International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

74th World Health Assembly Session

Provisional Agenda Item 34.1

Progress report: Promoting the health of refugees and migrants

(Decision WHA72(14) (2019))

Pillar 1: One billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage

Document A74/43

Geneva, May 2021

Statement by

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
17 route des Morillons • C.P. 17 • CH-1211 Geneva 19 • Switzerland
T. +41 22 717 91 11 • F. +41 22 798 61 50 • hq@iom.int • www.iom.int

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

Honourable Chair, Director General, Distinguished delegates,

As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a view to recovery, we must aim for truly universal health coverage so that migrants, regardless of their migration status, have access to health services, including vaccinations, as well as socioeconomic protection measures in all countries equitably.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) welcomes the progress report on promoting the health of refugees and migrants, and is working with governments and WHO to further advance this agenda, through its network of experts who are working daily across the world on health system strengthening, pre-migration health services, health promotion, and more.

IOM has closely engaged with WHO on several of the items reported, including the training guidance on global competency standards to ensure quality health services for refugees and migrants. And the Organization looks forward to contributing to the development of the first global report on the health status of refugees and migrants. IOM, including as the Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration reiterates the need for inclusive approaches and calls on countries to combat stigma and address the specific vulnerabilities of migrants to truly overcome the many health, mobility and socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic.

To that end, governments must particularly base access to essential health services, including vaccine eligibility, on public health considerations without discrimination.

It is also critical that we meaningfully engage with migrants as key stakeholders, whether as part of the health workforce fighting this pandemic, or as essential contributors to socioeconomic recovery.

Thank you.