerbated the economic situation in the country, drove up food prices and resulted in the forced displacement of more than one million residents¹⁴⁶. In addition, children have also been adversely affected by the conflict in the country as nearly one million children are in need of humanitarian assistance¹⁴⁷.

As exemplified during the panel debate, the humanitarian community remains committed to addressing the needs of IDPs in Syria. In this regard, NRC works all across Syria responding to displacement and humanitarian needs that result from the ongoing armed conflict. Their work is mainly focused on addressing the humanitarian needs of IDPs who have been displaced as well as those who are seeking to return home after years in displacement. Much of their work relies on cooperation with local partners as well as with local authorities on the ground to ensure that they can access those in need and to provide the required assistance to those most affected by the conflict. This has included projects related to access to education, shelter and providing basic assistance to keep them on the path towards recovery¹⁴⁸. Other NRC projects related to offering basic access to water and sanitation and information, counselling and legal assistance have likewise benefitted the IDP population in Syria¹⁴⁹. This is telling evidence that alleviating the critical and immediate needs of

144. FAO, “*The Syrian Arab Republic*.” Accessed 26 October 2018 <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/countries/detail/en/c/161538/>

145. IDMC 2016. “*2017. Humanitarian needs overview*.” Page 5. December 2017. Accessed 26 October 2018 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_Syria_hno_161205.pdf

146. Welch, Craig, “Climate Change Helped Spark Syrian War, Study Says,” *National Geographic*. 02 March 2015. Accessed 26 October 2018 <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/03/150302-syria-war-climate-change-drought/>

147. IDMC, “*2017. Humanitarian needs overview*.” Page 6. December 2016. Accessed 26 October 2018 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_Syria_hno_161205.pdf

148. These points were highlighted by Ms Rachel Sider in her presentation to the audience during the panel debate.

149. Norwegian Refugee Council, “*NRC's Operations in Syria*.” October 2018. Accessed 01 Novem-

IDPs in conflict-settings requires sustained delivery of services and support at the community level in cooperation with involved actors.

VI: INTERNAL UPHEAVAL AND CIVIL STRIFE IN IRAQ – THE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION OF IDPs

In 2014, Iraq witnessed an internal upheaval and civil strife which led to the emergence of DAESH. At one time, DAESH-controlled territory in both Iraq and Syria was larger than the territory of the United Kingdom. The ideology of DAESH brought destruction and bereavement to Iraqi society. People and social segments who did not comply with DAESH's heinous and poisonous ideology were indiscriminately targeted by the terrorist group forcing hundreds of thousands of people to flee their home societies. IDMC estimates that more than 900,000 were displaced in Iraq during the course of 2017¹⁵⁰ owing to military clashes between the Iraqi Army, Kurdish Peshmerga forces and DAESH in the wake of Iraq's military offensive to retake and capture DAESH controlled territory in northern Iraq. One would assume that the military defeat of DAESH would unite the people of Iraq in rebuilding their society: nonetheless, the attempt of the Iraqi Kurds to secede from Baghdad has added new uncertainty.

Although the situation in the country remains fragile in the short-term, the military defeat of DAESH has brought new dynamics to the region. Iraq has entered into a new phase as the country prepares to rebuild a society that has been destroyed after more than 14 years of military conflict and decades of sanctions, both of which have adversely impacted the country's economic and social development. Iraq has a massive task ahead to provide the necessary conditions allowing for the safe return and reintegration of IDPs. In this context, IOM estimates that around 1.7 million people have returned to Iraq owing to the improved security situation in the country¹⁵¹. The return of IDPs has been facilitated either through the support of the Iraqi government or through the assistance of international organizations with a presence on the ground.

However, there are various obstacles hindering the return of IDPs to their places of origin. The sectarian upheavals have left Iraq's social fabric in tatters. People belonging to different ethnic and/or national minorities often experience reprisals and physical attacks when they return to their home societies. According to the study "*Access to durable solutions among IDPs in Iraq*" prepared by IOM and Georgetown University,

ber 2018 https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/fact-sheets/2018/october/syria/factsheet_syria_oct2018.pdf

150. IDMC, "Iraq." No date. Accessed 26 October 2018 <http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/iraq>

151. IOM, "Obstacles to return in retaken areas in Iraq." March 2017. Page 7. Accessed 26 October 2018 <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/specialreports/obstaclestoreturn06211701.pdf>

the return of IDPs tends to be “*with their own communities*”¹⁵² signifying that the ethnic and the sectarian division of Iraq is becoming a reality through the return and reintegration of IDPs.

Another factor that affects the willingness to return is the lack of access to employment, to housing and to other related livelihood options. Inevitably, the war in Iraq has adversely affected the economic prospects of this oil-rich and resource-blessed country, preventing it from realizing its potential. The unemployment rate among youth in the country remains high. The volatile security situation and the decision of investors to invest in other countries in the region deemed safer and more investment-friendly have had a major impact. The lack of economic development will make the country’s economic recovery more difficult and will further exacerbate poverty. The lack of livelihood options will thus adversely impede displaced persons from returning to their home societies as prospects for a better future will remain bleak.

Against this background, UN agencies such as IOM, UNHCR and UNOCHA continue to support the return and reintegration of IDPs throughout Iraq. Given that the Iraqis face socio-economic challenges following decades of violence and armed conflict, international organizations remain instrumental in offering Baghdad much-needed assistance helping to ensure the safe return of IDPs and enhancing livelihood options and durable solutions for the reintegration of people on the move. For instance, IOM has been promoting the “*creation of micro-or-small business, as well as the development of skills, through the Community Revitalization Programme*” to create conditions allowing for the dignified return and the reintegration of IDPs in host societies¹⁵³. Such programmes are becoming increasingly relevant as rebuilding war-torn societies requires decision-makers to look beyond the protection and return aspects of forced displacement. If there are no adequate livelihood options to support the return and reintegration of displaced people, the best option could be to migrate to another country that is safer and economically more prosperous.

In addition, the needs of IDPs are diverse and reintegration assistance must therefore aim to enable IDPs to re-establish themselves in their home societies. In order for the return to be successful and to increase the likelihood of being durable, it is paramount that IDPs are empowered to participate in social, cultural and economic activities. Failing that, IDPs returning to their home societies can become refugees owing to inadequate livelihood and living conditions. The efforts of international organizations are thus key to ensuring the rebuilding of societies and to enabling displaced persons

152. Georgetown University & IOM 2017. “*Access to durable solutions among IDPs in Iraq. Part one.*” Page 8. April. Accessed 26 October 2018 <file:///C:/Users/aaa/Downloads/Access%20to%20Durable%20Solutions%20Among%20IDPs%20in%20Iraq%202017.pdf>

153. IOM, “*Reintegration. Effective approaches.*” Page 28. 2015. Accessed 26 October 2018 https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/Reintegration-Position-Paper-final.pdf

to achieve their economic, social and cultural rights. In addition, the reintegration of IDPs – notably women – who have experienced physical attacks and sexual violence remains a key issue requiring the attention of decision-makers and involved parties¹⁵⁴. Post-traumatic stress disorder and depression have become major areas of concern for the population in the region. This will have long-term consequences for societies and generations to come.

VII: PROTRACTED INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN AZERBAIJAN: ADOPTING TO THE NEW REALITY

According to IDMC, approximately 600,000 people are considered as IDPs following the outbreak of the military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the early 90s in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh¹⁵⁵. Despite numerous attempts to find a peaceful solution to the dispute, the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh has turned out to be a “frozen conflict”. The military clashes in April 2016 between Baku and Yerevan illustrate the volatile and precarious situation in the contested region and suggests that similar incidents could flare up once again in the future.

