

S t a t e m e n t o f F r a n c e R e d C r o s s a n d R e d C

Dialogue 1: Promoting action on the commitments of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, at the Inter-Governmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, 10 December 2018

Mr/Madam Chair, thank you for giving me the floor.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies represents members in 190 countries, working through 11 million volunteers worldwide. Our members are present in all of your countries, responding to the humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination.

We warmly welcome the suggestion in the concept note for this session that the first priority of all signatories should be immediate action to save more migrants lives. We have heard a number of echoes in statements today, which we also welcome. We all know that many migrant deaths pass unnoticed in official statistics, but even those that are recorded have reached staggering levels, particularly along migration routes to Europe, which we find unacceptable.

We suggest that action to save lives will only be successful if it goes hand in hand with efforts to protect migrants from exploitation and abuse and to preserve their basic well-being and dignity as human beings. We suggest three urgent steps that states should take:

- x First, states must invest adequate resources in rescue activities at dangerous crossing points (particular at sea, desert and mountainous areas) and in a victim-centred approach to countering trafficking (meaning the victims must not be pursued and detained). In some places, we currently see the opposite trend.**
- x Second, states should collaborate with civil society organisations to ensure that all migrants have access to essential services, such as food and health care. We must urgently address both the formal barriers (such as legal restrictions) and informal barriers (such as**

language issues). Attempts to criminalise neutral humanitarian aid must be reversed.

- x Finally, we must scale up front-line capacity to prevent, detect and respond to the risks of abuse against unaccompanied and separated children. This includes ensuring that border and enforcement personnel are adequately trained and health care and psychosocial service providers are available in the right locations.

As auxiliaries to their public authorities in the humanitarian field, National Societies are ready and willing to support you in taking these steps and caring for vulnerable people, including migrants and those in surrounding communities.

Thank you, Mr/Madam Chair
