



On 18 December, the world will observe International Migrants Day.

The theme chosen for the Day this year is the United Nations Secretary General's campaign against xenophobia: #Together.

Offices for the International Organisation for Migration ([IOM](#)) around the world are marking this Day with a candlelight vigil for the second year in a row to celebrate the positive contributions that migrants make to our societies, to recognize and honour their struggles and the challenges they face, and also to remember those who died this year trying to reach a better life.

The UN in Brussels will join with IOM to mark the day on Friday 16 December to stand together #ForMigration.

To celebrate the many positive contributions that migrants make across societies, IOM has launched a [Global Migration Film Festival](#), the first of its kind, which will pay tribute to the many films that capture the beauty and challenges of migration – bringing these realities to audiences in Europe and around the world.

The launch coincides with the observance of IOM's 65th Anniversary, on 5th December, and will roll out as a worldwide event with screenings in at least 82 countries. The Festival concludes on 18th December, International Migrants Day. [\[1\]](#)

The Global Migration Film Festival made its debut in Brussels with a screening of '[Reis zonder terugkeer -Voyage sans retour](#)', a film set in the heart of the immigrant community in Belgium and in the midst of men and women of Moroccan or Turkish origin.

When asked what the contribution of migrants is to the host country, Hassan Semlali, who features in the film said that "my greatest contribution has been hard work and participation in society". A statement reiterated by Ms Latifa Abdelkader who said that "working and contributing to the social system is the best way to integrate."

This global event is partnering with the United Nations [Together](#) Campaign for respect, safety and dignity for all refugees and migrants.

The Together campaign is unfolding across the globe at a crucial time, as extreme right-wing political parties "are fomenting divisiveness and dangerous myths, [...] once-moderate countries are seeing xenophobia rise sharply", according to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. [\[2\]](#)

The UN Together Campaign aims to counter some of the misinformation and misperceptions on refugees and migrants and encourages contact between refugees, migrants and those in the destination countries. [\[3\]](#)

The Campaign was launched at the United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants in September of this year. At this Summit, with representatives of nearly two hundred nation states

looking on, IOM Director General William Lacy Swing signed a document formally linking IOM to the United Nations. This gave the UN an explicit migration mandate for the first time. [\[4\]](#)

In support of the Together campaign, IOM is implementing an inclusive and participatory campaign called ' [I am a migrant](#) ' which provides a platform to gather and share the personal stories of migrants.

I am a Migrant aims to challenge anti-migrant stereotypes and hate speech in politics and society by showing that migrants have very diverse faces, stories, aspirations and dreams that we can relate to and learn from. Watch this video to find out more:

[1] <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-launch-global-migration-film-festival-5-18-december>

[2] <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53485#.WE6OyfkK8>

[3] <http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/together>

[4] <http://www.iom.int/news/summit-refugees-and-migrants-opens-iom-joins-united-nations>