Compared with the case studies of Iraq and Syria, the situation related to internal displacement in Azerbaijan concerns a perennial conflict and a protracted situation that has lasted for decades. The return and reintegration of IDPs in Azerbaijan have required decision-makers to identify sustainable policies that put IDPs at the centre of decision-making processes. The former UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, Dr Beyani, issued a report on 8 April 2015 regarding the situation on internal displacement in Azerbaijan. In this report, Dr Beyani stated that “*an effective humanitarian response to internal displacement in Azerbaijan*” is in place in terms of identifying durable reintegration policies to integrate IDPs as equal citizens in the Azerbaijani society.¹⁵⁶ It was noted, *inter alia*, that the government of Azerbaijan has taken numerous policy-measures to enhance the human rights of IDPs. The latter benefit from legislative provisions allowing for equal access to adequate standard of living, employment and livelihood opportunities, social security, access to education, health services and participation in public and political life.¹⁵⁷ In view of these observations, Dr Beyani commended the efforts of the Government of Azerbaijan

154. World Council of Churches, “*The protection needs of minorities from Iraq and Syria.*” Pages 24 - 25. November 2016.

155. IDMC, “*Azerbaijan: After more than 20 years, IDPs still urgently need policies to support full integration.*” 26 March 2014. Accessed 26 October 2018 <http://www.internal-displacement.org/europe-the-caucasus-and-central-asia/azerbaijan/2014/azerbaijan-after-more-than-20-years-idps-still-urgently-need-policies-to-support-full-integration/>

156. UN General Assembly, “*Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani.*” A/HRC/29/34/Add.1. Page 5. 8 April 2015. Accessed 29 October 2018 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/regularsessions/session29/pages/listreports.aspx>

157. Ibid, pages 7-14.

“to ensure that IDPs have equal access to all human rights. The Government has not only worked towards an improvement of IDP rights, especially in the areas of housing, education, livelihood and social security, but it has also raised awareness on displacement, collected some data, and trained officials on IDP rights. It has also adopted a number of laws to ensure increased protection of IDPs,” he said in his report.¹⁵⁸

Since then, the Government of Azerbaijan has continued to take measures to enhance the protection and assistance of IDPs despite the large-scale displacement pattern in the country. Decision-makers in Azerbaijan have taken adequate steps to identify sustainable return and reintegration policies that put IDPs at the centre of decision-making processes, in accordance with the provisions set forth in the 1998 Guiding Principles. In this connection, the government of Azerbaijan has developed a comprehensive repatriation program called the *“Great Return”* to enable IDPs to exercise their right to return to their homes voluntarily, in security and in dignity and to access their properties. As part of the *“Great Return”* program, the Government of Azerbaijan initiated the comprehensive rehabilitation process of the village of Jojug Marjanly in the Jabrail region of Azerbaijan to ensure the safe return and reintegration of IDPs¹⁵⁹. This village was fully reconstructed and welcomed the first wave of returnees in July 2017¹⁶⁰.

In recent years, a full legal framework has been established to address social problems of IDPs. The President of Azerbaijan has for instance signed 108 decrees and orders, the Cabinet of Ministers have adopted 379 decrees, whereas the Milli Majlis (National Parliament) adopted 34 laws to enhance the social and economic status of IDPs¹⁶¹. The government of Azerbaijan estimates that the living conditions of 53,000 families or 265,000 IDPs have thus been improved over the last 14 years¹⁶². With the funds allocated from the State Oil Fund and other sources, 97 modern settlements and multi-store residential complexes with a total area of 3.3 million square meters, with all required socio-technical infrastructure have been built for displaced people in more than 30 cities and regions of Azerbaijan during the period of 2001-2017¹⁶³. The efforts of the government of Azerbaijan to create a permanent solution and enhance

158. Ibid, page 17.

159. Government of Azerbaijan, *“Brief information on the activities undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the social protection and improvement of living conditions of internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan.”* Page 1. March 2017. PDF

160. Highlighted by Dr Izmailzade in his statement during the panel debate.

161. Government of Azerbaijan, *“Brief information on the activities undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the social protection and improvement of living conditions of internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan.”* Page 1. March 2017. PDF

162. Ibid

163. Ibid

the rights and social status of IDPs within the Azerbaijan community offer concrete evidence of the importance of government leadership to address the adverse impact of internal displacement.

VIII: ENHANCING IDP PROTECTION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1998 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The outcomes of the panel discussion illustrated the multi-causal relationship regarding the causes and consequences of forced internal displacement. Although the 1998 Guiding Principles have contributed to advancing the human rights situations of IDPs, the adoption of the guidelines was made in the post-Cold War era. 20 years down the line, one can conclude that the push and pull factors of internal displacement, and its causes and consequences, have witnessed a considerable shift. Forced displacement of IDPs – that received minimum attention in the 1990s – has become a global issue affecting every region of the world. No country, whether rich or poor, can claim to remain immune to internal and forced displacement. A perfect example is the migrant and refugee crisis. As highlighted by the Chairman of the Geneva Centre, today’s IDPs could become tomorrow’s refugees if prolonged cases of internal displacement remain unsettled. In many cases, internal displacement movements share the same causes as cross-border movements that overlap at various levels and during different cyclical displacement patterns. In the video message of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, Mrs Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, the latter highlighted that the push and pull factors of internal displacement have become intertwined and multi-casual in light of the situation the UN Special Rapporteur on IDPs experienced during her 25-31 January 2018 country-visit to Libya. The Director of IDMC Ms Alexandra Bilak likewise cautioned in her statement about the spill-over effects of internal displacement if adequate measures are not implemented to remedy the situation. In other words, if internal displacement is not resolved at the national level or the country level, it could lead to an inevitable situation where IDPs decide to cross a border and become either an international migrant, asylum-seeker or refugee.

What will the next 20 years of internal displacement look like, and what steps should be taken to enhance the protection of IDPs? On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the 1998 Guiding Principles, the Global Protection Cluster¹⁶⁴ adopted the “*Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018 -2020*.”¹⁶⁵ The plan of action appeals to decision-makers

164. Global Protection Cluster, “*20th Anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: A Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018-2020*,” page 1. 23 May 2018. Available 29 October http://globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/20180523-gp20-plan-of-action-final.pdf

165. In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GP20), the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, UNHCR, the GPC and OCHA has

and stakeholders to “engage IDPs in decision-making processes,” introduce national policies and frameworks addressing internal displacement, to strengthen data collection and to identify durable solutions to forced internal displacement. Many of these recommendations go hand-in-hand. Access to reliable data on protracted internal displacement is a key guiding factor for decision-makers in the preparation of national legislation and policies regarding IDPs. It is imperative that decision-makers and relief organizations understand the causes and consequences of internal displacement so as to identify durable solutions to address its root-causes. In many instances, and as witnessed in Syria, IDPs experience extreme poverty, lack of livelihood opportunities and inadequate access to basic services. Therefore, peacebuilding and reconciliation are key to develop a people-centred approach to address poverty, social injustice and to promote social, human and economic development. It would also contribute to enhancing the prospects of restoring peace and aiding conflict-affected societies to recover from the adverse impact of violence and conflict owing to the lack of human capital.

Other actors have likewise taken an active role appealing for action-oriented outcomes to enhance the long-term efficiency of the 1998 Guiding Principles and the protection of IDPs. In its commentary to the consultations held in the context of the Global Compact on Refugees, IDMC suggested that decision-makers and States continue “to integrate the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into national law and policy.”¹⁶⁶ IDMC likewise appealed to involved parties “to expand and coordinate the collection of interoperable data that covers the entire displacement continuum, from internal displacement to refuge abroad and repatriation/return.”¹⁶⁷ The latter echoes the provisions set forth in Resolution A/C.3/72/L.46 of the UN General Assembly adopted on 31 October 2017 entitled “Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons” which called for strengthening the collection of data on IDPs worldwide¹⁶⁸. This would enable involved parties to track IDPs in the entire displacement trajectory and to understand where they have come from and where are they going.

However, the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees have largely neglected IDPs in the adoption of a future framework on global human

jointly driven this multi-stakeholder Plan of Action, in consultation with various UN entities, INGOs, NGO consortia, ICRC, academia, member States and other stakeholders.

