



**ICELAND**  
**Prime Ministers' Office**

Statement by  
**Ms. Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir**  
Permanent Secretary

at the

**Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact  
for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**

Marrakesh

December 11, 2018

Your Excellencies, Ministers, Madame President, Delegates.

I would like to thank our hosts for a great conference in this very special and beautiful place, Marrakech, and not least for the hospitality and kindness of all the people I've met here. And I would also like to congratulate UN for a great preparation as I know that it has taken many hands and minds to prepare the excellent conference area here.

It is a historic moment, when the states present in this conference, facilitate the adoption of the first intergovernmentally negotiated agreement on a safe, orderly and regular migration.

Migration is a global phenomenon that affects every single state on earth, either as a state of origin, transit or destination for migrants, or all of the above. The international community agrees that migrants should be received and treated in a decent manner, that their human rights are respected and that they can prosper as individuals and contribute to the society and the economy of the country they migrate to.

By adopting the Global Compact for Migration, although not legally binding, the international community has committed to enhancing cooperation and share the responsibility in addressing international migration.

This agreement rests on the principle of the sovereign right of each individual State to govern migration into and within their jurisdiction in accordance with international law, as clearly reaffirmed in the Compact.

The Global Compact is comprehensive in its approach to address the various forms of migration, both voluntary and forced, but focuses on regular migration. A joint effort of UN Member States to implement its 23 Objectives would considerably advance the goal of achieving safe, orderly and regular migration, keeping in mind the cross-cutting principles in the Compact.

Iceland particularly welcomes the focus on human rights and a people-centred approach that is sensitive to people in vulnerable situations, in particular taking into account gender aspects and the rights of children. Also, we value the emphasis put on actions to combat trafficking in human beings. Iceland also welcomes the clear connection to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Participation in adopting this non-legally binding document does not alter the rights and freedoms which citizens in Iceland enjoy under the Icelandic Constitution or Icelandic law, including legislation on fundamental rights such as freedom of speech and freedom of the media. Furthermore, all Icelandic legislation relevant to migration is compatible with the commitments in the Compact.

Iceland is convinced that the Global Compact for Migration will prove to be a landmark document in the field of Migration. We are pleased to join other states in adopting it.

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