

## **General Statement IMRF – Kingdom of The Netherlands**

*Delivered by Special Envoy for Migration, mr. Joost Klarenbeek*

Thank you Chair,

Excellencies, distinguished guests, colleagues,

- Four years ago, the Kingdom of the Netherlands chose to support the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular migration.
- This was a significant step in establishing common goals and guidelines on migration management at the global level.
- The Compact is a framework to respond to the challenges and opportunities of migration globally, as best we can.
- Since then the world has faced several challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic not the least. As borders closed, traveling became difficult and people could not return to their own countries.
- Today, Europe now has the highest number of displaced people since WW2. The Russian aggression in Ukraine causes harm to countries, societies and migrants and undermines our common aim of safe, orderly and regular migration. People fleeing the war are confronted with the risk of falling victim to human trafficking and other horrific crimes, such as sexual and gender based violence, while being on the move. It shows once again that international cooperation is vital.
- And this has forced us to face the facts: it is exactly in times of crisis that we must work together, also in the field of migration. Critical evaluation and continuous efforts to improve are

key. Therefore, the Progress Declaration is a stepping stone for better migration management in line with the Compact.

- In this context, our three key priorities are: better migration governance, cross-border cooperation to manage borders and fight human trafficking, and safeguarding human rights and protection of migrants.
- We encourage that the Progress Declaration, just like the Compact, reflects all aspects of migration and has a Human Rights-based approach. We also recognize the importance of gender- and disability-responsive, as well as age- and child-sensitive , and LGBTIQ+-sensitive policy.
- Our compliments to all who have been involved in this process. Particularly the co-facilitators Bangladesh and Luxembourg and their teams for their tireless work to arrive at a consensual outcome document.
- Although the goals of the Compact and recommendations of the Declaration are already well-integrated in our national migration policies, the Netherlands will continue to strive to improve. We will continue to strive for a just, humane and effective migration policy.
- Therefore, over the next few years, we will take more action to combat abuse in the context of labour migration and continue to prioritize combating human trafficking, also through international cooperation. No government can end transnational crime such as human trafficking and smuggling of migrants alone.

- In our efforts to reduce the adverse drivers of migration, the Netherlands will strengthen foreign trade and development cooperation with key countries and regions.
- We will strengthen efforts to promote wide-ranging migration partnerships, both bilaterally and at the EU-level, including clear agreements on return and sustainable reintegration, as well as legal migration. We reaffirm the obligation of all States to duly receive and readmit their own nationals as an essential element of a well-functioning global migration system. This is a human right and an international obligation.
- In conclusion, the Netherlands remains committed to make the Compact and now the Declaration a success. We encourage all member states to strengthen our international cooperation on migration to the benefit of all.
- Only by working together, we can manage migration effectively, and thus promote safe, orderly and regular migration, with full respect for human rights.