166. IDMC, “Global Compact on Refugees – Thematic discussions four on solutions.” Page 1. 14 November 2017. Available 29 October 2018 <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Global-Compact-on-Refugees-Intervention-14-Nov-2017.pdf>

167. Ibid

168. UN General Assembly, “Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons.” Page 10. 31 October 2017. Available 29 October https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/hum/revised-draft-resolution-protection-of-and-assistance-to-internally-dis-_.pdf

mobility. The issue of IDPs has likewise been excluded from the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted on 3 October 2016 by the UN. The need to enhance the protection and assistance of IDPs has thus not received the necessary political attention which is exemplified by the ignorance of the international community as to how to deal with internal displacement. The vision of reducing by half the number of IDPs worldwide – as put forward during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul – is therefore at stake¹⁶⁹.

One solution to initiate a long-term process to enhance the protection of IDPs and to address political sensitivities is for decision-makers to recognize the long-term adverse impact of internal displacement. Internal displacement must be recognised as an issue in its own right. The majority of displaced people in the world are IDPs and many of them do not have the option to cross an international border. In her statement, the Director of IDMC highlighted the importance of demonstrating to decision-makers that “*the cost of not doing anything*” would result in adverse long-term economic, social and political consequences for affected countries. The situation in Syria is a relevant example in this regard. The inability to address the adverse impact of the socio-economic situation of IDPs in the country has left the social fabric and economic pillars of the country in ruins. The imposition of unilateral economic coercive measures has exacerbated the socio-economic situation of the country, adversely affecting IDPs in particular. Therefore, there must be stronger political mobilization and more substantial investment, from a financial, development and peace-building perspective to address the long-term needs of IDPs in protracted conflict-situations. Although internal displacement remains a domestic issue *per se*, it must become embedded as an integral part of national government development plans and poverty reduction strategies as stipulated in the 31 October 2017 General Assembly resolution on IDPs¹⁷⁰.

In addition, the successful protection, reintegration and resettlement of IDPs must be revised so as to better adapt to the provisions set forth in the SDGs as well as to leave no one behind that remains its motto. A successful return and reintegration strategy of IDPs relies on an ability to enhance livelihood options, to implement people-centered development policies as well as to advance transitional justice and to promote peace. These elements must be addressed more concretely so as to guide decision-makers in their endeavors to enhance the relevance of the 1998 Guiding

169. World Humanitarian Summit, “*Executive summary*,” page 10. 27 November 2016. Available 29 October https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/asr/2017/Nov/No%20time%20to%20retreat%20Executive%20Summary_NEW_web_nov27.pdf

170. United Nations General Assembly, “*Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons*.” Page 5. 31 October 2017. Available 29 October <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/hum/revised-draft-resolution-protection-of-and-assistance-to-internally-dis...pdf>

Principles in addressing the causes and consequences of forced displacement of IDPs. In this connection, UN General Assembly Resolution¹⁷¹ A/C.3/72/L.46 of 31 October 2017 on IDPs highlights, *inter alia*, that the “*adverse effects of climate change as contributors to environmental degradation and extreme weather events*” must be recognised as a triggering factor to “*human displacement*.” These elements must be better integrated in the existing framework addressing internal displacement. However, the lack of a global consensus to address climate change – as witnessed in the Paris climate talks and in the adoption of the Paris Agreement – is yet a telling example that multilateralism is undergoing a test of confidence.

CONCLUSION

The question of forceful displacement of IDPs must be given additional political importance in the future. The migrant and refugee crisis has demonstrated that there is a direct linkage between internal displacement and migrant and refugee flows. The discourse regarding the migrant and refugee crisis cannot afford to ignore the human rights situation of IDPs. As highlighted in the panel debate, IDPs can potentially become refugees, migrants or asylum-seekers if internal displacement is allowed to linger. Internal displacement is often the precursor to extensive migratory and refugee flows. The situations in Syria, and in other countries facing large-scale displacement of IDPs such as Iraq and Libya, illustrate that the interplay between the forced displacement of refugees and of IDPs are interrelated and interwoven. Turning a blind eye to the situation of IDPs could result in a new wave of people hitting the road and crossing borders.

Although it is unlikely that the issue of internal displacement will be depoliticised, efforts to reduce and prevent the root-causes of forcible displacement of IDPs should be given political and institutional priority. The Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees consultations were timely opportunities to further explore the required policy solutions to address the causes and consequences of internal displacement. However, the forthcoming global framework for global human mobility will fall short of identifying durable solutions aimed at improving policy responses to internal displacement, as the latter has been left out. In addition, the decisions of 29 States, including the US, Hungary, Poland, Czechia, Latvia, Austria, Chile and Australia, to name but a few, to not sign the non-binding UN Global Migration Pact that was adopted as an outcome to the 10 - 11 December 2018 Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration held in Marrakesh is yet a telling testimony that multilateralism¹⁷² is undergoing a

¹⁷¹, Ibid

¹⁷². United Nations, “*Governments adopt global migration pact to help ‘prevent suffering and chaos,’*” 10 December 2018. Accessed 17 December 2018. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/pop->

test of confidence and is being overshadowed by political considerations. In this connection, the “*Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018 -2020*” initiated by the Global Protection Cluster is therefore a timely opportunity to propose relevant policy solutions to complement the provisions set forth in the Global Compacts to mitigate and eliminate the triggering factors of forced displacement in conflict and disaster prone settings. It will likewise offer novel contributions to outline recommendations and follow-up actions and mechanisms to make the 1998 Guiding Principles more relevant to contemporary challenges regarding internal displacement that may mutate into new waves of refugee flows.

In addition, the case-studies of Syria, Iraq and Azerbaijan demonstrated that a long-term solution to address internal displacement lies in the ability to nurture a political atmosphere conducive to peace and stability. However, this calls for a radical political change of approach in problem-solving in conflict-affected regions like the Middle East. It requires that military interventions, unilateral coercive measures and “*threats of destruction*” are phased out as “*solutions*” to settle political disputes. Peacebuilding and self-reliance must therefore remain integrated components of long-term solutions aspiring to address the root-causes of internal displacement. Countries that are confronted with the heaviest burden of IDPs are also those that have low or lower incomes and that have witnessed civil strife and internal turmoil. They are therefore least able to address this issue themselves. If peaceful conditions for return are not in place in affected countries, it is highly unlikely that returning displaced people would stay in their home societies lacking conditions for survival. As demonstrated during the debate regarding IDPs in Iraq, Syria and Libya, the lack of livelihood options and of income-generating activities could become a major push factor for recurring displacement.

To tackle these issues requires government leadership in terms of addressing the causes and consequences of forced displacement of IDPs. It is important that involved parties integrate internal displacement in development, disaster, climate change and poverty reduction strategies. Internal displacement should not merely be considered as a political issue. It must likewise be treated as an economic asset, developmental issue with broad societal repercussions affecting the long-term stability of affected societies. Governments must therefore cooperate with humanitarian actors and other relevant parties with a presence on the ground to ensure they can access those in need at grassroots level and provide the services that are most critical to those affected by conflict and armed violence. As stated by the Chairman of the Geneva Centre in his inaugural address at the 21 March panel debate:

“Societies that demonstrate respect for social justice are the ones most likely to be winners in the long run.”

