



IOM and the UN are participating in the 20 Km of Brussels, in support of the IOM Campaign: "The Contribution of Migrants: It's Amazing what Migrants bring"

Brussels - This year, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has launched a world-wide campaign on the positive contribution of migrants to the society.

In spite of their increasing presence, crucial and overwhelmingly positive role in modern society, migrants and their contributions to home and host societies remain largely unknown and misrepresented. The general public's image and representation of migrants is an unbalanced, predominantly negative one; a perception based on uninformed assumptions and stereotypes.

On that occasion, and amongst other initiatives, the IOM Country Office (CO) for Belgium and Luxembourg has set up a team to run for the 20 km of Brussels on Sunday 18 May 2014 at Parc Cinquantenaire/Jubelpark (departure at 10:00 am).

Under the patronage of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, the 20 km of Brussels is a major event in Belgium, getting together runners and joggers from 121 different nationalities.

The IOM&UN team comprises 32 people representing various organizations, amongst which IOM Brussels, IOM The Hague, the United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Federal Public Service Interior, etc. People in the team originate from a wide range of countries around the world, namely: Belgium, Canada, China, Congo DRC, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Swaziland, The Netherlands and Tunisia.

Mr Pascal Reyntjens, Chief of Mission of the IOM CO for Belgium and Luxembourg, concludes: "When moving around the world, each individual migrant is bringing various skills to home and host societies. Going beyond the usual stereotypes, our international team will run - and walk - with one voice and put all efforts together to commonly highlight this positive message."

5 participants will run with suitcases for the first 2 kilometers, with generic photos highlighting different migrant profiles and individual stories, telling their particular contribution (strength for building, training in intensive care, love of teaching, etc.).

For more information, please contact:

- Mrs. Géraldine d'Hoop, Information and Communication Focal Point, IOM CO for Belgium and Luxembourg, gdhoop@iom.int, tel: +32 2 287 74 12 or +32 473 28 18 46. You can also visit: www.belgium.iom.int; www.migrantscontribute.com

- Mr Christophe Verhellen, Communication Officer, United Nations Regional Information Center, verhellen@unric.org, tel: +32 2 788 84 54 or +32 475 90 63 60. You can also visit: www.unric.org