“Statement of Introduction” to the

4th Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of RCPs on Migration: 22-23 May 2013
Lima, Peru

William Lacy Swing, Director General, International Organization for Migration
Time: 22 May, 08:30, after Director of Ceremonies’ Introductory remarks,

Your Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Peru,

Your Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

IOM is honoured to be a co-organizer of this important gathering with our generous host, the Government of Peru.

The 2011 Botswana RCP demonstrated the many participating governments’ strong interest in RCPs; this fourth global meeting of chairs and secretariats meeting is evidence of states’ awareness of the continued and growing impact of RCPs and inter-regional fora on migration governance.

The spread and success of RCPs and inter-regional fora reflects an important change: States see the value of working together to address the global migration challenges on the basis of consensus, the value of sharing migration related benefits without compromising their sovereign prerogatives, and the value of overcoming migration challenges that might otherwise prove intractable.

With these achievements in mind, I would like to raise three topics relevant to the immediate future of global collaboration on migration governance:

1- What mechanisms would States find useful to facilitate regular and beneficial dialogue between the various fora for inter-State migration dialogue?

2- What messages will give RCPs the greatest influence on the second UN GA High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development this October 2013?

3- IOM support for RCPs and Inter-regional fora
1) **Expansion in Regional, Inter-Regional and Global Dialogue on Migration**

Since the first RCP – the IGC – in 1985, State-led migration dialogue has expanded rapidly at the regional, inter-regional and global levels. What began with a European focus is now diverse: there are now eighteen RCPs covering almost every region in the world.

Since the previous global meeting, more than 175 RCP and IRF meetings, from high level conferences to technical workshops, have been held around the world, resulting in consensus-based and result-focused approaches to a wide variety of migration concerns.

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), a state-lead forum resulting from the first HLD in 2006, has a list of chairs that reflects its global nature: Belgium, followed by Philippines, Greece, Mexico, Switzerland, Mauritius, Sweden now, and Turkey next.

The 2010 GFMD conference in Puerto Vallarta highlighted how loosely structured inter-regional fora can unite countries from different regions around deliberations on a variety of migration issues.

A question raised in a variety of fora, most notably at GFMD summits, is how the various regional, inter-regional and global processes interact with each other. The thematic meetings in 2011 generated considerable productive interchange between the GFMD and RCPs, but States also expressed the view that, while regional processes on migration provide experience for the GFMD, the RCPs and IRFs are distinct and should remain independent of the GFMD.
This October’s second United Nations General Assembly’s High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) in New York raises the question of what structures would be most suitable for the many inter-State fora to interact in a regular and constructive way with international organizations. This question is also relevant to development of the UN post-2015 Development Agenda and to role of the Global Migration Group.

IOM will continue, as the leading global migration agency, to use its expertise to promote migration for the benefit of all – and in a way that acknowledges government proprietorship of consensus-building consultative processes as well as the importance and benefits that result from these meetings. As such, IOM will continue to support the GFMD’s objective of engendering regular global dialogue on migration and development. IOM’s commitment to enhancing the GMG’s effectiveness is substantiated in several improvements proposed to this end – including;

a) a no-cost secretariat hosted by IOM; and

b) a 2-chair structure with IOM as permanent chair to create continuity

2) Key Messages for the UNGA/High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

This second HLD provides a rare opportunity to improve the governance of migration for years to come, with a strong impact on migration and development from the local to the global levels, while keeping the rights and well-being of migrants at the centre of the debate.
The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution (No. A/RES/65/170) of March 2011 invites Member States to contribute to the HLD, through regional consultative processes, among other mechanisms. Your deliberations, presented in the resulting Joint Statement, can be a powerful driver for a productive and successful second HLD.

SRSG Sutherland’s Special Advisor will update us on preparations for the HLD and further clarify how this forum can contribute.

IOM’s HLD paper, circulated to all member states, articulates policy and institutional outcomes that will improve rights-based development outcomes for all migrants and their families, as well as societies.

The 6 desired policy outcomes are to:
1. Improve public perceptions of migrants;
2. Factor migration into development planning;
3. Protect the human rights of all migrants;
4. Manage migration in crisis situations;
5. Enhance evidence-building and knowledge-based policymaking on migration;
6. Promote policy coherence and institutional development.

