

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

**William Lacy Swing, Director General  
International Organization for Migration**

**International Dialogue on Migration  
12 October 2016, Geneva**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd like to begin this closing session by thanking all of you for your presence and contributions over past the two days. I also want to thank Ms. Jill Helke, our Director of Department of International Cooperation and Partnership, Mz Azzouz Samri, who heads our Governing Bodies Division, and other in Director Helke's Department.

The IDM -- now on its 16<sup>th</sup> year -- has, once again, demonstrated its value as a platform to explore policy issues -- issues of current, often urgent, interest to the international migration community -- Member States, academia, the private sector, international organizations and, most importantly, migrants themselves.

This 2nd IDM workshop in 2016 has given us an early opportunity **to assess progress in the implementation process of migration related SDGs**. It is very early in the process -- and we have another 15 years to reach all the goals and targets. Nonetheless, Member States clearly feel that it is not too soon to get into the habit of monitoring and measuring the impact of our endeavours.

My opening remarks contained three Cs, let me try to summarize some of the points that were made by using three Ps (Progress, Policy and Practicality):

### **1- Progress**

Many speakers highlighted the major progress, in recent years, on issues related to migration and development. Fifteen years ago a discussion such as the

one we had this week would not have been possible. At that time, as the international community had not yet fully grasped the link between migration and development (you will recall that migration was glaringly absent from the MDGs). You have identified several areas of progress:

1. The very fact that the UNGA convened a Summit assembling Heads of States on migration for the first time in 71 years is in itself historic.
2. It is, therefore, not surprising that participants identified **IOM's entry into the UN system as an important marker of progress.**
3. Another important marker of progress is **the decision by world leaders to create a process leading toward a Global Compact on Migration.**
4. Another area in which several governments, have made significant progress is diaspora engagement. In fact, we heard from the Honorable Minister from Mali as well as from our migrant's voice panel that the diaspora themselves are increasingly engaged in migration governance -- and can greatly contribute to the achievement of migration-related SDG goals and targets. As the distinguished State Minister of Portugal very rightly pointed out, for migrants to be actors of their own development, states need to encourage civic participation of migrants in host societies; and to strengthen their sense of belonging and their co-responsibility in building a common destiny.

## **2- Policy**

“Policy” was one of the most commonly used word in our discussions.

As DG Stefano Maservisi of DEVCO said, we need to change the approach of development policies **from a defensive to a more proactive one.** Development policies can no longer be solely geared towards eliminating poverty and lowering inequalities as a means to stop migration. Development policies

must also address migration as a mega-trend of our century -- and migrants as agents of development. We must consider both the short-term and long-term impact of migration and development policies. While pull factors of migration will always exist, it is in everyone`s interest to address the push factors, i.e., the drivers or root causes.

Most speakers also highlighted the need for evidence-based and whole-of-government approaches to migration. We need to build the capacity to collect and analyze migration data to arm ourselves to respond with facts to the too-often toxic discourse on migration.

IOM will fully play its role in supporting Member States to strengthen their capacities in this area (GMDAC).

### **3- Practicality**

We heard throughout these two days the need to move beyond conceptualization and process and start the implementation of migration aspects of SDGs through concrete actions. We need to give life to the SDGs. We heard practical measures already put in place by many countries.

In this regard, we heard a number of concrete examples including:

- Work being done on ethical recruitment through IRIS
- Work on defining and measuring target 10.7 with the Migration Governance Framework and the Migration Governance Index
- The honorable Minister of State from France and the World Bank on their work in reducing the cost of remittances.
- Many panelists also mentioned the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) guidelines that are starting to be launched.

Finally, speakers highlighted the importance of localizing the SDGs and of translating the global list of indicators into national ones that fit countries`

specific context. Effective implementation of migration goals and targets requires the involvement local actors who have the role to translate the SDGs into local development policies. IOM has always called for a more important role for local authorities and engaged them in a global discussion at the IDM 2015 Conference on Migrants and Cities.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, discussions in the past two days called again for states and migration actors to collaborate and thus put their commitments regarding migration in the 2030 agenda into practice. Panelists applauded the inclusion in the NY declaration of a proposal for a global compact on migration and recognized it to be an opportunity for states to bring their commitments regarding migration in the SDGs further by developing a framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migration and human mobility. I heard your call for IOM to play a leading role in the process, and also the importance to have an inclusive and transparent state-led process -- one in which everyone has a voice. I have already indicated my intention to dedicate the IDM in 2017, and 2018 if needed, to canvassing views and identifying elements for the Global Compacts.

A more exhaustive summary will be shared with you in the coming days.

I hope that you will join us in our collective work over the coming two years to develop a Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration. This will give concrete content to the migration-related aspects of the SDGs, and establish and reinforce cooperation mechanisms between and among governments, partner UN agencies and other international entities with mandates and expertise in this field, and with the many parties whose views must be heard and whose views and expertise need to be drawn upon, not least of which migrants themselves and those who work on their behalf.

IOM is committed to providing leadership in supporting Member States in your efforts and to ensuring genuine partnership and inclusivity in our approach.

Allow me thank you all again for your participation and important contribution to this debate and wish you all a safe journey home in the meantime.

Finally, allow me to thank most sincerely the Government of the United States and the Government of Australia for their continuous support to the IDM programme. This workshop would have not been possible without their generous financial contributions.