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**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

Statement

**Statement by Mr. Haider Ali Khan,
Member National Assembly of Pakistan to the
IPU Standing Committee
(15 October, 2018)**

**Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

The unprecedented challenges accruing from large scale displacements of populations warrant greater commitment of the international community to address the plight of people on the move.

The current session and our deliberations are an occasion to demonstrate our commitment for the migrating people through the Resolution.

Pakistan considers migration a positive development-related phenomenon which plays a key role in the socio-economic progress of both source and destination countries.

Being a country of origin, transit and destination, Pakistan has taken a number of policy, legislative and administrative steps to check irregular migration.

We have enacted a new legislation (i.e. Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act, 2018) which has empowered our LEAs to effectively prosecute criminals associated with human smuggling, while protecting rights of smuggled migrants.

On numerous occasions, the Government of Pakistan has launched nation-wide awareness campaigns to educate people about harms and dangers associated with irregular migration.

Our Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development have evolved elaborate mechanisms to encourage and ensure that migrant workers do not fall prey to human smugglers.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community should focus on addressing root causes of irregular migration, particularly by bridging economic disparities among developing and developed countries and by enhancing legal pathways of migration.

Restrictive visa and border control regimes would further aggravate the problem and force people to avail services of human smugglers.

While States retain the sovereign right to strengthen their border security, this right should be consistent with the international law and must respect human rights of migrants, irrespective of their status.

We call for using gender-sensitive approaches while handling illegal migrants, with particular focus on taking care of the special needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls in the migratory process.

Excellencies,

The persistent xenophobia, racial profiling and Islamophobia in the countries of destination against migrants need to be curbed. These trends and rhetoric create schisms among civilizations.

Migrants should be allowed to exercise their fundamental human rights with dignity. This will facilitate their socio-economic integration in the destination societies.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan welcomes the finalization of inter-governmental negotiations on the Global Compact on Migration at the UN. Now, the international community should take concrete steps to ensure its effective and balanced implementation.

In our global discussions as well as efforts to promote safe, orderly and regular migration, we should not conflate issues related to migrants

with those of refugees due to fundamental differences in their statuses under the international law.

Migration is a multifaceted phenomenon. Instead of unduly focusing on its security dimensions, we should work closely together to channelize its potential and role in achievement of SDGs.

In order to mutually reap benefits of the phenomenon of migration, there should be closer collaboration between source and destination countries in the following areas, among others,: (i) recognition of qualifications and degrees; (ii) exchange of information on labour skills requirement; and (iii) capacity-building in area of skills development for migrant workers.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition to UN-led processes on migration, Pakistan supports regional approaches and participates in different regional consultative mechanisms on migration, including Abu Dhabi, Bali, Budapest and Colombo Processes.

Mr. Chairman,

We, the Parliamentarians of the world, have huge responsibility to deliver. Together, we can offer hope for collectively addressing the development and humanitarian challenges associated with large scale displacements of people.

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