**FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 48th session of the Human Rights Council**

**General Debate Item 2: Oral Update of the High Commissioner**

Thank you, High Commissioner, for your oral update, your focus on the climate crisis and your attention to specific human rights situations and the connection these have to migration and displacement.

Five years ago, at the summit on large movements of refugees and migrants States noted the impacts of climate change amongst factors that compel people to move, alongside armed conflict, poverty, food insecurity, persecution, terrorism, and human rights violations and abuses.[[1]](#footnote-1) All issues covered by this Council. As the Council takes this work forward, we ask all States to recall their own words in the New York Declaration when they said:

We are determined to save lives. Our challenge is above all moral and humanitarian.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Reports from the Special Rapporteur on Migrants, alongside your oral updates and monitoring reports from your Office[[3]](#footnote-3) describe many failures in the face of this challenge.

We encourage wide use of the Trainer’s Guide on Human Rights at International Borders, recently published by your Office jointly with the Office of Counter-Terrorism.[[4]](#footnote-4)

However, training of border guards is not enough, as you have so clearly highlighted in your reports on COVID-19[[5]](#footnote-5) and racial injustice,[[6]](#footnote-6) systemic problems need systemic responses.

We call on the Council to uphold the safety, dignity and human rights of all and complement its work on the human rights of migrants by strengthening commitment to the right to seek asylum, international protection and the principle of non-refoulment in relevant resolutions, and by considering what monitoring and accountability activities are needed to demonstrate and deliver on that stated determination to save lives.

\*\*\* Ends \*\*\*

Delivered by Laurel Townhead

1. New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, A/RES/71/1, paragraph 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, A/RES/71/1, paragraph 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For example: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (August 2021) [*A Pandemic of Exclusion The impact of COVID-19 on the human rights of migrants in Libya*](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/A_pandemic_of_exclusion.pdf)*;* : Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (May 2021) [*“Lethal Disregard” Search and rescue and the protection of migrants in the central Mediterranean Sea*](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/OHCHR-thematic-report-SAR-protection-at-sea.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [Human Rights at International Borders: A Trainer’s Guide (published jointly with the Office of Counter-Terrorism)](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/HR-InternationalBorders.aspx) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the enjoyment of human rights around the world, including good practices and areas of concern, [A/HRC/46/19](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/46/19) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers, [A/HRC/47/53](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/47/53) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)