

**Remarks of the UNODC Executive Director
UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants
New York, 19 September 2016**

Distinguished delegates,

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime stands in solidarity with you to promote justice, and better protect vulnerable women, men and children on the move who are subjected to violence, abuse and exploitation.

We cannot allow the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War to be exploited as a business opportunity by criminals.

I welcome the draft Declaration's recognition that

- refugees and migrants in large movements are at risk,**
- and that states need to vigorously combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling,**
- including through proper identification and support,**
- as required by the Protocols on trafficking and migrant smuggling under the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.**

It is, most of all, a question of respect.

Respect for human life, and recognition that every single man, woman and child on the move is a person deserving of, and entitled to, protection.

Respect for law and the rule of law: criminal law obliges states to investigate and prosecute crimes, and provides rights to victims, including those with irregular status.

To date, one hundred and fifty-six countries have made human trafficking a specific criminal offence, as required by the Protocol.

While implementation remains a challenge, one hundred and forty-two countries have committed to doing the same to stop migrant smuggling.

For justice to be done, we need states to respect their own laws.

For justice to be truly for all, we need to work together, share responsibility and acknowledge that we can and must do more to stop human suffering.

UNODC is here to support you. Thank you.