



GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
Permanent Mission to
the United Nations

Side event in the margins of the International Migration Review Forum: Upholding the human rights guiding principle in the Global Compact for Migration

New York, 19 May 2022, 1PM – 3PM

Intervention of H.E. Mr Olivier Maes, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations

Excellencies,

Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to address you today, together with my fellow co-facilitator, Ambassador Fatima. I would also like to thank the High Commissioner for Human Rights for her inspiring words.

We are coming together this week to mark a historic milestone in the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration: the first International Migration Review Forum. Together with Bangladesh, I had the honor to co-facilitate the intergovernmental consultations on the Progress Declaration to take stock of the progress that has been made and the challenges that remain. Indeed, a lot of progress has been made since the adoption of the Global Compact four years ago.

But the Declaration also rings many alarm bells that should shake all of us into action: thousands of migrants continue to die or go missing. They continue to face discrimination and racism. They continue to be subjected to exploitation. They continue to have disproportionate or no access to COVID19 vaccines. These are not only human rights violations, but alarming realities that are contrary to the very essence of the Global Compact. Safe, orderly and regular migration is *only* possible when migrants' rights and dignity are upheld.

The human rights guiding principle is indispensable for the full implementation of the Global Compact – it is the Compact's north star. Whenever we do not ground migration governance in the full respect of human rights, whether at the global or national levels, we fail migrants. And any failure to recognize their rights contributes to the routine violation of migrants' rights in transit, at international borders, and in the countries they migrate to. That's why I am very

pleased that the Progress Declaration contains very strong human rights language that goes even further than the commitments States had already made in the Global Compact in 2018.

As a Global Compact Champion country, Luxembourg is fully committed to respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migratory status. This is also a key priority of my country as a current member of the Human Rights Council. With migrants making up almost half of Luxembourg's population, migrants are an integral part of our identity. And they are also an integral part of our economy. In fact, 73 per cent of jobs in Luxembourg are held by migrants.

We fully agree with the assertion that we made in the Global Compact in 2018 that migrants are sources of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development. But, first and foremost, they are rights holders. That is why my country's migration policies put human rights at the center. We provide access to education as well as health services to all migrants, regardless of their migratory status. In fact, migrants have access to the same services as Luxembourg nationals.

My country also recognizes that no country can address migration on its own. To this end, my Minister announced earlier today that Luxembourg will make a financial contribution to the Multi-Partner Trust Fund in order to support collective action on migration and foster global solidarity.

Before I conclude, please allow me to repeat the words of a young migrant activist who spoke at Monday's multi-stakeholder forum: "Migration is not just a migrant issue, it is fundamental to the future of our societies". Migration always has been and always will be an integral part of our collective success story. Migrants ask for nothing more than a chance to give back to those societies and communities that welcome them.

What is asked of us is to uphold our fundamental obligation to them: Migrant rights are human rights. And human rights are migrant rights.

I thank you.