

## UN High Level Summit on migrants and refugees Statement by Anastasia Crickley, Chairperson UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Speaking at the UN Summit, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016, Anastasia Crickley, Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination said "Every migrant and refugee has human rights they are entitled to claim and every state is obliged to protect them. Human rights are for all and migrants should be treated as equal rights holders."

She continued "all outcomes of the summit aimed at addressing large movements of refugees and migrants needed to be grounded in, and guided by existing human rights standards including the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination which states including Ireland have ratified and agreed to be bound by. Any change in the global governance of migration needs to improve not reduce rights".

Ms Crickley acknowledged the role played by Ireland as co-chair for the development of the Declarations of the summit, which are a step in the right direction. She however expressed concern at the lack of clarity regarding detention of children and the multiple discriminations experienced by women migrants and refugees.

Ms Crickley reiterated the need for actions by states including Ireland to create environments where migrants and refugees are not just tolerated but treated as equals. This means going beyond integration strategies to addressing one of the main barriers to integration -racism. There also needs to be a clear separation between enforcement functions and essential services so that people can access justice, education, social services and work without fear of deportation as recently recommended by the Council of Europe

While congratulating Ireland's international role in preparation for the summit, Ms Crickley said, "the summit has created a unique and timely opportunity to refocus responses in Ireland with renewed urgency".

Ms Crickley in her role as Chairperson of Community Work Ireland, and a founder of the Migrants Rights Centre Ireland, said "There could be no room for complacency at home. Many of the recommendations of the McMahon Report remain to be implemented, less than a quarter of the refugees we promised to give refuge to have arrived a year later, undocumented migrants who make essential contributions to our economy still languish in limbo and we continue speak of the integration of migrants and refugees without reference to addressing the racism they can experience. This is unacceptable".

She continued "Ireland has an important role to play in continuing to shape the global way forward on migration and refugee issues, and needs to reflect that in our contributions to EU discussions as well as our policies at home."

Ms Crickley concluded " Ireland has its own migration history and we must work to ensure both at home and elsewhere, those who migrate or move for whatever reason are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve as human beings with inalienable human rights".

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