ANNEX I
FULL STATEMENTS AND TALKING POINTS OF PANELLISTS

Moderator's remarks

Ambassador Idriss Jazairy

Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue

Excellencies, Distinguished Panellists, Honourable Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- ▶ It is my honour to serve as a moderator of today's panel debate entitled "*Protecting people on the move: Internally displaced persons in the context of the refugee and migrant crisis.*"
- ▶ The Geneva Centre very much appreciates the broad-based representation of Permanent Missions from the West and the Arab region to honour us today with their presence. Our aim is to encourage global dialogue on justice, tolerance and human solidarity as well as to promote cooperative relations between stakeholders involved. We hope today's panel debate will serve as a model for future dialogue between decision-makers of Europe and the Middle East and NGOs to discuss and identify solutions to issues of mutual concern such as the forced displacement of IDPs.
- ▶ Today's panel debate will be opened by the Chairman of the Geneva Centre **HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim**. We also have the privilege of having the presence of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan **HE Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov** who will enlighten us on Azerbaijan's successful experience to address the plight of IDPs.
- ▶ Following the opening remarks, the debate will benefit from the expert insights from renowned global spokespersons on IDPs.
 - ♦ Although not physically present with us today, the **UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons Ms Cecilia-Jimenez Damary** will deliver a video message to enlighten us about her efforts to improve the protection of IDPs worldwide.
 - ♦ After the UN Special Rapporteur's video message, our first speaker will be the **Policy and Advocacy Advisor at the Norwegian Refugee Council's Syria Office Ms Rachel Sider**. The Norwegian Refugee Council is one of highly valued humanitarian relief organizations which provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian population. We are most grateful for Ms Sider's readiness to be present with us today and to offer her practical insights regarding the situation of IDPs in Syria.
 - ♦ The second speaker to take the floor will be **Mr Fariz Ismayilzade, the Vice Rector of ADA University commonly known as the Diplomatic Academy**

of Azerbaijan. Mr Ismayilzade will offer us an insight of best practice as encapsulated in Azerbaijan's policies to enhance the human rights situation of IDPs.

- ◆ Our last keynote speaker will be the **Director of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Ms Alexandra Bilak**. IDMC is one of few organizations worldwide that is solely devoted to addressing the human rights situation of IDPs. Ms Bilak's insight on the efforts of IDMC to "*keep the issue and the plight of internally displaced people high on the global agenda*" is of central importance to today's debate.
- We are therefore fortunate to have the presence of high-level spokespersons on forced displacement of IDPs who will enrich today's debate with their expertise. I look forward to a constructive and open dialogue about the solutions required to enhance the protection of IDPs in the context of the migrant and refugee crisis.
- The presentation from the panellists will be followed by a Q & A session where we will open the floor to the audience.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Opening remarks

HE Dr Hanif Hassan Ali Al Qassim

Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue

Excellencies, Distinguished Panellists, Honourable Guests,

- ▶ Welcome to our panel debate addressing the issue of protecting internally displaced people in the context of the refugee and migrant crisis. And thank you for your interest and participation.
- ▶ Please allow me to also extend my appreciation to the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the UN, Geneva, and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre for joining forces with the Geneva Centre to organize today's panel debate. I would also like to express my gratitude to HE Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov and to the high-level panellists who have honoured us with their presence.
- ▶ Today's program follows the Geneva Centre's December 2017 panel debate, titled *"Migration and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region."*
- ▶ In this debate, we discussed the causes and consequences of cross-border movement of people forced by war-related insecurity and climate change in the MENA region, following which we generated a declaration signed by some twenty renowned NGOs, IGOs and academic institutions.
- ▶ The declaration, titled *"Mobility and human solidarity, a challenge and an opportunity for Europe and the MENA region"* is still open for signature and I invite civil society organizations who have not yet done so to join this expanding coalition. Copies of the Declaration are available in the room.
- ▶ The situation of IDPs is unfathomable even for those of us who are well versed in the statistics and human stories of tragedy that play out everyday.
- ▶ Internal displacement affects over 40 million people today. We must remind ourselves to pause as we consider the magnitude of human suffering embedded in that number.
- ▶ In Syria, there are more than 6 million and in neighbouring Iraq, over 3 million IDPs – totalling 10 million *"refugees within their own borders"* caused by protracted civil war.
- ▶ While violence-related displacement and sanctions have been the main triggering factor of forced displacement, climate change and environmental degradation likewise contribute to forced displacement.

- ▶ According to the research study, “*Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and the effects of the recent Syrian drought*,” inflation, food shortages and water-stress have exacerbated further the crisis in these two once stable, prosperous countries.
- ▶ We ask ourselves, how is this possible in the 21st century?
- ▶ Although we are assaulted daily with these facts, the global community is growing weary of the tragedy and the perception of the sufferings of up-rooted individuals is affected by compassion fatigue.
- ▶ We see serious consequences ahead. Turning a blind eye to the situation will only deepen the problem by triggering a new wave of people on the move.
- ▶ What if today’s 6 million IDPs in Syria suddenly become “*tomorrow’s refugees*” seeking refuge and protection in Europe? What will the response be and how will the effects be managed?
- ▶ We must continue to seek solutions. During today’s debate we turn our attention for the moment to Azerbaijan where IDPs resulting from protracted conflict were treated differently.
- ▶ The military conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh has lasted for more than 20 years resulting in forced displacement of some 600,000 Azeris. A difficult situation – and, yet, IDPs in Azerbaijan enjoy equal access to human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- ▶ The spotlight today on the situation of IDPs in Syria, Iraq and examining the case study of Azerbaijan will broaden the discussion on solutions to promote and advance the human rights of IDPs and people on the move.
- ▶ The Geneva Centre remains committed to addressing the human rights situation of people on the move encompassing migrants, refugees and IDPs. The refugee and migrant crisis should not continue to be met with the denial of social justice to people on the move in general. Societies that demonstrate respect for social justice are the ones most likely to be winners in the long run.
- ▶ On this note, I would like to emphasize that I am confident we can find solutions, and I wish you all fruitful and constructive deliberations.

Thank you.

Opening remarks

HE Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

First of all, let me start by expressing my appreciation to the co-organizers of this event, the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue, the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. My gratitude goes, of course, to the Distinguished Panellists who will provide us with their views on these very important issues.

Unfortunately, the topic related to IDPs is mostly linked to wars and to armed conflicts. The number of people who are internally displaced due to wars and armed conflict is twice as high as the number of people who have fled to other countries. Today we have more than 40 million IDPs. However, unlike refugees, IDPs are not entitled to protection under the United Nations Refugee Convention. Yet, they desperately need humanitarian assistance and protection. The United Nations system deals with displacement issues through specialized agencies like IOM and UNHCR. It mostly deals with refugees, and migrants of different categories [encompassing] economic [migrants], asylum-seekers and political refugees. However, the real facts that we are dealing with shows that the major victims these days are the so-called IDPs.

The magnitude and complexity of internal displacement do not unfortunately galvanize the international attention they deserve. You will never find any headlines on CNN, BBC or other media outlets dealing with IDPs. If something blows up somewhere, it will be covered. The crisis referring to refugees or to the migrant crisis in Europe is all very well covered. However, very few people know about the situation of IDPs around the world. At the same time, the protracted nature of the latter does not arouse media attention and the international community, *per se*, remains reluctant to recognise that internal displacement in many, if not most cases, is a source of subsequent onward journeys. If you walk one floor up in room XX – where we have the Human Rights Council – you will on very few occasions hear anything regarding IDPs, and most importantly, to the violated human rights of IDPs. I deliberately put aside the political side of the story, but the rights of these people are as important as the rights of the other groups in focus that the HRC is dealing with.

We have to be clear on one thing; without the right and timely protection for IDPs today they will become refugees tomorrow. The new trends that are developing today point to the mixed character of migration. If you look at the situations of armed conflict, even today in the Middle East, a person on the move starts normally as an IDP fleeing one part of the country - because of internal violence - to another part of the country. Then the violence reaches him there so that he/she and his/her family are

obliged to cross the border and thus become refugees. And then after the situation gets back to some degree of normalcy a person or a family takes a decision to look for a better life somewhere in Europe and then becomes a migrant. During one journey from one shore of the Mediterranean Sea to the other, the person actually becomes a client of IOM, of UNHCR but can never become a client of a UN entity dealing with IDPs *per se*.

That is why the alarming situations of internal displacement require renewed attention and rethinking of approaches to prevention addressing the root-causes as well promoting concerted action at all levels. My country continues to believe, that much more is needed to upgrade the issues facing IDPs within the UN system. It is important that the Human Rights Council, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and special rapporteurs focus more closely on the violated human rights of these people because their human rights have already been violated. We are not speaking about some theoretical issues that might or might not develop in the future. Their rights have already been violated. These specialized bodies should not neglect IDPs and start to be involved in the restoration of IDPs' human rights violated as a result of ongoing conflict.

