

**State of Libya**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

**Speech of His Excellency**

**Mr. Muhammad Al-Taher Hamouda Syala**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Delivered on his behalf by**

**Ambassador/ Permanent Representative**

**Mr. Tamim M. Baiou**

**Dialogue on Migration (IOM)**

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**Thank you, Mr. President.**

I convey to you and to the esteemed gathering the warm regards of H.E. Mr. Muhammad Al-Taher Hamouda Syala, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Libya, who could not be here and asked that I deliver his speech to you.

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**Mr. President**

**Excellencies**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**At** the outset, I wish to thank the organizers of this forum, and I would like to express in this regard my appreciation to the International Organization for Migration, for its contributions in helping to better manage the ever growing demands of migration.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**We** are all aware that today, irregular migration, holds a prominent importance and priority as it touches the core of humanity and human rights of millions of people and affects most countries and international organizations. It certainly poses great challenges for us in Libya, particularly during this difficult time, when the negative effects of unplanned and unorganized people movement across borders become exacerbated.

**Regrettably** this is now topped by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and all the health and economic consequences and repercussions, that have directly impacted the wellbeing and lives of our citizens, our economy and the immigrants who are equally affected, as other vulnerable segments of the population.

**Thus,** we must consolidate our efforts, our policies and our actions to come together in solidarity to mitigate the effects of irregular migration.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**My** country took an early interest in the issue of Migration, through many initiative to organize conferences and fora’s at regional and international levels, including, the (Migration and Development of Africa and the European Union) conference held in Tripoli in 2006, and the Tripoli Conference in 2010 on African-European cooperation, in which the two sides urged the necessity of intensifying efforts to develop effective solutions to this growing phenomena of migration and the problems that come along with it, in the areas of security, stability, combating poverty, cross-border criminal enterprise, illicit trafficking, and terrorism.

**I** take this opportunity to reiterate my country's call for the international community to solidify the efforts and shore up its support and assistance to help us better control our southern boarders. This will greatly assist in the curbing of illegal immigration and help alleviate the suffering of people who become an easy prey in their long journey once they leave home. My country has made unremitting efforts to work with our brotherly neighboring countries, Niger, Chad and Sudan to form a joint action framework. We have signed the Niger Agreement for border management and security in June 2018, and we urge the international community to support our efforts in implementing this agreement through capacity building, training and securing the necessary mechanisms and equipment to activate joint desert patrols along the common borders,

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**I**n order to reduce and better manage the flow and movement of people, in what we commonly refer to as “migration”, we must work together regionally and internationally and address the real issues at the core. We should not look at irregular migration only from the angle of security alone. We must address the socio-economic reasons that make anyone be willing to endure a tortuous journey that is filled with dangers and the possibility of even losing their life.

**Only** a comprehensive approach that encourages and invests in socio-economic development and community investment in source countries, with parallel public campaigns in raising awareness about the ills and dangers of irregular migration, will bring positive outcomes to all.

**Libya** is committed to working with all and to hold true to the path that we have taken to help alleviate the suffering of all that is synonymous with “illegal migration”. We will cooperate with our neighbors and friends in the south and in the north.

**Libya’s** stability is key to lessening the suffering of innocent civilians. It also is key to regional stability and that of the Mediterranean. We are hopeful that our stability efforts will be supported by all member states of the international community, and that the days of intervention in the internal affairs of Libya through a proxy war are over. The stability of the entire region is at stake.

**In** closing, I wish to call on all stake holders to come together and consolidate the various efforts and initiatives that have been launched to address migration, such as the UN Global Compact on Migration and Refugees; and others, into a unified action plan that will have a far more positive and long lasting outcome, and that is aligned with the 2030SDGs.

***Thank you, Mr. Chairman***