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Remarks

by

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High Representative

and

Under-Secretary-General

for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States

at a Side Event on

Climate-induced Human Mobility

Venue: Room Warmia

Katowice, Poland

11 December 2018, 13:15 – 14:45

Moderator, Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is good to be with you at this inter-agency meeting to address the critical issue of climate-induced human mobility. This issue is of particular concern to the more than one billion people living in the Least Developed, Landlocked and Small Island Developing States.

It is a bit of an understatement to say that recent years have seen increased impacts of climate change. One result is of course what it does to human mobility both within countries and across borders.

Climate change related migration is now more than just an emerging challenge. It is a policy priority in the context of sustainable development and to me it is a challenge in how to manage.

Again, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are among the most vulnerable and most disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of climate change and their adverse migration consequences..

These countries either are countries of origin, transit or destination in climate related migration. And I am not even talking about internal migration patterns here! Yet they are the ones least able to cope with climate-induced migration given their general lack of means and capacity to respond.

The challenges are very specific and highly complex ranging from depleting already scarce local capacities to complex and rapidly emerging peace and security issues.

Take the case of the Sahel and Lake Chad regions. Climate change and internal migration have exacerbated conflicts between farmers and herders over natural resources.

Climate migration has become a formidable challenge for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to address.

We do not have the luxury of time - as I have said at other meetings, we may already be in the " perfect storm"!

Strengthening climate resilience of these countries and building their capacity to manage migration is not some luxury it is a MUST, it is a key condition for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development.

The programmes of action of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, namely IPOA, VPOA and SAMOA Pathway are clear. They recognize the vulnerability of these countries to external shocks including climate change, but also the role of migrants in development in their communities through remittances as well as transfer of skills and knowledge.

The adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakesh is before us. It recognizes that environmental degradation and natural disasters increasingly interact with the drivers of human movements. It also provides a global framework to consider how to tackle all dimensions of international migration in a managed, in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

In Agenda 2030 we promise to leave no one behind. For impactful action, we need a thorough understanding of the complex dynamics of climate-induced migration in these vulnerable countries. From there ought to come a comprehensive approach and concerted efforts at the national, regional and global levels.

IOM and my office have forged a partnership to address this particular challenge facing LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. I am happy to inform you that we are going to issue a joint publication which will highlight the migration and climate change nexus in the three groups of countries, and propose ways forward to address it.

Colleagues,

Three years ago, the world adopted the Paris Agreement to tackle climate change. We do not have the luxury of time in the face of devastating impact of climate change and its social and economic consequences

Maybe we could go faster, but I am glad that the Taskforce on Displacement after two years of strenuous efforts has put forward a series of forward-looking and comprehensive recommendations.

LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS need to strengthen national policy frameworks to address the challenge of forced migration and displacement. Support from the UN system and its complementary expertise are much needed. Today's event is one step in this direction.

We are not talking in abstract, we are talking about real people's lives. So, it is my hope that today's discussions will help sharpen our focus on climate migration, and fine-tune recommendations of the Taskforce on Displacement while taking the perspectives of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS into consideration.

I look forward to a productive exchange and discussions.

Thank you.