

*Edited transcript of extemporaneous remarks*

**“Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development”  
8<sup>th</sup> Summit meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development**

**Remarks by António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

**Istanbul, 14 October 2015**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is good to be here in İstanbul, in generous Turkey, the largest refugee hosting country in the world and a country that is facing a dramatic impact in its economy and society, not to mention the tragic consequences of the Syria and Iraq crisis for Turkey’s security. Mr. Chair, for all UNHCR staff, the sorrow of the families of the Turkish victims of terrorism is our own sorrow, we feel it as if they were members of our own family.

Now forgive me that I will speak today less about refugees and more about migration and development – for a very simple reason: only in a world where migration can be legal and can take place in a human rights framework, only in a world like that can refugee protection truly be possible. But unfortunately, in our world, globalization has been asymmetric, money flows freely (even for some too freely); trade of goods and services is also relatively free, but people – and especially migrants and refugees – face enormous obstacles to move.

Now, there is a global financial market. There is a global market for trade, for goods and services. But there is also increasingly a global labour market. When I was young, I was more radical than today, then I learned to be more moderate; but one of the first things I discovered is that markets work and that governments can influence markets, can regulate markets, but they cannot ignore markets, and much less govern against markets. And this is also true for the global labour market. If we ignore that it exists, or we try to rule against it, we will only benefit the smuggling industry that is prospering in our world. And let’s not forget that the smugglers and traffickers of human beings are today part of a cluster of criminal gangs in which trafficking of human beings is linked to the trafficking of drugs, to the trafficking of guns and to global terrorism becoming more and more of a threat to us all. And so we need a world in which we understand that migration is part of the solution – it has *always* been part of the solution of global development problems – and that the global labour market needs to be respected, needs to be regulated, needs to be improved, but cannot be ignored or denied.

In my opinion, since we do not have a global regulatory framework for the labour market like we do for the financial markets, it is essential to increase international cooperation – international cooperation at regional level and international cooperation between countries of

origin, countries of transit and countries of destination along the routes of people's movements. But such cooperation cannot only be centred on border management issues to stop people from coming or going. That cooperation needs, as Jan Eliasson mentioned, to be centred on those development cooperation policies that can create the conditions for people to have a future in their own countries, for people to be able to migrate or to move out of choice and not out of desperation.

Now in this context, it is important to note that the main problem we are facing today is the problem of forced displacement – not of people who move out of their free will, but who are forced to move by the need to survive. First of all, because of conflict – as it was said, today the largest numbers since the Second World War are displaced by conflict. But more staggering than the absolute number is the escalation of this displacement. In 2010, 11,000 people were displaced by conflict per day; in 2011, 14,000; 2012, 23,000; 2013, 32,000; last year 42,500 people were displaced every single day because of conflict. But we also have the stronger and stronger interconnection of climate change, the defining challenge of our times, with population growth, urbanization, water scarcity, food insecurity, that are resulting in environments not being able to sustain life, which also forces more and more people to move.

And that is where I think it is important to look not only at the contributions migration can give to development, but at the contribution development cooperation can provide to address the problems of forced displacement. Of course the central question is prevention. We know how difficult it is to prevent conflicts in today's world; a world in which there is no global governance system, in which power relations became unclear and impunity and unpredictability are the name of the game; a world in which conflicts multiply and old crises never seem to die. But even if the answer to this problem is political, even if the answer requires diplomatic and political efforts, there is a lot that development cooperation can do. In mitigating the struggle for resources, some conflicts break out – or at least intensify – because of scarce resources and the competition for instance between farmers and herders. Darfour was a case in point. The Sahel is another case in point.

Development cooperation is essential also to allow for solutions for the people displaced and to support the host communities receiving them. Development cooperation is essential to build the resilience of those communities, mainly in the context of adaptation to climate change, but also adaptation to large population flows that come into those communities.

Development cooperation is also essential to stabilize the results of the conflicts when conflicts finally end, so as not to go back to conflict again soon. But there is one aspect of development cooperation I would like to underline here today. This is the need to particularly take into account countries like Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, or like Kenya, Ethiopia, or Cameroon, which are not only large hosting countries of refugees, but also pillars of stability in their regions and a kind of first line of defense in relation to our collective security.

Now the truth is that many of these countries are middle income countries, and because of that they are excluded from different development instruments, namely grants from the World Bank to give an example, and they are not in the first priority of bilateral development cooperation. I think a fundamental review is required so that our development cooperation is adapted to the needs of this dangerous world in which we live today. It is absolutely central that countries like Turkey or Lebanon or Jordan become first priority in both bilateral and multilateral development cooperation policies, in order to help them cope with the enormous

challenges they are facing and also to support them in what they are doing for all of us by providing global public goods.

When one looks at Turkish efforts – as the Prime Minister mentioned, more than 8 billion dollars in direct assistance to refugees – and the dramatic impact this has had on the economy, on the society; or if one looks at Lebanon, where 1 in every 4 people is now a refugee – then we understand how important it is that these countries really become the first priority of development cooperation. And this requires a fundamental review. As a humanitarian, I do believe that humanitarian space needs to be preserved, that humanitarian action needs to respect the values of impartiality, neutrality and independence. But I also recognize, as a citizen of the world, that today it is impossible to formulate development cooperation policies without taking into account the humanitarian dimension, but also the security dimension. And I think countries need to recognize that humanitarian, development and security are three faces of the same reality, and that development cooperation policies need to adapt themselves to the dangerous world in which we live in order for human mobility to be an essential contribution to global development, and in order for those fleeing conflict and persecution, the most vulnerable of the vulnerable, for the refugees to find the safety they are entitled to receive.

But that safety needs to be provided not only by the neighboring countries. It doesn't make sense to ask Turkey to keep the borders open, and to close other borders to refugees. And we continue our request to all States, be it in Europe, in the Gulf, everywhere, to also open their borders, namely to Syrian refugees and others, as Turkey has done. And to receive more people, refugees and migrants, through legal channels in order to avoid the dramatic suffering we are witnessing today on the shores of the Mediterranean, the Andaman Sea, the Caribbean, the Gulf of Aden. If we all join efforts, if we all assume our responsibilities, our world will be a world in which migration and development will be able to go hand in hand and refugees will find adequate protection.

Thank you very much.