

**Speech of Eni Lestari Andayani Adi
Chairperson, International Migrant's Alliance (IMA)
At Opening Session of UN Summit of Large Movement of Refugees and Migrants
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Your Excellences, UN Secretary General, Presidents of General Assembly and Distinguished Guests,

I am honored to stand before you today on behalf of the 244 million migrants all over the world. After years of being voiceless and invisible, we - the migrants - are finally welcomed here to speak for ourselves.

We are the peoples who have been denied the future, the rights and the dream we used to imagine. When I was young, I dreamt of reaching a higher education and making a contribution to my family and society.

But the worsening crisis affected my family in Indonesia and millions of poor people, where we wake up everyday to a reality of unemployment, lack of chance for education, eroding social services, loss of land and deepening poverty.

Like many others, I did not have choice but to work abroad as migrant domestic worker. So that I could put food on our table, pay off my parent's debt and bring my siblings to school.

However, the reality of migration speaks otherwise. For the majority of us, the promise of a better future is a lie. We are trapped into debt bondage, trafficked or tricked into slavery, our basic rights denied, vulnerable to abuses, many disappeared and even died.

Our dream has become a nightmare. A nightmare driven by a system that creates profits for those is migration business and allows companies to push down wages. Our future is bleak.

We expect protection and services but we are left alone to deal with our sufferings. We are alone in a system that does not value the rights and dignity of migrants, does not recognize us as workers or people – but merely cheap labour or commodities.

Our vulnerability is exploited. Moreover, the policies on migration reinforce our invisibility. We are perceived as security threats, yet we are transformed into an industry that generates billions in remittance that some governments talk as development opportunity.

In our experience, no matter how much we sacrifice, migration does not guarantee development that can enable us to go home with a decent life. No matter how hard we work, we are never recognized as workers and humans with dignity and equality.

Do we wish to be vulnerable? No. We wish to be seen and heard; not marginalized and excluded. We wish respect to our humanity. Migrants in different part of the world are collectively struggling and organizing to make our dreams come true.

I speak before you today with a clear message. Do not talk about us without us. We have answers and we have been voicing them. Listen and talk with us about migration, development and human rights. International conventions designed to protect us have been ratified. But they remain in a paper and not in action.

You want us to remit but what we need is for you to commit – to justice, to a development that does not tear families apart and to a future that relies on the strength of its people, not to the continued export and exploitation of our labour.

In two years, you are set to forge a global compact for us. Let's make it real and actionable. Frame it as rights-based and make sure its implementation will lessen displacement or forced migration, resolves conflict and the root causes of poverty.

Let's work for a world without vulnerability, insecurity or invisibility. As people, as workers, as women, as migrants – we are ready to make this happen. Work with us.

Thank you. Terima kasih.