

Tunis, 08th June 2021

IOM and UNHCR join efforts and sign a Memorandum of Understanding in Tunisia.

TUNIS – To strengthen their efforts for the protection of persons under their mandates, the International Organization for Migrations (IOM) and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 8th June 2021. The aim of this MoU is to establish a framework for collaboration and coordination between the two agencies in Tunisia.

The areas in which the cooperation will be strengthened include the provision of humanitarian assistance, the timely identification of international protection needs, the development of protection pathways or pathways for refugees and migrants in vulnerable situations, local integration, the protection of victims of trafficking, of unaccompanied or separated children, and the voluntary return of migrants to their country of origin.

The MoU will also allow strengthening joint capacity building and advocacy aimed at enhancing the protection and assistance of vulnerable migrants, refugees, and other persons in need of international protection and support the efforts of the Tunisian authorities. The MoU will be accompanied by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that will ensure the smooth and effective cooperation between the organizations in their operations.

In a context in which both parties are faced with the challenges represented by the stark increase in the number of people arriving by sea or entering Tunisia by land and air, and by the need of ensuring the emergency assistance to new arrivals, the close coordination between the two organizations becomes critical. This requires the concerted efforts of both parties that can ensure to maximize the efficiency of IOM and UNHCR interventions in support to the authorities.

“We are closely working with UNHCR Tunisia at all levels and commit to continue a regular strategic joint dialogue and partnership to steer progress at highest level on key priorities to serve best the mandate of our respective organizations and our beneficiaries”, underlined Samri Azzouz, IOM’s Chief of Mission to Tunisia.

“IOM is one of UNHCR’s key partners in addressing the challenges of mixed movements and both agencies’ joint efforts show the real partnership we have, and I hope this initiative can be replicated in the future to other areas of work”, added Hanan Hamdan, UNHCR Representative in Tunisia.

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The signature ceremony was organized in the Blue House, with the participation of Ms. Carmela GODEAU, IOM's Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, Mr. Ayman GHARAIBEH, UNHCR's Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, Mr. Arnaud PERAL, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Tunisia and Dr. Hanan HAMDAN, UNHCR's Representative in Tunisia, Mr. Azzouz SAMRI, IOM's Chief of Mission in Tunisia, as well as senior representatives of both organizations.