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**International Dialogue on Migration 2017**

**Panel 6 – “Strengthening International Cooperation on and Governance of Migration  
Towards the Adoption of a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and  
Regular Migration in 2018”**

Good afternoon everyone. I’m honored to be here with so many distinguished friends, colleagues, and experts.

As you know, the Trump Administration, as is the case with all new administrations, is conducting a number of simultaneous policy reviews to ensure that the United States government is pursuing the policies, and supporting the programs, that align with both its domestic and international objectives. On the migration and immigration fronts, the Administration’s review is working to ensure, first and foremost, that America’s borders are secure and that American citizens and workers are both physically and economically protected by our immigration policies.

Every citizen should feel safe in her home, community, and nation – and every nation’s immigration policy must strive to make this safety and security a reality. When citizens perceive that unchecked migration is the norm, versus the exception, governments’ options for identifying and promoting the benefits of migration will remain severely constrained.

Regarding the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, countries of origin, transit, and destination have a shared interest in reducing irregular migration, improving border security, and combatting human smuggling and trafficking in persons.

The compact negotiating process will provide all nations with an unprecedented opportunity to share their views and positions on the most pressing national, regional, and global migration management challenges and opportunities. This process will also help identify best practices that can be shared with, and adopted by, other countries. We also hope it will generate the research that highlights the concrete benefits of migration as well as ways to address the negative aspects of migration that must be acknowledged and credibly addressed.

I'd like to stress that for the United States the term "governance" (which is a part of the title of this week's Dialogue) represents voluntary participation in the development and adoption of best practices and practical approaches to migration management.

An underlying principle guiding the compact process is that States maintain their sovereign right to control the entry and presence of foreign nationals in their territory, consistent with their international obligations, allowing them to protect their borders, determine acceptable levels and types of migration, and regulate flows of irregular migrants.

For instance, governance could look at common approaches to the voluntary adoption and use of secure information sharing schemes to facilitate the movement of regular migrants. Many examples exist, but if countries that currently lack such systems adopt them, it will be to the benefit of all nations and migrants – increasing security and transparency, while reducing opportunities for corruption during movements across borders.

Looking around the room, I am reminded of the great progress we have collectively made in bringing international migration cooperation to the forefront of the global agenda since the beginning of this century. First with the 2001 Bern Initiative in which many of the migration practitioners and governments here today participated. Back then the estimated number of international migrants was 175 million; since then, the number has increased to 244 million, reinforcing the need for sustained cooperation to address an ever evolving set of dynamic migration issues.

The Bern Initiative established a voluntary, state-led consultative process to gather input from governments representing a variety of regions and experts. It also produced the International Agenda for Migration Management cooperation framework and addressed a number of migration issues, including irregular and regular migration, brain drain, development, border control, labor migration, smuggling and trafficking. Sound familiar?

The Bern framework introduced much of what we plan to review in the global migration compact and established a foundation for cooperation on international migration. And as we create a compact blueprint for well managed and safe migration, we need not only build on these earlier efforts, but also consider today's realities. These include the instability, insecurity, and poor economic conditions

that are driving people to migrate, as well as increasing migration-related security concerns. We should also use existing structures through which we can implement compact deliverables, such as regional migration consultative processes.

So how can regional processes provide follow-up to the compact so we can build on our solid foundation? We hope to see a compact that moves beyond words on paper towards practical and achievable results, such as voluntary standards and incentives for countries to work together to improve migration management. States are not likely to adopt standards voluntarily without incentives and encouragement. Regional consultative processes – such as the ones I participated in a few weeks ago for the Americas region – provide an opportunity for governments to discuss issues confronting specific regions and to identify how countries of origin, transit, and destination can collectively develop solutions and incentives that will be acceptable and create win-win situations for all stakeholders.

To conclude, no single country can take on the world's numerous and evolving migration challenges. When other countries strengthen their migration management, it strengthens our own immigration processes by developing capable partners and processes that facilitate the movement of our citizens. In the coming year, as we all work to strengthen migration management processes and address security concerns related to migration through the compact process, the United States looks forward to participating in the consultation and negotiating process and contributing our best practices and understanding of current and future migration challenges and opportunities, and the concurrent areas for collaboration they will offer us all.

Thank you very much.