

**Statement of the President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly at the
FINAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE GLOBAL COMPACT
FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION**

**13 July 2018
New York**

Excellencies, Madam Deputy-Secretary-General, Dear Colleagues, Friends,

Today is the last meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular migration. And, before I get any further, I want to express my thanks. First, to our co-facilitators, Ambassadors Juan José Gómez-Camacho and Jürg Lauber. Without a doubt, they had one of the hardest jobs at the United Nations these past two years. But they took it on with a commitment and an energy that inspired us all. And we are grateful to their teams of experts, who worked some very intense hours. I also want to thank Special Representative Arbour. The work of her, and her team, was invaluable – and will continue to be, as this process moves forward. Special thanks must also go to the International Organization for Migration for the vital role it has played. And I want to pay tribute to others, who may not be in this room today. In particular, the civil society representatives who engaged with us, along the way. Their stories and perspectives helped to bring this issue to life. And, finally, I want to thank all of you here. You should all be very proud. For two main reasons.

First, because of what we have achieved. We have reached an agreement. And, I think it is important to be very clear on what this agreement *is*.... and what it is *not*. The reality is that migration is here. It *has* been here, for centuries. And it *will* be here, for centuries more. And this agreement addresses this reality. And it offers a way to deal with it. It does not encourage migration, nor does it aim to stop it. It is not legally binding. It does not dictate. It will not impose. And it fully respects the sovereignty of states. And its potential is huge. It can guide us from a reactive to a proactive mode. It can help us to draw out the benefits of migration, and mitigate the risks. It can provide a new platform for cooperation. And it can be a resource, in finding the right balance between the rights of people and the sovereignty of states. And, in December, it will formally become the first comprehensive framework on migration the world has ever seen.

But it is not just *what* we have achieved; it is also *how* we did it. Which was, in short, through real dialogue. And that is the second reason you should all feel very proud. You listened to each other's positions. You tried to understand where colleagues were coming from. You searched for compromises. In fact, many of you even spent your nights working to find new solutions, for the morning. And, here, I want to make a crucial observation: I believe humanity always got the upper hand. Even delegates who took vastly different positions could find a way to respect and listen to each other. And this is exactly why we created the United Nations – and why we gave it an organ like the General Assembly. In here, *all* Member States are on equal footing. *All* issues, and matters, can be dealt with. And *all* voices can be heard. And, we used this forum for good. We engaged in what I think were the most transparent and inclusive discussions on international migration in history. And so, we proved that multilateralism is very much alive. And we showed what we can all achieve, when we commit to real dialogue. So, yes, we should feel proud.

But under no circumstances can we see our work as over. And this is the third and final issue I want to touch on today, 2098 migrant deaths have been recorded since we began negotiations. Children made up about 400 of them. Many, not reported, have been lost in the desert or on

other dangerous journeys. Others - including countless women and girls - have fallen victim to human trafficking. And, as we speak, thousands of migrant workers worry about their health, their security and the welfare of their families. At the same time, migration continues to be used as a political tool – on all sides of the spectrum. Often, this is based, not on facts, but on political interests. So, many challenges remain. We need to be aware of them, as we look to the International Conference, in December - and to the months and years ahead.

But, we also need something else. And that is: all of you. You know this document better than anyone. You were the ones to shape it. You heard the facts, the data and the human stories behind it. And you are all key to its success. Please don't let your work end here. Tell others what you saw and heard. Drum up the political will. Answer the questions. Give the clarifications. Speak up, against misinformation. Claim the narrative. And keep driving this process forward.

So, dear colleagues and friends, I will end on this note.

I hope you *are* all very proud. You rose to the challenge. You were tested and tried, as diplomats. You came back, day after day... week after week.... to talk, to listen and to work for solutions. In doing so, you demonstrated what this great Organisation is capable of. And you allowed us all to keep a promise that we made to humanity. So, this is an historic moment. But please don't forget: there is a lot left to do. The eyes of the world are watching. They have seen us come to one milestone. But, really, the journey is only beginning.

Thank you.