Thank you Chair.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a worldwide disruption in all spheres of life. In terms of particular groups, the pandemic has disproportionally affected migrants, especially those in an irregular situation, and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities.

The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants in his report on the impact of COVID-19 provides an extensive analysis, from which I would like to highlight 3 crucial points[[1]](#footnote-1):

* By February 2021, 144 States had closed their borders or had restricted access to their territory, in June 2020 **99 countries made no exemptions for those seeking asylum.**[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Polarized narratives have fueled health fears and constructed perceptions exacerbating discrimination, racism, xenophobia and stigmatization. Such negative rhetoric and some media reports **have portrayed migrants as threats and have falsely scapegoated them as COVID-19 carriers**.
* According to the International Organization for Migration, in May 2021, **in more than 53 countries, and territories, people in the most vulnerable situations including migrants did not have access to COVID-19 vaccines.**

In line with this, we urge Member States to ensure the following:

* Include all migrants, regardless of status, in vaccination plans, economic recovery plans and protocols on a non-discriminatory basis.
* Ensure that any border closures do not violate international human rights law including the right to seek asylum and international protection.
* Investigate, prosecute and provide effective remedies in cases of racism, discrimination and xenophobia affecting migrants; and reverse rhetoric that stigmatizes and reinforces harmful narratives.

To finish our question for the Panel is: how does discrimination on basis of migration status intersect with discrimination against the particular groups that you have spoken about this morning? What measures would you recommend for intersectional responses that include migrants?

Thank you.

1. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Migration/SRMigrants/Pages/COVID.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/SG-Policy-Brief-on-People-on-the-Move.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)