**FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 45th session of the Human Rights Council**

**Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on Covid-19: Human rights of migrants**

Covid-19 has been a painful disruptor that leads us to rethink what we see as possible.

Border closures across the world that seemed impossible in December are still with us now. The disruption these closures have caused, including to those of us in this room today, is a reminder that migration is a fundamental facet of human behaviour. Neither the pandemic nor the responses to it have halted the movement of people but they have highlighted yet again the human rights violations experienced by many people in migration.

Learning from what the pandemic has shown us we must, as the Secretary General has said, build back better. Building back better in migration governance means integrating international human rights law and the cooperative framework States agreed in the Global Compact for Migration to ensure people centred and human rights based approaches.

We welcome human rights based pandemic responses that have included firewalls between healthcare and immigration enforcement, regularisation, and release from immigration detention. Continuing and expanding these measures are steps to building back better.

We call on all States to learn from these examples and draw on guidance from OHCHR,[[1]](#footnote-1) the UN Network on Migration[[2]](#footnote-2) and the Secretary General.[[3]](#footnote-3) We also call on all States to recognise the role the Human Rights Council can play in this regard, not just in developing standards and guidance but also in monitoring when the human rights of migrants are violated and ending impunity for these violations.

We ask you to rethink what is possible from the Council and encourage you, as first step, to hold a Panel to hear from migrants about the violations they face and the visions they have for post-covid migration governance that upholds the dignity and rights of all of us regardless of the borders we cross or why we cross them.

We ask the High Commissioner what else the Council can do to help achieve this?

\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\*

Delivered by Laurel Townhead

1. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/OHCHRGuidance_COVID19_Migrants.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Policy Briefs on COVID-19 and immigration detention, access to services, protecting migrant workers, and the Global Compact for Migration: <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/covid-19> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_people_on_the_move.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)