This year also marks the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. This is now an opportunity to focus more on the issues of IDPs and to bring these issues back into the spotlight. We must ascertain that IDPs are not left behind. And here I would like to recognise the important role the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre has played since its establishment in 1998. The Centre does important work that the United Nations should have been doing in filling the knowledge gap about the global scale and patterns of internal displacement.

My country's own sensitivity to IDPs is understandable. I do not want to delve into the history and the root-cause of this situation; I will leave that to the Distinguished Panellist representing my country. I would simply like to say that the population of Azerbaijan is almost 10 million. Since 1992, we host the largest population of people on the move per capita in the world; about one million IDPs and refugees. At that time, Europe did not know what refugees/IDPs were. Now, the 500 million inhabitants of Europe are dealing with a flow of IDPs and refugees. I do not want to touch upon the political side of the story as this is a long standing issue. I would simply like to say that the government of Azerbaijan has invested about USD 6 billion in the last 20 years to alleviate sufferings of IDPs in the country. They have been protected by all necessary legislation in my country. These days you will not find any typical refugee camp the way it can be seen on CNN or BBC referring to similar situations in other countries. All IDPs have been provided with normal housing in settlements built and funded by the government. We managed to achieve a significant decrease in the unemployment and poverty rates [of IDPs] - from 49% to 5% -, which is an

important social element.

However, of course the political side of the story has never come to a conclusion because internally displaced persons normally want to go back to the place from where they were displaced. This is a separate story. It is an issue which is actually moving [forward] but with very modest results. That's why I hope that this discussion today will help us to find ways, or to discuss ways to strengthen our joint efforts to protect and assist IDPs and keep this issue high on the national and the international agenda, including at the UN. The initiative should start from Geneva; because by definition this is the human rights capital or centre. If it does not start from here, it will never start in any other place around the world.

Thank you so much Mr Chairman.

Video message

Mrs Cecilia Jimenez-Damary

UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons

Greetings from the Philippines,

It is my pleasure to join you in this symposium in Geneva entitled “*Protecting People on the Move: Internally Displaced Persons in the context of the Migrant and Refugee Crisis*” with particular focus on Syria, Iraq and Azerbaijan. I would like to thank the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue as well as the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates for having invited me to address you, even remotely.

We all know the situation of IDPs worldwide through the work that is being done by many organizations in the United Nations as well as by non-governmental organizations, like the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. We know that the protection of the human rights of IDPs is an essential matter. At the end of the day, it is the State that is primarily responsible for the respect and guarantee of those rights and to prevent those human rights violations that cause displacement, including arbitrary displacement, as well as those human rights violations that protract the situation of internal displacement. It is therefore very important for me to cite in this symposium the existence of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, of which you are aware and of which we are presently commemorating the 20th anniversary.

As an international human rights and international humanitarian lawyer, the Guiding Principles have always been for me a very convenient compilation of these international obligations. When I started out in the work to protect IDPs, there were no Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and in fact, no mention of what we now call IDPs - internal refugees. And this is why I still commend the UN for having endorsed these important principles and we need to commemorate and implement the Guiding Principles to this day.

In the context of the migrant and refugee crisis, the link to internal displacement for me is very clear. I have just returned from an official country mission in Libya upon the kind invitation of the Government of National Accord of Libya. And there – during my short country mission – I met with many IDPs and in those interviews – when I consulted them and heard their stories – their desperation and frustration made it very clear to me that they are considering crossing the Mediterranean Sea.

And in fact, recent arrivals in Italy, just about two weeks ago, have shown that there was an increase of Libyans in the mixed migratory situation of those arrivals among migrants and refugees. In my press conference concerning my country mission to Libya, I had in fact urged the Libyan government to comprehensively protect the

human rights of IDPs, [enhance] efforts to prevent internal displacement and to protect IDPs themselves as well as to resolve protracted international displacement situations. And in this case to not contribute to the continuing migratory and refugee flows to Europe.

This link between internal displacement and the migrant and refugee crisis situation, is very clear. In this context, I have recently issued – this week – an open letter to States and to different stakeholders, who are involved in the negotiations of the Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees. In this open letter, I have urged States and stakeholders to take note that the prevention of internal displacement - in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement - is essential in order to resolve the matter of migrants and refugees. Protection remains essential and inherent in all our endeavours on migration and refugees.

In addition to Libya, I would also like to cite the internal displacement situation in Iraq which you are [addressing] in this symposium. My predecessor, Mr Chaloka Beyani, had actually visited Iraq on a country mission before I assumed the office in late 2016. The situation of hundreds and thousands of IDPs in Iraq, which has actually caused a lot of the migration and refugee situation as well, remains a cause of considerable concern. The recent defeat of the Islamic State in Mosul came at a heavy price with nearly one million having to flee the city, which has largely been devastated surpassing the worst-case scenarios predicted by humanitarian responders.

Humanitarian partners are struggling to meet the needs of displaced persons. While some returns are definitively possible, many other IDPs from the conflict are facing protracted displacement conditions in remaining camps and host communities sometimes years after their very initial displacement. And of course, we know that many Iraqis, whether migrants and refugees remain heavily reliant on humanitarian assistance with few short-term prospects of return to their homes or of other durable solutions. Minority communities were particularly targeted and affected by the displacement including groups such as the Yazidis. Finding solutions for them – as minorities – must also be a high priority of the government where possible to ensure their return to their historic territories and homes in safety and in dignity and to rebuild devastated communities - as well as their trust rapidly - moving from humanitarian assistance to recovery. Developing approaches will be very critical to find durable solutions. The government must fulfil its commitments to IDPs while addressing their recovery will require the continuing support of the international donor community and the international humanitarian, human rights and development community.

In both of these country situations, which have been covered by my mandate, it is very clear to me that there are various factors, which could link internal displacement

with migration and refugee flows. The primary responsible entity for the protection of internally displaced persons remains the government that is, in this particular case, that of Libya as well as of Iraq. In my engagement with the government of Libya, for example, I have really urged them to give serious attention to this [situation which is also reflected] in my report to the Human Rights Council that will be presented in June 2018.

In all my dealings concerning the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, one thing is very clear to me; it is only with the concerted and comprehensive efforts of both the governments, civil society organizations, UN¹⁷³ agencies and international communities – that one can together resolve the situation. In Iraq, for example, the L3 level has just been lifted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee of which I am also a part of. Nevertheless, despite the lifting of the L3 level of the situation in Iraq, it is still primordial for the international community to lend their hands and efforts concerning rebuilding Iraq on the basis of their human rights.

In conclusion, in sharing these two country examples, it is still my hope that as an advocate for human rights of IDPs, we all move forward the spirit and letter of the principles that are in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, especially in this momentous here and now and beyond. In all our joint endeavours, let us remember though that IDPs are rights-holders and that they should always participate in all decision-making processes and in the decisions themselves that concern them.

With this, I would like to leave you with these few thoughts and experiences and I wish you good luck in the continuation of this symposium.

Thank you very much.

173. Note from the editor: IOM and UNHCR are the key UN entities that address migration and refugee issues

Panellist statement

Ms Rachel Sider

Policy and Advocacy Advisor at the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) Syria office

Since the outbreak of conflict in Syria in 2011, close to half the country's pre-war population has been displaced, with nearly 5.6 million refugees having sought safety abroad and a further 6.7 million people living in internal displacement as of December 2017.¹⁷⁴ IDMC recorded an estimated 2.9 million new displacements due to conflict and violence in 2017 alone; despite being declared a de-escalation area, bombs continue to fall on Syria's besieged city of Eastern Ghouta, in some of the fiercest fighting since the start of the war.¹⁷⁵

Over the course of the conflict, NRC has witnessed the following:

- Attacks on aid workers and facilities, obstruction of humanitarian access to the internally displaced;
- Restrictions on freedom of movement of the displaced within camps in the northeast;
- Looting, pillaging and illegal occupation and appropriation of homes of the displaced;
- The compounding impact of children kept out of school for prolonged periods;
- Barriers to women accessing property documentation and providing inheritance rights;
- Enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention of the displaced;
- Closure of international borders limiting options for IDPs to seek asylum elsewhere.

