



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič,
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and
Other International Organizations in Geneva at the
International Dialogue on Migration

Panel 4: “– Integration and social inclusion as a means of addressing and mitigating migrant vulnerabilities”

Geneva, 19 July 2017

Madam Chair,

When, on the one hand, migrants are demanded and accepted in the markets of developed and emerging economies, there seems to be a glaring contradiction with the sad reality that, on the other hand, they often are rejected and subjected to resentful attitudes and violent attacks by many in receiving societies.

The Holy See repeatedly has recalled that migrants are not simply seeking to improve their financial, social, and political condition. They represent the human face of the process of globalization. They come with courage, hope and resilience; they can serve as instruments of peaceful relations among countries thus demonstrating the truth that we are one human family.

Evidence-based studies have demonstrated the positive and pragmatic impact of migrants in countries of origin, transit, and destination, as well as for the migrants themselves and their families. In too many instances, however, these contributions are overshadowed by double standards, which are spread and fueled in media and public opinion. This regrettable situation facilitates stereotyping and negative generalizations about newcomers, and makes the host society fearful that they will become less secure and that their identity and culture will be lost.

In this regard, Pope Francis has reminded us of the “duty of solidarity” as a means to counter the “throwaway culture” and to give greater attention to those who are weakest, poorest and most vulnerable, thus encouraging a culture of encounter as the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world.¹

While stressing the need for the integration of migrants in host countries, Pope Francis explained that this “is neither assimilation nor incorporation. It is a two-way process, rooted essentially in the joint recognition of the other’s cultural richness: it is not the superimposing of one culture over another, nor mutual isolation, with the insidious and dangerous risk of creating ghettos.”² In this two-way process, migrants “are duty bound not to close themselves off from the culture and traditions of the receiving country, respecting above all its laws”.³ Receiving States, on the other hand, must respect the family dimension of the process of integration, shaping policies directed at favoring and benefiting the reunion of the family, the fundamental unit of society.

¹ Pope Francis, Address to participants in the International Forum for Migration and Peace, Vatican City, 21 February 2017.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

Madam Chair,

there can be no successful and sustainable migration policy without a simultaneous, comprehensive, and mutual-enriching integration strategy centered on the human person as the subject who is primarily responsible for development. The engagement of local administrations in fostering a culture of integration, mutual enrichment and peace will be fundamental, while at the same time, “migrants themselves must not forget that they have a duty to respect the laws, culture and traditions of the countries in which they are received.”⁴

In this regard, Madam Chair, if you allow me, I would like to inform the distinguished representative in attendance that, during the upcoming session of the IOM’s Council in November, the Permanent Mission of the Holy See, together with the Permanent Mission of the Order of Malta, the International Catholic Migration Commission, Caritas Internationalis, and the *Caritas in Veritate* Foundation are organizing a parallel event that aims to present good practices and to identify practical recommendations to improve the integration of migrants in host societies.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

⁴ Pope Francis, Address to Members of the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See, 9 January 2017