

Remarks by Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos during the Opening Plenary of the Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Distinguished Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would first like to thank Morocco for hosting this important event in this beautiful and historical city, Marrakesh.

I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his wise, courageous and visionary words.

I would also like to thank Louise Arbour for organising not only today's conference but for pushing this entire process forward.

It is an honour for me to address this Conference today.

In our globalised world, human mobility can only be addressed effectively by the international community as a whole.

It is a global phenomenon that requires global solutions.

Building strong partnerships with countries of origin, transit and destination to address migration challenges is a key element of the European Union's comprehensive migration policy.

The objective of the European Union is to prevent uncontrolled migration flows, while continuing to work towards better management of global migration and mobility.

In this respect, neither a single country, nor a region such as Europe, can address migratory challenges alone.

The added-value of the Global Compact is to create a cooperative framework for all States to manage migration together.

It offers an unprecedented and unique framework to share responsibility for improving global migration management in full respect of the sovereignty of each State.

The European Union is already implementing many actions contained in this Compact through the comprehensive migration policy it has put in place over the past few years.

Notably we have supported actions in and outside Europe to:

- (i) protect the human rights of all migrants with particular attention to children and the most vulnerable groups;
- (ii) address the root causes of irregular migration;
- (iii) break the business model of smugglers and traffickers;
- (iv) better manage borders;
- (v) facilitate effective return and readmission and support sustainable reintegration;
- (vi) create the conditions for legal pathways.

Of course, we also know that better managing migration and mobility requires action *beyond* the measures listed in the Global Compact.

There is notably a strong link between migration and development and between this Compact and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Trust Fund for Africa, through which we have mobilised €4 billion, is a good example of this link.

Among other priorities, it has allowed us to finance projects to address the root causes of irregular migration and to help to ensure the successful socio-economic reintegration of returning migrants in their countries of origin or transit.

More generally, we see migration in a broader context whereby Europe forges equal and strong partnerships to deepen economic relations and to boost investments and jobs.

The New Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, presented by the European Commission in September, is a good example of the EU's commitment to bring our partnerships to a higher level with the ambitious objective of creating 10 million jobs in Africa in the next five years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Migration is an important challenge for all of us.

The European Union will continue working closely with all the United Nations bodies to better manage it at global level.

Thank you for your attention.