

**Statement by Reverend Father Michael Czerny, Undersecretary of the Migrant and Refugee
Section of the Holy See**

Third Thematic Session on the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration

Panel 1: “International cooperation and governance of migration in all its aspects”

Geneva, 19 June 2017

My Delegation wishes to welcome once again the two co-facilitators and the Special Representative for International Migration. I also would like to thank the panelists for their thoughtful presentations.

The Holy See has repeatedly stressed the conviction that, before the divisions of borders, we are one human family and it has called for a greater humanization of the global movement of people. As Pope Francis reminds us “migration, if handled with humanity, is an opportunity for everyone to meet and grow” (Interview on the struggles of migrants and refugees, 28 March 2017). Indeed, it is an opportunity for everyone, since in today’s world, human mobility touches many aspects of our life!

Through the New York Declaration (NYD), States acknowledged a “shared responsibility to manage large movements of refugees and migrants in a humane, sensitive, compassionate and people-centered manner” reaffirming that “international cooperation among countries of origin or nationality, transit and destination has never been more important; “win-win” cooperation in this area has profound benefits for humanity” (NYD, 19 September 2016, para. 11).

To this end, Pope Francis encouraged the implementation of programs of international cooperation, free from partisan interests, and programs of transnational development which involve migrants as active protagonists and which are grounded in the dignity and centrality of the human person (cfr., Address of Pope Francis to the International Forum on Migration and Peace, 21 February 2017).

Mr. Chair,

Indeed, the scale of migration movements is such that only a systematic, comprehensive and active cooperation between States, civil society, international organizations and the private sector can be effective in adequately managing such movements. In this regard, the experience of the Catholic Church, through its well-established network of associations on the ground worldwide, for example the ICMC and Caritas, has been making considerable efforts in responding to Pope Francis’ call for a “globalization of solidarity”.

But to be fruitful in the long term, as acknowledged in the Sutherland report “international cooperation in this area must take the interests of all legitimate actors... As long as there are

stakeholders for whom the system is not working, they will at best ignore it or worse, undermine it” (cfr., Report of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration, 3 February 2017, n. 90). “States will have a much better chance of reasserting control over who enters and stays on their territory if they work together, rather than unilaterally, thereby facilitating safe and legal migration” (Ibid, Summary).

In this regard, it is a moral imperative that we are all united in preventing smugglers and human traffickers from taking advantage of people in desperate and vulnerable situations. These criminal networks, exploiting the suffering of many, are an affront to human dignity. The Holy See encourages expanded legal avenues for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Only if we can present people with a real option for a safe, regular, and orderly migration, and if we strive to create the proper conditions for an integral human development “at home”, will we finally defeat these traffickers of human flesh.

Indeed, human mobility is a reality of our time and it needs to be approached and managed in a forward-looking manner through international cooperation and in a spirit of profound solidarity and compassion. Such cooperation must consider not only the orderly movement of people and consider the short-term humanitarian assistance, but also the countries of origin, encouraging to “create better economic and social conditions at home, so that emigration will not be the only option left for those who seek peace, justice, security and full respect of their human dignity” (cfr., Pope Francis, Message for the 100th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 5 August 2013).

Mr. Chair,

The increased number of people on the move is a sign of an unregulated globalization, of socioeconomic imbalances, and, regrettably, too often connected with violence. Through international cooperation, based on common values, complementarity of policies and decisions, migrants’ potential and talents may be opened for the benefit of all.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.