



18 December 2014 – On this [International Migrants Day](#) , IOM Director-General William Lacy Swing calls for urgent action to save the lives of migrants, stop smugglers from exploiting their desperation, and address the drivers of irregular migration.

While the share of international migrants in the world population remains constant at around 3 per cent, the number of displaced people is the highest since World War II, with 33.3 million people internally displaced and 16.7 million refugees.

Additionally, 2014 was the deadliest year on record, with double the number of last year’s deaths. According to the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)), some 5,000 migrants lost their lives this year at sea or in remote deserts and mountains, with the highest death toll in the Mediterranean, where over 3,000 people drowned. Those who survive often face exploitation and discrimination.

