Background

Throughout history, migration has been one of the forces connecting the world, driving cultural exchange, enriching societies, spurring growth and innovation, and saving lives. The opportunities offered by the movement of people for societies and individuals across the world are clear and have been recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Together with the Global Compact on Refugees, other relevant international instruments, as well as key regional agreements, these frameworks map out how to ensure and amplify the positive impacts of human mobility and address its challenges.

However, today’s increasingly fragmented world is shaken by conflict, climate change and a fragile global economy. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals has faltered, forced migration is the highest on record, millions of people are being displaced by the effects of climate change. Vulnerabilities associated with displacement are often compounded by exploitation, violence and abuse and discrimination along migration routes. These challenges are particularly rife in the context of irregular migration with thousands of people dying each year on unsafe migration journeys, because they see no accessible, safe alternative.

All these factors will continue to shape and drive the movement of people, while putting unprecedented pressure on States, societies and individuals around the world. Global trends point to more migration in the future. This increases the scale of opportunities offered by the movement of people for societies and individuals across the highly interconnected and interdependent world, as well as the potential costs of not adequately addressing it. A major positive shift in how migration is approached is critical.

Regular pathways for migration are integral to delivering on the promise of migration to address global challenges. Where and how people migrate, and with what outcomes, depends largely on the options available to them. The evidence highlights that the currently available options are insufficient for the complex, shifting contexts of today and tomorrow. There is a need to strengthen regular migration pathways and to mitigate the risks of deepening divides and exacerbating inequalities globally. A comprehensive approach to facilitating regular pathways must draw on both Global Compacts and other relevant frameworks, and be coupled with other measures to save lives, minimize and deliver solutions for displacement, as well as to combat irregular migration, and provide for safe and dignified returns and sustainable reintegration. Change and innovation are urgently required to enable functional and impactful regular pathways as a key element of safe, orderly and regular migration.

This International Dialogue on Migration session will bring States and diverse partners together to explore how to create more and better opportunities for people to move in a regular and beneficial way as part
of a comprehensive approach to human mobility. This will include exploring policy, operational and technical cross-sectoral solutions that are needed throughout the migration cycle, from pre-migration to admission, stay, exit, eventual return and reintegration or onward migration. This discussion will be taking place in the context of ongoing GCM Regional Reviews and ahead of the UN Summit of the Future. Joint action to achieve real progress in the migration and asylum space is critical for a better future. Such action must be a key part of wider efforts to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, enable adaptation to climate change, fill labour shortages, manage demographic transitions, provide safety to those fleeing violent conflicts and facilitate alternatives to dangerous, abusive, and exploitative irregular journeys.

What is the aim of this session?

This IDM session aims to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, including States, United Nations system organizations, civil society, the private sector and migrants and their communities to promote a global, multilateral conversation on how to seize the opportunities and address the challenges of migration while supporting vulnerable populations in an increasingly interdependent and complex world.

What are the expected outcomes of session?

This session will contribute to:

- An evidence-based understanding of the challenges and opportunities for migration today and tomorrow, including geopolitical crises and scaling-up of solutions, as well as ways to address gaps in current knowledge.
- Identifying innovative and cutting-edge solutions that governments at local, national, and regional levels have already put in place or could develop in the future, to harness the potential of regular pathways for migration as part of a 360-degree approach to human mobility.
- Unpacking how multilateral action and broad-based partnerships including private sector, diasporas and local communities, at the national, regional and global levels to facilitate regular and safe pathways for migration contribute to the response to some of the most distressing crises in the world, supporting integration and the transition to peace and prosperity.
- Understanding how to achieve more accessible, people-centered, rights-based, accessible, sustainable and safe regular pathways, including key policy, operational and technical solutions that should be in place throughout the migration cycle.