As Um Mahmoud recently told me, *"Not another year of being displaced from once house to another, and from one tent to another."*

While tens of thousands continue to be displaced overnight, the focus of the international community has begun to shift towards prospects for return, bolstered by the Syrian government's territorial gains. Millions of displaced people are eager to go home. Already in 2017, 66,000 Syrian refugees (primarily from Turkey and Jordan) and 655,000 IDPs are estimated to have returned - yet for every Syrian refugee or IDP

174. UNHCR, Syria Regional Refugee Response : Interagency Information Sharing Portal, last updated 1 March 2018, available at : <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>; IDMC Provisional estimates.

175. IDMC Provisional estimates; Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, 20 February 2018, available at <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=85219>

who returned home in 2017, a further three were newly displaced.¹⁷⁶

In general, most refugee returns were to areas controlled by the Democratic Union Party (PYD) with 44% returning to Kurdish controlled districts within Aleppo Governorate (Kobane and Afrin) and Al-Hasakah governorates. Around 113,000 of the returnees were later displaced again, underlining the fact that even in ‘safer’ parts of Syria, many returns are not durable.¹⁷⁷ Of the returnees, 95% were able to return to their own houses and around one third stated that the main reason for return was due to the improved economic situation in the location of origin, plus the need to protect assets,¹⁷⁸ suggesting a mix of both positive and negative ‘pull factors’ in effect.

A broader trend to emerge from tracking of returns is that the highest levels of returns tend to occur following a decisive end to fighting in a particular location, whether through one side winning and taking full control or through a negotiated ceasefire. Typically, the largest numbers of returns tend to occur in the weeks following an end to fighting, and then incremental numbers drop after one to two months, settling to a more gradual monthly rate.

It is also notable that *those areas most likely to receive returns are the same areas where IDPs in protracted displacement are most likely to congregate*. For example, Aleppo, Rural Damascus and Idlib, being three of the four governorates containing the highest numbers of returnees, also continue to host the highest numbers of IDPs. This factor is very relevant in considering the impact of returns on the competition and demand for access to public and humanitarian services, as well as the predictable strains this will place on intra-community dynamics and the need for interventions to be inclusive of all co-located population groups in need.

In practice, many Syrian refugees and IDPs are increasingly returning to situations which are far from safe. In many instances, returnees have faced further displacement, or even worse, injury or death. Sometimes they are returning because their situation in the place of internal displacement or the country of refuge has become worse than the situation in their place of origin. In other instances, decisions to return have been taken without sufficient or accurate information about the consequences of doing so. Others are coerced or forced to return home simply because they have nowhere else to go, or because conditions in the place of displacement have become too difficult or degrading - even though a forced return is a violation of fundamental rights, as well as of international and domestic laws.

176. NRC, Save the Children, Action Against Hunger, Care, Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee and Durable Solutions Platform, *Dangerous Ground: Syrian refugees face an uncertain future*, February 2018.

177. Humanitarian Needs Overview, OCHA, Dec.

178. NPM ‘Mobility Dynamic and Services Monitoring’ October 2017

The latest UNHCR poll shows that only 6 percent of Syrian refugees want to return to Syria in the near future and 8 percent say they will never return.¹⁷⁹ Some three-quarters are officially hesitant.¹⁸⁰ Syrian refugees continue to ‘vote with their feet’ and their feet are largely ‘staying put’ in countries of asylum. Much internal displacement is also protracted, yet at the same time the number of new displacements continue to far outstrip the number of returnees, (both IDP and refugee combined).

The global experience is that the longer refugees and IDPs remain outside their home country or home areas, the lower the chances of them returning. Yet despite years spent in displacement, most Syrian refugees and IDPs remain highly committed to returning to their original homes but they need certain pre-conditions to be in place; the most important ones being an end to conflict, the restoration of security, and credible assurances of fair treatment and protection from ‘victor’s justice’, including persecution and discrimination. These preconditions are currently far from being met.¹⁸¹

Nonetheless, for their own reasons, regional host and donor countries and the Government of Syria itself, have generated impetus and pressure for returns. As this agenda continues to ‘gather steam’, so too does the prospect and risk that many more of the 11 million Syrians in exile or internal displacement will be catapulted into a whole new realm of suffering, despite having already been so damaged by both the effects of conflict and displacement.

In Syria, sustained efforts from humanitarian and development actors will be needed in order to work towards meeting these benchmarks. As made painfully apparent by the ongoing bombardment of Eastern Ghouta and other areas, the country remains far from safe. Sustained military activity and the presence of explosive remnants of war put the physical safety of those who return at very real risk. Alongside these prevalent threats, widespread destruction of housing means that many IDPs will be unable to return to their former homes, finding themselves in continued displacement. Research conducted among IDPs in Southern Syria found that almost 50% of respondents’ previous homes were either destroyed or damaged beyond repair.¹⁸² Meanwhile,

179. See ‘Not Without Dignity: Views of Syrian Refugees in Displacement in Lebanon on Displacement, Conditions of Return and Coexistence, ICTJ, September 2017, <https://www.ictj.org/publication/syria-refugees-lebanon-displacement-return-coexistence>.

180. ‘A Half Million Syrian Returnees? A Look Behind the Numbers’. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/a-half-million-syrian-returnees-a-look-behind-the-numbers>.

181. Common preconditions for return include: safety and security; shelter, livelihoods, and the physical reconstruction of homes and infrastructure; compensation or restitution for the loss of property and housing; the provision of education for children and youth; psychosocial support; and family reunification. ‘Not Without Dignity’, ICTJ.

182. NRC, Displacement, HLP and access to civil documentation in the south of the Syrian Arab Republic, July 2017.

damaged infrastructure and curtailed services undermine people's ability to fulfil their basic rights – it is estimated that less than half of Syria's health facilities are fully operational, while more than one in three schools are damaged, destroyed or used for non-educational purposes.¹⁸³ Many Syrians have also lost their documentation during displacement, further curtailing their ability to access necessary services.¹⁸⁴ In the absence of opportunities for sustainable reintegration and durable solutions, the displacement crisis will continue to prevail.

The changing 'shape' of the Syrian conflict throughout 2017 has already started to have seismic implications for the more than 11 million Syrians displaced inside and outside of Syria. While the dominant narrative is that the GoS has won on the battlefield, with DAESH/other oppositions groups having been largely defeated and the GoS increasingly recapturing territory and consolidating its control, in reality, active conflict continues across much of the country and several new 'theatres' of war may yet have started.

Returning home after spending time as refugees in another country or displaced within their own country (IDPs), should mark the end of personal suffering and the chance to work towards a return to a 'normal' life. However, this scenario of positive return can happen only after the threat or danger that caused refugees or IDPs to leave their homes, has ceased to exist.

The Syrian Government must incorporate the Guiding Principles into their Strategy for recovery, durable solutions and national legislation. The government must recognise, protect and give access to NGO partner organisations to deliver the required assistance. Without government leadership to ensure respect for and protection of the displaced, it will be a much longer road towards distant durable solutions.

The humanitarian community must remain committed to addressing the needs of IDPs in the case of protracted crisis in Syria. Ongoing displacement and the likelihood that it will be years before parts of Syria are ready to witness return, the humanitarian community must continue to meet the longer-term needs of the displaced through sustained delivery of services, support at the community level, commitments to longer-term humanitarian funding for programs in Syria which contribute to resilience and, ultimately, work towards durable solutions to displacement. Whilst reconstruction is not yet politically possible, steps should be taken now to ease the transition to future development.

183. NRC, Save the Children, Action Against Hunger, Care, Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee and Durable Solutions Platform, *Dangerous Ground: Syrian refugees face an uncertain future*, February 2018.

184. NRC, Displacement, HLP and access to civil documentation in the south of the Syrian Arab Republic, July 2017.

As a community, we must continue to ensure that IDPs remain a focus within the peace process and ongoing political discussions. *“Experience shows that early and sustained dialogue on issues relating to access to land, housing and property is essential to the identification of durable solutions”*. Addressing critical issues including access to legal identity/civil documentation and HLP (Housing, Land and Property) will not only alleviate immediate needs of those newly displaced in terms of access to basic services, but will have reverberating effects across the displacement continuum, reducing a stumbling block in future return.

