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First Dialogue: Promoting Action On The Commitments Of The GCM

By His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin

Secretary of State of the Holy See

**Statement of His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin,
Secretary of State of His Holiness Pope Francis and
Head of the Delegation of the Holy See,**

*at the First Dialogue: “Promoting Action on the Commitments of the Global Compact for Safe,
Orderly and Regular Migration,” Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for
Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*

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Mr. Chair,

In this dialogue, dedicated to promoting action on the commitments of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Holy See would like to focus above all on two of those commitments, which it considers among the most fundamental and indispensable if the international community is going to respond adequately to the challenges and opportunities we face in front of increased migration flows.

The first is the commitment to peace and development. If we are to fulfill our pledge to making migration voluntary and safe, orderly and regular, we must address the root causes of the migratory flows. As is clearly stated in paragraph 13 of the Global Compact, of which the Holy See is proud to be a leading contributor, “We must work together to create conditions that allow communities and individuals to live in safety and dignity in their own countries.” Therefore, adequate responses to the adverse drivers of migration, most especially, violent conflicts and extreme poverty, must be addressed.

These solutions should not be considered the responsibility solely of the country of origin. The international community must also assist if we are to be sure that those constrained to flee might remain in their countries of origin in peace and security. Situations of violence, inhumane living conditions, and economic hardship, as well as natural disasters and environmental degradation, affect not only those countries where they arise but also those countries of transit and destination.

This is not only a matter of fulfilling commitments to provide international development assistance and humanitarian aid, but also involves the commitment to the integral human development of every individual, providing each person with the basic conditions and opportunities to live a decent life. Few would leave if they had access to jobs, education, health-care and other basic goods and services that are fundamental to every person's fulfillment and basic well-being. Also essential to stability are the fundamental rights to be able to practise one's religion freely, without fear of persecution or discrimination, as well as the right to political participation and freedom of expression. These concerns form an integral part of the "the right to remain".

The second commitment is to integration. Those on the move must be welcomed and treated with dignity, even if it is determined later that they must be safely returned to their country of origin.

As laid out in the Global Compact on Migration, all migrants regardless of status, should be guaranteed due process and receive an individual assessment that will determine their status. In the case of children and victims of trafficking, such measures are crucial if we are to respond adequately to their needs and be sure that they not find themselves in the very same situation that they sought to leave behind. We must give preference to policies that favour family reunification and prevent their separation throughout the migration process, while working towards ending the practice of detention, particularly of minors.

For those who are given regular status and the possibility of remaining in the country of destination, either temporarily or permanently, it is important to emphasize that integration is neither merely assimilation nor incorporation, but a two-way process rooted in the mutual recognition of the fundamental equality and dignity of all. Such an approach will also help to stem the tide of racism and xenophobia. Those who arrive are, as Pope Francis underlines, "duty bound not to close themselves from the culture and traditions of the receiving country, respecting above all its laws." At the same time, integration "is not the superimposition of one culture over another, nor mutual isolation, with the insidious and dangerous risk of creating ghettos." It is rather a mutual enrichment based on mutual and interpersonal respect.

These two objectives require an urgent response on the part of the international community. As migrations, even mass migrations, are very likely to continue in the coming years, we consider it necessary to widen the regular and sure channels of emigration through generous and responsible policies, inspired by solidarity and co responsibility.

Mr. Chair,

Peace, development and true integration are fundamental to ensuring the implementation of the Global Compact. Like bookends, these two commitments keep the other commitments upright and orderly, from minimizing the adverse drivers of migration through peace and development to a successful conclusion of the migratory process in the harmonious integration of the migrant in the new homeland.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.