**Joint Statement: migrant children and adolescents**

**General Debate, item 3**

**45th Session of the Human Rights Council**

Thank you Madame President:

I have the honor to present this Joint Statement on behalf of El Salvador and a group of like-minded countries, concerning the current situation of human rights of migrant children and adolescents.

We consider that, due to their vulnerability, children should be the center of attention for member states in the United Nations system, particularly now because of the critical moments we are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the situation of the human rights of children.

Human mobility is an inherent part of our current reality. In this regard, we recognize the multi-causal nature of migration, resulting from structural factors that link countries of origin, transit and destination in search for solutions and opportunities before the challenges of such migration movements.

In this context, we highlight the importance of States to guarantee the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrant, displaced and refugee children and adolescents, regardless of their migratory status.

We call all States to preserve the principle of the best interest of the child as a primary consideration in their migratory cycle, of their relatives, as well the family unity, and to promote their psychological and physical integrity, and the right to education and to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health.

We also recognize the efforts made by governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society, local governments and the United Nations system in the countries of origin, transit and destination, in providing care and guaranteeing the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrant children and adolescents, particularly those unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents, for which we reiterate the call to the international community to continue supporting these efforts.

We call the Human Rights Council to seize permanently on this matter. Also, we request the cooperation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to implement specific programs and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of the human rights of migrant children and adolescents, in accordance with the rules and principles of the International Human Rights Law.

We welcome the "Secretary-General's Policy Brief: COVID-19 and People on the Move" and support its four (4) basic tenets to guide human mobility response.

We urge Member States to display greater solidarity during these difficult times, recognizing the shared responsibility and strengthening bilateral, sub regional, regional and multilateral cooperation, with the view of improving the protection, well-being, safe voluntary return and effective reintegration of migrant children and adolescents, as well as to guarantee that in the response and recovery measures of the COVID-19 pandemic, no one is left behind.

Finally we reiterate our commitment to fully guarantee the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrant children and adolescents, in broad cooperation with the United Nations human rights system.

I thank you Madame President.