

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AT THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
UNITED NATIONS NETWORK ON MIGRATION**

Wednesday 16 December 2020

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Colleagues and friends,**

It is a pleasure to meet with you today.

This week, with the tragic deaths of up to 25 migrants and refugees off the coast of Venezuela, we are reminded once again of what is at stake when we discuss the need for better management of migration worldwide.

2020 has been one of the most difficult years that the United Nations has faced in its 75-year history.

But across the board, the UN system has risen to the challenge, including the United Nations Migration Network. I commend your efforts.

You responded rapidly to COVID-19, speaking out for the rights of vulnerable migrants, supporting those who have been stranded. You also provided important analysis, insights and policy guidance to help governments better address the consequences of the pandemic for migrants and migration but also their invaluable contribution to the fight against COVID-19.

And you have done this while advancing your core responsibilities to support the Global Compact for Migration: developing comprehensive guidance on implementation; expanding UN coordination on migration at country and regional levels; advancing the Compact Champions initiative; operationalizing the Migration Fund; facilitating strong stakeholder engagement; and preparing for the first round of regional reviews.

The key task now is to leverage this solid groundwork to make migration work for all, over the coming years.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to highlight what I see as three key opportunities.

First, we have seen growing support for the Compact over the last two years. Governments have started to engage with the Compact as a tool that adds value to communities.

I encourage the migration network to do all it can to keep this political momentum going in 2021.

The Compact Champion initiative is an excellent vehicle in this regard and I wish to commend those Member State that have joined it already.

Drawing on the Regional Review processes and the build-up to the first Global Migration Review Forum in 2022, Network members can support these countries to translate their commitments into concrete changes and improved outcomes for migrants.

Second, 2021 will see many governments seek to kickstart a rapid economic recovery.

As they do so, it is essential that they respond to the fragilities the crisis has exposed and support greater inclusion, sustainability, justice and resilience.

Recovery strategies must be aligned with agreed international frameworks including the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Ensuring that vaccines and treatments are accessible to all is a first step.

I encourage the Migration Network to prioritize supporting governments to ensure vaccines reach all migrants, and to make improved migration outcomes a key feature of their recovery plans.

The UN Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plans and the new generation of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks are key tools for recovery.

We must also continue to support the full operationalization of the Migration Fund. This has already shown its ability to bring the Compact to life, to support the SDGs, and to enhance the coherence of the UN system.

I urge all donors to sustain and expand their engagement, and encourage all States to help broaden the donor base.

A third opportunity lies in strengthening United Nations support' on the regional dimensions of migration.

The Issue-Based Coalitions that are emerging as part of the UN development system reforms can offer a solid platform, in tandem with other regional and sub-regional coordination mechanisms.

We must support governments to address the many complex migration-related challenges they face in their regions. These include the situation in Central America; human trafficking in the Sahel; the roll-out of the African Union Protocol on free movement of persons; and migration related to climate change.

We must also look more closely at how our support for the Global Compact for Migration interacts with and complements our support for the Global Compact on Refugees.

We must ensure that we are addressing the many issues that affect migrants, refugees and other displaced people in a coordinated and complementary way.

Excellencies,

Under the able coordination of the International Organization for Migration and the Migration Network, we are building a more collaborative approach to migration across the United Nations system.

Your leadership has succeeded in building trust and deepening cooperation between individual UN entities, and optimizing the range of expertise and mandates on migration within the system.

Let us continue to advance in this spirit: minimizing bureaucracy, drawing on the entire UN family, and making implementation of the Global Compact for Migration the driving force behind our collective work on migration.

I wish you the very best with your deliberations.

Thank you.