Panellist statement

Mr Fariz Ismayilzade

Vice Rector of ADA University (Diplomatic Academy) in Baku

Thank you very much Mr Chairman,

It is a great honour for me to serve as a keynote speaker on this panel. I would like to thank the organizers for inviting me to be present here today. I understand that Azerbaijan is now being used as a best-practice case study so as to highlight the efforts taken by Baku to identify durable solutions to enhance the integration of IDPs within the Azeri society. I think some of the policies and lessons from Azerbaijan's response to provide refuge and protection to IDPs are applicable - not only in hotspots such as Syria, Libya, Iraq - but also beyond in other countries like Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Chechnya affected by internal displacement. In some case, the conflicts while frozen are yet to be resolved.

I will base my presentation on three main topics to address the situation in Azerbaijan: I will speak first about educational opportunities for IDPs, second about the availability of housing opportunities, and finally about the enhancement of jobs and skills for IDPs. I think these three areas are key to demonstrate the successful endeavours of the government to alleviate the plight of IDPs in the country and to facilitate their successful reintegration into the Azeri community. Azerbaijan has experienced one of the world's highest per capita levels of refugees and internal displacement. Back in the 1990s, it had almost one million refugees and IDPs out of a total population of seven million people. This challenge emerged simultaneously with a severe economic crisis - following the collapse of the Soviet Union - and [with] active military warfare along the Azerbaijani-Armenian border in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I would like to show a picture of a tent camp that was used to provide shelter to IDPs during the 1990s. During that period, Azerbaijan experienced a large inflow of IDPs from occupied territories and the host population was taken by surprise when the inflow of refugees and IDPs occurred as it happened overnight.

I am delighted to see that the United Arab Emirates is one of the co-organizers of this panel. In fact, the United Arab Emirates was one of the first countries to provide tent camps and provisional humanitarian assistance to our IDPs. At the early stage, a large number of IDPs lacked very basic sanitary facilities, for a sustainable living. They lacked access to basic sanitary conditions, food and water. IDPs were temporarily housed in railway carriages, university dormitories, dugouts and tent camps. Of course, these living conditions were not ideal particularly during the winter period owing to weather conditions. Many international organizations – such as UNHCR and IOM as well as international aid agencies such as USAID – provided basic relief services to address these people's need for assistance and support. The majority of

IDPs had lost all of their belongings owing to the military conflict. Access to clothing and basic medicines was needed. Children were likewise in a vulnerable situation. Overall, this amounted to a very severe humanitarian crisis.

In order to redress the humanitarian and human rights situation of IDPs, the government has focused on three areas: access to education, housing and employment. Firstly, the provision of free access to education at secondary and university levels have been a key focal area as IDPs did not have the financial means to cover their educational expenses. Therefore, the government stepped in to subsidise their education. For instance, even if a refugee or an IDP had attended a private school or university, the government covered their education expenses. This policy was considered to be an important step to prevent the rise of extremist and radicalist ideas among IDPs. An uneducated child or an undereducated teenager is prone to be brainwashed by extremist groups – owing to their vulnerable situation - with their ideas and heinous ideologies. The government of Azerbaijan was intent on preventing the rise of extremist ideas among the affected population through providing free access to education to IDP children and through enrolling them into a nine-year schooling programme.

In the concept note of the panel debate prepared by the Geneva Centre, it was mentioned that the government of Azerbaijan has adopted nearly 400 decrees - at the government level - and 35 laws to enhance the social status and human rights of IDPs in the country. One of these laws is the right to employment. Under the current legislation, an IDP cannot be fired from his/her job by an employer. This has been an important legislative act so as to enhance access to job opportunities for IDPs, to ensure their social protection and to ensure that these families have access to basic income.

At the same time, large scale governmental programmes have been implemented to enhance skills development of IDPs, notably women and IDPs living in tent camps and settlements. They have undergone skills training so as to understand how to use computers, speak English and work with handcrafts. These opportunities have provided them with basic income-generating skills.

Another important legislative act introduced by the government relates to community development. Under the current administrative law, administrative bodies are encouraged to preserve IDP communities and to regulate their day-to-day affairs. This has enabled IDPs to stay in their own respective communities, to preserve their family and kinship networks. Up to this day, towns that were once under military occupation have been temporarily moved to other regions allowing the population to live with the same community members.

When the country started receiving the first inflow of oil revenues, the government started to direct the revenues into large housing projects. In the election campaign

of the President HE Ilham Aliyev, his main ambition was to provide decent and affordable housing to IDPs living in tent camps. Within a very short period of time - around 5-7 years - all tent camps were removed and were replaced by modern housing. One-third of the IDP population has already benefitted from access to modern housing whereas 2/3 continue to live in university dormitories and other temporary housing offered by the Government. Modern roads and schools along with decent and safe sanitary conditions and potable drinking water were also offered to IDP communities under the leadership of the President. These housing projects have likewise created opportunities for agricultural development as they are located in non-arid areas suitable for agricultural capacity. This was not the case for IDPs living in tent camps as they were located in areas of poor agricultural capacity.

Furthermore, the government continues to provide monthly stipends to IDP families as well as to cover their utilities costs. In this connection, all IDP families are exempt from paying for electricity, water and gas. The government covers IDPs' utilities costs from budgetary resources. The government has also facilitated the return of IDPs to former villages when security had been restored. Even though the villages are located along the border and the cease-fire line, they are now considered as safe. To facilitate this return, the government has conducted demining activities in affected areas. In this connection, a State agency called "*Anama*" – Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action – has been set-up to demine areas formerly affected by the conflict. Once the clearance of landmines and other explosive devices has been concluded, people are allowed to return back to their villages. Anama has now acquired significant experience in dealing with mine clearance and is offering its expertise and knowledge to countries such as Afghanistan and Russia where some southern regions have been affected by landmines.

The government of Azerbaijan has likewise made resources available to facilitate the repair and reconstruction of infrastructure destroyed during the war. A major rebuilding programme has been initiated in the village of Jojug Marjanli, which I had the privilege of visiting with researchers from our academy. As a result of the resettlement program, it has become possible for IDPs to return. Fifty families have returned to Jojug Marjanli and they have peacefully resumed their lives. This sends an important message to the parties involved in the conflict: the government of Azerbaijan wants a peaceful not a military resolution to the conflict. The peaceful return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs is a paramount objective.

The government has also implemented employment programmes to enable IDPs to benefit from income-generating activities. In this regard, the government has prioritized the reconstruction of factories, enterprises and production centres so as to enable people to have access to day-to-day jobs and income. As mentioned by Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov, the government's activities in the field of education,

employment, community development and housing are temporary solutions. They cannot provide a long-term solution to address the plight of IDPs. The long-term solution lies in putting an end to occupation and in the return and the permanent resettlement of IDPs. It requires a political settlement of the conflict between the involved parties. This in turn means that involved actors must engage in conflict-resolution. However, prospects for a breakthrough remain bleak. The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict has grinded on for 25 years. Other countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova are in the same situation.

I hope these examples have been useful to understand how to deal with the IDP crisis and how to help the IDP population in Azerbaijan.

I look forward to the question and answer session during the discussion.

Panellist statement

Mrs Alexandra Bilak

Director of Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

I would like to thank the Geneva Centre for approaching us a few months ago to organise this panel debate. I also take the liberty of thanking the Permanent Missions of the UAE and Azerbaijan for being present today. The panellists have illustrated very well some of the challenges involved in dealing and in thinking about the adverse impact of internal displacement. I am glad this event is symbolically taking place on the side lines of the second consultations on the Global Compact on Refugees; a good way to remind decision-makers debating what the future international response to refugees and migrants should look like. I think we need to focus on the issue of internal displacement, as an issue in its own right. A good way to start this conversation is indeed by linking it and embedding it into the broader displacement and migration picture.

