

STATEMENT
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COP Presidency event: “UN Coherence: low-emission and climate resilient development at national level”

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Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji (and President-designate of the UN Climate Change Conference),
Secretary General,
Your Excellencies,

We live in a world on the move. Our era is experiencing an unprecedented level of human mobility, and climate change is one of the drivers. Climate action is essential to limit future forced migration. I will make three remarks in this regard:

1. First, to acknowledge progress achieved in climate change negotiations as far as migration is concerned

Today I am honored to represent IOM for the fifth time at a climate conference of parties. My first COP was in Copenhagen in 2009 and migration was nowhere to be found in the climate negotiations. Our efforts were then focused on advocating for the recognition of climate change as a driver of migration.

Climate migration was first included in the Cancun Adaptation Framework in 2010 and in Warsaw Loss and Damage Mechanism in 2012.

In 2015, the Paris Agreement made a groundbreaking reference to migrants in its Preamble. It also mandated the creation of a Taskforce on Displacement

associated with climate impacts, we are actively contributing to. At Paris in my remarks, I said that “for the first time, we can refer to climate migrants.”

Here at COP23 in Bonn, we build on results of COP22 in Marrakech and reach a new phase in our migration and climate journey: it is time for national climate action to integrate migration solutions.

2. So let me share some examples of how policy work comes into action at the national level :

- First, successful national climate mitigation and adaptation measures allow people to remain in their homes;
- Second, humanitarian responses protect people displaced by the adverse impacts of climate change;
- Third, migrants can reintegrate back home with sustainable green jobs, while diasporas transfer technology and skills into climate projects in their countries of origin.
- Lastly, countries can adopt migration policies that offer regular and dignified migration options, in response to the adverse impacts of climate change.

3. As my last point, I would like to share a word about IOM’s global migration governance vision in the light of evidence and data we have on climate change:

Contemporary migration policy and practice can no longer be shaped as it was ten or even five years ago – this is because we can no longer afford to ignore the impact on migration of climate change and environmental degradation.



Migration is inevitable but also necessary and desirable if well managed and respectful of human rights.

The global compact for safe, regular and orderly migration, to be negotiated next year in New York, is our historical opportunity to ensure that climate change drivers of migration are considered in the global governance of migration.

Earlier this year, we all worked to bring migration dimensions to the UN System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action and we will continue to integrate migration issues into the operationalization phase of the Global Compact on Migration.

This is not a time of sadness and regrets – but a time for action.

I thank you.