



STATEMENT OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA

UNODC WG on Smuggling of Migrants

Wien, 27-28 June 2022

Mr. Chair,

Migrants and refugees often cross through multiple transit countries, and may be refused entry to one of them before arriving at their country of destination. Making matters worse, along many irregular migration routes, migrants and refugees also suffer human rights violations, encounter violence and risk family separation. Too often, their only option appears to be these illegal pathways, which are expensive and depend on smugglers. Furthermore, criminal prosecution and detention for immigration violations deter migrants from seeking protection.

Therefore, globally, there is urgent need to increase the number of safe and legal pathways for migration, as well as to implement public policies based on freedom of transit, and the respect for international protection for migrants in vulnerable situations. At the same time, the lawful return of irregular migrants should, whenever possible, be voluntary and must always respect the best interests of the child.

States frequently conflate national security with national defense and homeland security. However, national security is impossible without human security. Proper border security requires that all parties respect the principle of non-refoulement. It also demands that the rights of all migrants, regardless of their legal status, should be protected.

Lastly, the Holy See encourages the building of relationships of trust between UNODC and its Member States. This is the best way to ensure fruitful cooperation not only on migrations, but also for the promotion of awareness campaigns, for the

prevention of smuggling, and in order to make migration safer, more orderly, and more regular.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.