



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

International Migrants Day, 18 December 2020

**Theme: Reimagining Human Mobility with a focus on the
Global Compact for Migration (GCM).**

Remarks by Mr. Sanusi Tejan Savage | IOM Uganda Chief of Mission

Our Chief Guest, Hon Minister Hilary Onek;

**The UN Resident Coordinator -ad-interim, Mr Alain Sibenaler, and UNCT colleagues
joining this event;**

Hon Ministers and representatives of Ministries, Departments and Agencies;

Representatives civil society Organizations;

Local Government leaders;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is an honor to welcome you to this 20th commemoration of International Migrants Day 2020. Thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to join us.

International Migrants Day is commemorated every year on 18 December, to reflect on migrants – the contributions they make, and the challenges they face.

A little over five years ago, On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution **A / RES / 70 / 1**, thereby adopting the 2030 Agenda, represented by the Sustainable Development Goals. Chairing the session was the then President of the UN General Assembly, Hon Sam Kutesa.

In Paragraph 29 of the preamble, the member states said:

“We recognize the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. We also recognize that international migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, which requires coherent and comprehensive responses. We will cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status, of refugees and of displaced persons. ... ”

Today, as we mark yet another International Migrants Day, I would like to do just three things:

First, I would like to commend the Government of Uganda to all the efforts it is making to remain true to the above paragraph. As IOM we know all too well that the Government recognizes the contribution of migrants, and is concerned about their protection.

We also know that the Government of Uganda is actively involved in regional and international efforts such as the Nairobi Process, to reduce vices like trafficking in persons and improve safety of labour migration.

And in respect of today's theme, about the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), we know that through the Office of the Prime Minister, the Government has been more than supportive. This is a source of tremendous encouragement, because the GCM epitomizes the world's desire to maximize the fruits of migration, as well as member-states' determination to address migration-related challenges.

Secondly, I would like to reassure the Government and people of Uganda, that IOM Uganda stands ready to support in view of continuing to promote the safety, health, wellbeing and dignity of migrants from and in this country.

About one third of the more than 272 million international migrants in the world are found in the continent of Asia And in Africa, we know that most migrants migrate within the continent. That eastern part of the globe is also a key destination for many migrant workers from Uganda. During this COVID pandemic, IOM has endeavoured to support the most vulnerable Ugandans stranded in the region. And with our ongoing and new initiatives now in the offing, we are working to scale up our efforts, so that no migrant worker is left behind.

Thirdly, I would like to say something about the present pandemic of COVID-19, which has claimed more than 1.6 million lives, including more than 220 Ugandans. Like almost any organization and individual in the world, IOM has been greatly affected by COVID-19. Projects have delayed. Office work has been scaled down. Some staff members or their loved ones have been affected directly.

But from a migration perspective, the abiding lesson we take from the COVID crisis is that international cooperation on migration management is as vital as it has ever been.

This is that was recognized by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. International Cooperation is also what was agreed on by majority of UN Member states, in adopting the Global Compact in 2018.

IOM remains committed to continue to work with Member States and all relevant stakeholders in implementing the Global Compact, and responding to emerging issues such as COVID-19

As I conclude I would like to thank the Government of Uganda, donors, the UN family, civil society organizations, and all other partners for your support towards ensuring that migration is safe, orderly and humane.

Once again, I welcome you all and wish you a happy International Migrants Day.

Afwoyo matek!

Mwebare!

Asante Sana.

Merci beaucoup!

Shukrani !

Thank you all very much.