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UNGA 80: African Migration Observatory Hosts High-Level Panel on Fostering Partnerships to Advance African Ownership, Data Justice, and Harmonised Migration Data Governance



On the margins of the High-Level Week of the 80th Session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 80), the African Migration Observatory (AMO) hosted an event on September 18 to 19, 2025, at the AU Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union (AU) to the United Nations (UN) in New York, held under the broader theme **“Fostering Partnerships to Advance African Ownership: Data Justice and Harmonized Migration Data Governance.”**

Building on AMO’s engagement at UNGA 79 in 2024, which brought African voices and data-driven insights into global conversations, the event deepened discussions on overcoming data fragmentation and advancing African-led solutions in migration governance, while underscoring the urgency of translating continental efforts into coherent, sustainable, and internationally recognized actions. Closely aligned with the African Union’s 2025 Theme of the Year, **“Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations.”**



Opening the session, Ambassador Dr. Namira Negm, Director of AMO, reaffirmed the Observatory's core mandate of advancing African ownership of migration data and mobility governance frameworks, stressing that global debates are too often shaped by external narratives and fragmented statistics, whereas in reality 80% of African migration occurs within the continent, making accurate, harmonized, and timely data essential for protection, sustainable development, and policy-making. She emphasized that achieving justice in migration data requires placing African realities

and priorities at the centre of global discourse. Fragmented statistics, she noted, fail to capture the true dynamics of African mobility, making it essential to build harmonized, timely, and African-led data systems that can effectively support protection, sustainable development, and evidence-based policymaking.

Dr. Negm stressed the Observatory's commitment to building capacity among AU member states, highlighting that 47 African countries already generate migration-related data but face challenges in harmonization, analysis, and frequency of collection. She also noted AMO's progress in establishing regional migration data hubs, starting with the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) and expanding to other Regional Economic Communities (RECs).



The discussion brought together, Member States and UN officials. Mr. Giovanni Bassu, Deputy Director of UNHCR's New York Office, reaffirmed UNHCR's collaboration with AMO and emphasized the critical importance integration of refugees, IDP, and stateless persons' statistics into national systems. "Reliable data is indispensable for protection, socio-economic inclusion, and evidence-based policy," he said, calling for greater interoperability, governance frameworks, and

human capacity to counter fragmentation.

The Permanent Mission of Morocco reiterated its strong support for AMO, recalling the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, AU Champion on Migration, who has consistently advocated for robust migration data systems. Morocco underscored the importance of standardized migration profiles, census integration, regional technical working groups, and investment in training to strengthen national and continental data governance.

The discussions also explored the potential of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and big data, to bridge critical information gaps, alongside the

pressing need to collect and classify data on climate mobility, an increasingly significant driver of displacement in Africa. Participants acknowledged recent international legal opinions affirming protection principles for climate-displaced populations, stressing the importance of stronger global cooperation. The session further emphasized that ownership and governance of migration data remain central to justice, sovereignty, and fairness, ensuring that African states retain full authority over how data concerning their populations is collected, interpreted, and applied in international forums.

In closing, Ambassador Negm stressed the importance of collective action: “We must continue working with our partners, UN agencies, regional organizations, and member states to save lives and improve the lives of people on the move. Challenging harmful narratives and addressing gaps in migration data are essential to delivering justice, achieving Africa’s Agenda 2063, and fulfilling the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.”

The event marked AMO’s second annual side event during UNGA High-Level Week, consolidating its growing role as a key African voice on migration governance and data justice at the global stage

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