

United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants, New York, 19 September 2019

Roundtable on root causes

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Esteemed delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Not since the Second World War have people fled their homes in such large numbers. While the suffering – and deaths – of migrants and refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea have been well documented, less attention has been paid to the exploitation and abuse they are vulnerable to as they travel through transit countries, or to the situations that have forced them to leave to seek a place of greater safety.

In many cases, migrants and refugees are seeking to escape situations of violence and grave human rights violations that in some cases may amount to atrocity crimes, by which I mean genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

When we speak about the root causes of forced displacement, we are speaking about situations that are characterised by armed conflict or other forms of instability; by serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including consistent patterns of

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