When we look at the hundreds and thousands of refugees and migrants who have recently arrived in Europe, we must acknowledge that their displacement journeys started somewhere else. We realize that there is a much bigger and potentially much more complex phenomenon that is unfolding related to forced displacement of people on the move. This phenomenon is paradoxically receiving much lesser attention in the international scene.

We are convinced that human mobility can never be understood without looking at what is happening inside countries' borders and without looking at this particular form of displacement. I will be offering a global bird's eye view of the issue of internal displacement. I will go beyond the examples of Syria, Iraq and Azerbaijan by addressing the so what question; why should we elevate this issue beyond the national agenda? I will also be offering my thoughts on what IDMC sees as priorities moving forward in the coming years when it comes to policy-development on internal displacement.

As my colleagues already mentioned in their presentations, I would like to say that the numbers related to internal displacement speak for themselves. Today, the world does count over 40 million people internally displaced by conflict and violence. There are twice more conflict-related IDPs than refugees in the world. But in addition to people that have become internally displaced by conflict and violence, there is also a huge number of people that are becoming displaced by disasters brought on by natural hazards (like storms, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes). In this connection, we are looking at an average of 25 million people displaced every year since we started monitoring this issue for the last few years. We also know that there is a significant number of people who are becoming internally displaced each year by

other events and triggering factors associated with development and infrastructure projects. They often involve human rights violations and go largely unnoticed. The numbers of internally displaced - that come with those events - are very hard to track and monitor; but nevertheless, we need to have these issues on our radar screen when we talk about internal displacement.

There is no denying that internal displacement is a very global phenomena. Huge numbers of people were displaced in 2017 alone across the African continent, the Middle East, East Asia, the Pacific, South Asia, the Americas, Central Asia and even Europe. Internal displacement is not just happening in countries facing active or protracted conflicts like in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen or even in Ukraine.

In 2017, and this is what we will be reporting on with our global report which will be coming out in May 2018, internal displacement also happened in places like the US and the Caribbean as a result of the Atlantic hurricane season. In China, the Philippines, Vietnam, India and Bangladesh storms and floods displaced millions throughout the year. We are looking at internal displacement happening in urban areas across the world where we cannot even count the number of people who have become displaced. We are also looking at displacements happening in the context of mixed causes involving environmental and political issues that force people to gradually flee their home societies. This was the case in 2017 in Ethiopia where numerous people were displaced from the country as a result of the droughts that gripped the wider Horn of Africa region.

Internal displacement is widespread but its causes, patterns and impacts are also very deeply rooted with one another and are very diverse. It is hard to pinpoint single causes of these movements. In many contexts, causes are multiple and inter-twined. But what we do know is that internal displacement does take place predominantly in low and middle income countries. We also know that higher income countries - particularly those exposed to cyclical natural hazards - for example, are also affected. We know that there is a correlation between internal displacement and poverty, State fragility, environmental change, urbanisation, and it is obvious that those countries with the least capacity to cope are often the ones experiencing severe levels of internal displacement and those where that displacement tends to become protracted.

In fact, new cases of internal displacements add to the already existing caseloads of IDPs. These displacements patterns across the world tend to become repeated cyclical and rarely resolved within short time frames. We can only imagine the human suffering that this entails; the physical and the psychological aspects of displacement. It is particularly visible in some of the world's humanitarian crisis. We have discussed the case in Syria right now where horrific stories are being told. But let us also

not forget the big humanitarian crisis in sub-Saharan Africa – as witnessed in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan - where IDPs often are primary targets of violence and where their physical safety is under threat on a daily basis. You may recall that early last year there were IDP camps in Nigeria being bombed by Boko Haram. This is a very tragic illustration of how IDPs are often at the forefront of this violence.

In many cases, internal displacement also results in adverse social impact as communities witness that schools are destroyed, families are being separated, communities dislocated and income-generating activities lost. In fact, if we project ourselves in the future, we need to start measuring the longer-term cumulative impact of these effects of internal displacement; the gradual human, social and political losses that have contributed to the worsening situation of IDPs. They need to be measured because they have to be put forward as the key argument by national governments and the international community to invest more in preventing and identifying solutions to internal displacement.

One of the key arguments we have made over the last few years - in a desperate attempt to refocus the world's attention on IDPs - is precisely that leaving internal displacement unresolved will lead to spill over effects across borders. This is the case in Syria, Nigeria, Iraq - and as said by the UN Special Rapporteur [on the Human Rights of IDPs] - in Libya as well. So while we know that many of today's refugees and migrants are yesterday's internally displaced, it is also clear to us that today's IDPs could become tomorrow's refugees and migrants. Conversely, refugees returning back to conditions of insecurity and instability in their country of origin are also at risk of becoming internally displaced again. This is why we have been reminding policy makers involved in shaping the Global Compacts that these connections need to be made and that more investment is needed to address structural issues that create and sustain displacement.

We are calling for much more joined up and coordinated data systems. This would enable involved parties to start tracking people in the entire displacement trajectory and to understand where they have come from and where are they going. We are also calling for more comprehensive policy and operational responses. As Rachel [Sider] said, a much more sustained financial investment to meet the long-term needs of the displaced through *“sustained delivery of services ... [and] funding for programs which contribute to resilience, and ultimately, work towards durable solutions to displacement.”* Having said that, I would like to insist that we need to acknowledge that the majority of IDPs in the world are more likely to remain IDPs. They will not have an option to cross an international border. Many of them will be forced to remain in their home country.

What kind of argument can we make? How can we actually get more political attention

on an issue that is essentially and quintessentially a national issue that requires a national level response? This year, we are commemorating the 20th anniversary of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. IDMC has been taking stock of what these 20 years have meant to the world's IDPs. We thought long and hard about how the next 20 years would look like and what decision-makers should focus on. We do acknowledge that progress has been made since 1998. The ratification of the landmark Kampala Convention [African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa] for the African continent, and other related humanitarian reform processes, have tried to make operational responses much more comprehensive, systematic and predictable.

Globally, we also recognize that there is now a solid recognition that the issue of internal displacement is not just a humanitarian challenge, but an issue that needs to be treated from a political angle. Nevertheless, looking at the global picture, I think that we need to ask ourselves; what can we do better? And we need to ask ourselves what we want the next 20 years of the guiding principles to bring about? One of the key issues that came up in the cases of Syria and Azerbaijan is that there is a strong political sensitivity attached to internal displacement that we need to get around and overcome. As Rachel [Sider] said; *“First and foremost national governments have to acknowledge that there is displacement taking place in their country”*. In a certain context, perhaps in the Syrian one, we are not there yet. But in other situations, there is a positive openness from governments to acknowledge the issue and to find solutions to address it. This is certainly a first step, but we cannot be naïve.

We need to recognize that there are extreme political sensitivities attached to this issue which must not be ignored in our endeavours to identify possible solutions. We must demonstrate that there is a long-term financial impact to not addressing internal displacement at national and international level. If we let internal displacement linger for long periods of time, it is going to take its toll on individuals, local communities as well as on national economies. In this regard, I really commend the efforts of Azerbaijan for having invested financially so much into finding long-term solutions. However, I think that this example shows that more is needed and that the support of the national community has to be much more prominent and that internal displacement becomes embedded as an integral part of national government development plans and poverty reduction strategies. It should be tied to national risk disaster plans and strategies [as well as] climate change adaption plans. We need to find that entry point that enables internal displacement to be seen as an integral part of these priorities.

I would like to end on [the fact] that this requires the mobilization of international support. It does require that those countries that are directly experiencing internal displacement position themselves in the driving seat of future policy-making. I think there are a number of ways that we can bring a group of countries together to

share their experiences to realize that points of commonalities exist in identifying durable solutions to internal displacement. The important message is that national governments need to be front and centre of future policy making on this issue. They have been largely absent from international policy-making on internal displacement and it is time that the entire narrative and political process around this issue is prone to change.

At IDMC, we stand ready to support governments - in any way we can - and we hope that the next 20 years will bring about much more positive change for IDPs across the world.

I thank you for your attention.

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