

IOM Council

H.E. Ms. Caroline Gennez

Belgian Minister of Development Cooperation and Major Cities Policy

“Climate impact on human mobility: a global call for solutions”

5 min

- Dear Chairman, Director General, Excellencies,
- Around the world, the consequences of the climate crisis are already having major impacts. **Those who are most vulnerable have to carry the heaviest burden.** For this reason, as a Minister of International Solidarity, supporting our partners to prepare for and adapt to climate change is one of my absolute top priorities.
- As we all know, climate change has an impact on **people’s movements and migration.** The environment and climate in which people live has always played a role in people’s decisions to migrate.
- However, as the IPCC recognized, climate change now has an aggravating impact and multiplier effect on migration in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. More political efforts are needed to lead us to more innovative solutions.

- **First of all, more action is needed to address the climate crisis itself.**
  - The Belgian development cooperation is currently working on **a new strategy for its climate action**. It will take a crosscutting approach that calls on all Belgian actors to play a part in our response to the challenges caused by climate change, in the broader context of the triple planetary crisis (climate, biodiversity, pollution).
  - Our vision is to strengthen international cooperation and solidarity to work towards a safe and healthy planet for all. Belgium wants to contribute to the sustainable improvement of the wellbeing of vulnerable populations, particularly in the least developed countries, with a focus on Africa. Belgium will help boost resources for adaptation measures, responding to the needs and requests of its partner countries.
- **Secondly**, to help address the climate crisis, policy coherence for sustainable development is key. We will make sure that the climate strategy is complementary to our Strategy on migration and development.

- By **mainstreaming migration** and integrating it into the policies, strategies and programmes of the Belgian Development Cooperation, significant results can be achieved. We aim to promote the potential of migration for sustainable development and at the same time, to contribute to climate change-adaptive solutions.
- Thirdly, we need **action on the ground**. Various projects implemented by our Development Agency Enabel contribute to making people and communities in our partner countries more resilient against the adverse consequences of climate change. Professional mobility is used to develop and exchange climate- innovative solutions and skills to address climate-induced migration. Other programmes dealing with fragility or agriculture (e.g. in Burkina Faso and Niger) address climate-induced migration and the impact of displacement on the environment.
- Lastly, it is necessary to intensify discussions on how we can better manage migration, so it doesn't further increase the vulnerabilities of both the people migrating and of host communities. Discussions on regular pathways are needed to respond to sudden changes in the environment.

- So, all in all, much to talk about. I would like to thank the IOM for organizing this timely discussion and wish you a fruitful debate!