***Joint statement for International Migrants Day, 18 December, by the Chair of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and UN Women***

***Friday, 15 December 2017***

***On International Migrants Day, we call for the development of a gender-responsive global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration that promotes and protects the human rights of all migrants, and especially women and girls.***

For too long, the gender dimensions of migration have been overlooked in policies and programmes that govern international migration. This means that the specific needs, experiences, vulnerabilities and priorities of women and girls in migration have not been adequately addressed. Nor have the voices of migrant women and girls been really heard, and their leadership and participation in decision-making processes promoted to their full extent.

Gender-based discrimination in migration policies continues to limit women's access to safe and orderly migration pathways, and limits their job opportunities in transit and host countries. Hence, many migrant women end up in informal employment, particularly in the care and domestic sectors. These jobs not only perpetuate traditional gender stereotypes about what constitutes 'women's work' but also offer no or few labour protections. This heightens the exposure of migrant women to severe forms of human rights violations which often occur inside homes where victims are unseen and unprotected. Along the migration trajectory and particularly if using irregular migratory channels, migrant women and girls also face increased risks of sexual and gender-based violence. This includes harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and cutting, sexual exploitation and trafficking, child, early and forced marriage, intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence.

We must end this situation. The global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which will be finalized in 2018, represents an unprecedented opportunity to ensure that migration policies respond to and reflect the particular needs of migrant women and girls. As the first ever blueprint for international migration, the global compact will shape migration governance for generations to come—and women's human rights need to feature prominently in this blueprint.

We, the Chair of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, Mr. Jose Brillantes, the Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Ms. Dalia Leinarte, and UN Women call upon States to ensure that the global compact for migration will promote and protect the human rights of all migrants, and in particular women and girls. The global compact needs to be aligned with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW), and the other relevant international human rights instruments. The global compact should also contribute to achieving commitments made and targets set for migrant women and girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We call on Member States to ensure that the global compact for migration contributes to:

1. Eliminating of all forms of violence against migrant women and girls including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation throughout all stages of migration. This requires putting in place access to services (both prevention and response) and means of redress for victims/survivors of violence, and holding perpetrators accountable.
2. Promoting women's and girls' leadership and full, equal and effective participation in all migration-related decision-making processes at all levels.
3. Guaranteeing equal access for migrant women and girls to human rights-based and gender-responsive services, including education, health care, including sexual and reproductive health care services, social services, and access to justice. Access to decent work and social protection needs be provided to all migrant women.

4. Recognizing and supporting migrant women's economic rights, roles and contributions to the well-being of their families, communities, and countries of origin and destination.
5. Advancing international cooperation and migration governance that responds to the rights, needs and priorities of migrant women and girls. Root causes of migration such as deeply entrenched gender inequalities, conflict and poverty which are also often drivers of irregular migration should be addressed to ensure that migration is a choice.
6. Strengthening the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics in migration.

Together with other experts from treaty bodies, UN agencies and civil society partners, we developed expert recommendations on addressing women's human rights in the global compact for migration which provide specific and concrete guidance on how to develop a gender-responsive global compact. We reiterate the importance of these recommendations in developing a global compact that works for all migrants.

We are confident that the global compact can put an end to gender-blind migration policies and facilitate a world where migration is a choice for everyone and an expression of agency and empowerment: A world in which the human and labour rights of all migrants are realized, a world where no migrant is discriminated against on the basis of their gender, race or migratory status, a world where no migrant woman and girl needs to fear or experience any form of sexual and gender-based violence, a world that appreciates the myriad contributions of migrant women to sustainable development.

Today, on International Migrants Day, we stand together with all migrants: women, men, boys and girls, and count on all Member States and stakeholders to continue to promote and protect the human rights of all migrants, ensuring that no-one is left behind.

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