

Statement by Ambassador Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations and Other International Organizations, at the 100th Session of the IOM Council, December 7, 2011, Geneva.

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to the chair of this 100th session of the IOM Council. I also congratulate the vice chairs and the rapporteur on their respective elections.

I thank Ambassador Idriass Jazerry for the exemplary leadership he provided to 99th session of the Council.

My delegation welcomes the fourteen new members of the Organization. With entry of fellow new members, the Organization gains strength and moves towards universality to enhance partnership for peace and prosperity in this interconnected and interdependent world.

We commend the Director General, Ambassador William Lacy Swing, for his excellent leadership of the Organization in such critical and demanding times. With increasing political turmoil and emergency situations around the world, IOM's ability to deliver came to real tests in the recent past. We express deep appreciations for courage and dedicated service of IOM field staff even in the most difficult circumstances.

We listened carefully to the DG's statement this morning. We welcome the DG's outlining of the 'state of the Organization'.

We support the three pillar priorities namely proprietorship, partnership, professionalism. We commend the DG's commitments on greater accountability, transparency, stronger internal controls and optimum management of resources. We call for further strengthening of IOM's institutional capacities.

Nepal also welcomes the efforts made in timely reform of the Organization with focuses on human resources, budget and structure. We strongly support the establishment of the Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism. On the face of emerging migration related challenges of complex nature and escalating new

emergency situations in different countries, establishment of emergency fund will enable IOM to better respond and effectively intervene.

Mr. Chairman,

As the DG stated, migration is set to remain the 'megatrend' of our time and a defining attribute of the 21st century globalized world. Over 3% of global population is on the move today. With changing demographic structures, disparities of economic opportunities and living styles, ease of transport and revolutions in ICTs and social media, the trend will surely escalate. Both push and pull factors of diverse kinds in source and destination countries have contributed to the migration phenomenon.

Migration has become a phenomenon connecting the countries of the world. It is a political, economic and social issue providing both opportunities and challenges to states and societies. With increased migration, challenges of unprecedented nature and magnitude have emerged. And these challenges pop up at all stages of migration – origin, transit, and destination. This, therefore, calls for migration partnerships among countries to pave the way for constructive cooperation between countries of origin and destinations, complement each other, enhance its positive aspects and overcome negative consequences of youth deficit and youth bulge.

Mr Chairman,

Migration provides links in North-South as well as South-South relations and fills up skills deficits and workforce gap. Global flow of remittance is almost three times higher than the total ODA mobilization. The 48 LDCs alone share remittances of USD 26 billion, almost equal the amount of ODA they receive.

Several studies have come to suggest that liberalization of migration regime creates a win-win situation both for the country of origin and the country of destination. A sound and coordinated migration policy should take on board government authorities, civil-society institutions, the private sector, and migrant associations to better ensure the protection of people in vulnerable situations.

We live in a globalised world in which movement of capital and goods have been progressively dismantled whereas in labour mobility, restrictions continue. Easing migration process saves migrants from unnecessary cost and hurdles. A World Bank report puts that migrants in average spend from USD 700 to USD 1700 unnecessarily owing to existing migration hurdles. The same report further argues that 'the wage disparity can be reduced by 10%, through eased migration' and this will bring 'welfare gain of USD 774 billion annually.' There has also been convincing arguments

that easing migration helps reduce irregular migration situation. A more prosperous world is also going to be a safer and more stable world. IOM, with its underlined objective of 'promoting international cooperation on migration issues, needs to play a proactive role in sensitizing the benefits of safe and well-facilitated migration to all and help provide a sense of justice to migrant workers from poor countries. This has become particularly important on the face of growing anti-immigration sentiments and stigmatization of migrants witnessed in various parts of the world.

Remittance remains vital for LDCs economies, contributing as much as a third of GDP in case of some LDCs. The Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs recognizes remittances as important private financial resources and underscores that this should not be considered a substitute for FDI, ODA, and other public sources of finance for development. The IPoA also calls for further efforts to lower the transaction costs of remittances and create opportunities for development-oriented investment. It underlines the need to improve access to financial and banking services for easy transaction of remittances; simplify migration procedures; reduce the cost of outward migration; better utilize knowledge, skills and earnings of the returning migrants. It also calls on the destination countries to resist unfair and discriminatory treatment of migrant workers and the imposition of unreasonable restrictions on labour migration.

Given the pivotal role of remittances in enhancing development, IOM can also help countries in assessing possibilities and constraints for channelling remittances towards productive investments and thus help generate its multiplier effects on development.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is pleased to reflect on growing engagements and cooperative relations between Nepal and the Organization. We thank IOM for the critical support IOM provided to our migrant workers in times of distress, particularly in rescuing a number of workers stranded in Libya and neighbouring countries. We also remain thankful for IOM's technical assistance in capacity-building; providing services to labour migrants; review and recommendation of policies and legislation related to labour migration. IOM's assistance in establishing Migration Resource Centre, has helped provide a range of services including matching potential migrants and their skills with demand in the destination country

We reiterate our commitment to maintain and further strengthen the channel of close cooperation and constructive partnership with IOM.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.