

**Remarks by Dr. Madeleine K. Albright**  
**Dialogue Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact**  
**for Migration**  
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Distinguished chairs, your excellencies, I am delighted to be here and pleased to see so many familiar faces, including my friend and former colleague, Secretary General Gurría.

I want to express my appreciation to Special Representative Arbour for inviting me to join this important dialogue. It is a special honor to be here on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has so much to do with our subject today.

Naturally, this setting reminds me of my own years as America's permanent representative to the United Nations and Secretary of State.

I will always treasure the time that I served my country, but I want to make clear that the thoughts I will offer today are my own; I am not here as an official representative of the United States or anyone else.

And since I long ago ceased being a diplomat, I hope you will permit me to speak bluntly about the topic of migration.

I want to begin on a personal note.

My earliest memories in life are from London, where my family arrived in 1939 as refugees from the Nazi invasion of our native Czechoslovakia.

In the apartment building where we first lived, we met exiles from Poland, Hungary, France and elsewhere across Europe who had comparable stories to tell.

We were thankful for the haven we received but prayed for the day when we could go home.

After the war we did return to Czechoslovakia, but following the Communist coup we were once again forced into exile, this time to the United States of America.

Although we were refugees, I should emphasize that we were lucky ones.

No one threatened to put us in shipping containers, and we arrived in our new homeland on an ocean liner, not an overcrowded raft. In fact, it was 70 years ago last month – November 11, 1948 – that we sailed into New York harbor, past the statue of liberty.

I mention all this because I find it to be impossible to be coldly analytical on the subject of migration. And I also know, from personal experience, that the movement of people from their homes does not occur without good cause.

Most of us would prefer to remain in places where our families live, our names are known, our customs accepted, and our languages spoken.

However, hope is another basic human trait, and so millions of people each year do try to migrate, both legally and



born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and sh

Here, a doctrine of shared responsibility such as that described by President Reagan is essential. This can best be realized through the fair representation of diverse interests, informed debate, respect for truth, and the equitable implementation of just laws.