The 5 desired institutional outcomes are:
1. Recognition of the contribution of migrants and migration to all three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental);
2. Renewed commitment to protection of the human rights of all migrants;
3. Systematic inclusion of migration issues in the post-2015 UN development agenda;
4. A strengthened GMG, including more permanent IOM role to promote effectiveness and continuity;

5. Due recognition of IOM’s role as the global lead agency on migration: no need for duplication through new or UN agencies;

The HLD is also an opportunity to prepare the ground for further gains in migration in the post-2015 UN Development Agenda and ICPD+20 review by enhancing partnership with governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities -- including migrant organizations -- to ensure the **sustainable integration of migration within pro-poor development processes and broader sectoral planning** at all levels.

3) IOM Role in RCPs and Inter-Regional Fora: Key Actions

IOM will continue to support states to formulate cooperative approaches for overcoming migration challenges, while ensuring that the ownership of resulting mechanism rests where it belongs – with the states. Allow me to present you with some examples of IOM’s key activities in this area since we met in Gaborone.

At the request of Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), IOM provided the technical support that led to an initial reflection meeting sponsored and hosted by the Government of Congo in Brazzaville in 2011 on behalf of the 10 Central African member states. The outcome was an agreement between nine **Central African countries** to work together on establishing the **Migration and Development Dialogue Forum (MIDCAS)** as a forum for dialogue on their most pressing migration issues.
In the Caribbean, IOM supports a number of countries’ evaluations of how to create the most satisfactory mechanism for consultation on migration issues.

Following the 2011 Almaty Ministerial Conference, IOM has partnered with UNHCR to support the Government of Kazakhstan in establishing a migration dialogue—the Almaty Process. This fledging process will bring together Central Asian states and other countries in the region with shared migration concerns. Plans regarding post-2014 Afghanistan will be among the issues for discussion.

IOM continues to work closely with a number of key CIS bodies, including the Executive Committee, the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly and the Council of the Heads of Migration Agencies. In June, for instance, IOM is co-organizing -- with the CIS ExCom and the Russian Federal Migration Service -- a preparatory event for the UN HLD in the margins of the Council of the Heads of Migration Agencies. IOM has been working in the region for over 20 years, notably on the CIS Conference Process, and I am particularly pleased about the ongoing developments, which enable cooperative action and strengthen linkages between migration and development.

The 2009 IOM-commissioned assessment of RCPs by Prof. Randall Hansen, echoed in subsequent GFMD discussions, identified the need for continued review of RCPs to identify how states can best engage with them. Following this recommendation, IOM has produced the paper *Regional Inter-state Consultation Mechanisms on Migration: Approaches, Recent Activities and Implications for Global Governance of Migration.*
**Conclusion**

Before I close, I would like to summarize the 3 key points I have made.

**First**, state-driven fora for dialogues on migrations are well-established: Most countries participate in at least one RCP -- evidence that states recognize RCPs’ importance in addressing new and increasingly complex migration challenges. This is a great achievement in improving migration for the benefit of all. Closer interaction and communication is the logical next step for increased effectiveness through shared experience.

**Second**, the second HLD challenges us all to recognize migrants’ contributions to the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), and prepare the ground systematic inclusion of migration in the post-2015 UN development agenda. How can we claim to strive for equitable development if we ignore the 1 billion migrants – not to mention the other billions whose lives migrants sustain through labor and social and financial remittances?

Due recognition of IOM’s role as the global lead agency on migration is essential to achieve these gains effectively. A more effective and responsive GMG would also be very beneficial.

**Third**, wherever IOM can we will provide the support you request, in partnership with other organizations, to sustain the valuable processes that your governments have created. IOM will continue to do this discreetly within our core work, fully respecting the state-driven character of your achievements.
Since we last met in Gaborone, the DDG and I have been honoured to participate in many of your meetings: our presence reflects IOM’s abiding belief in the importance of state-led regional, inter-regional and global consultative processes on migration.

In closing, I would like to thank the governments of Switzerland and of the United States of America for their generous contributions to this meeting. I would also like to acknowledge the financial and in-kind contributions of several other donors to various RCPs. These contributions are critical to RCPs’ capacity to fulfil their potential for sustained inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration issues.

I wish you luck with your deliberations and look forward to a Joint Statement as a means to positively influence the HLD this October and the post-2015 discussions after that.