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STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL

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at the Ninety-sixth Session of the Council

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Ministers, Ambassadors, Distinguished Delegates,

1. It is an honour and pleasure to address you today at the Ninety-sixth Council Session of IOM.
2. I would like to begin by extending a special appreciation to the outgoing Chairperson, H.E. Ambassador Javier Garrigues (Spain) for his diligent efforts that enabled us to competently and transparently manage the Director General election process.
3. I would also like to congratulate our new Chairperson of the Council, H.E. Ambassador Germán Mundaraín Hernández (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) and his bureau on their election. I would like to reiterate my commitment and support to him as he leads the work of the IOM Council during what promises to be a particularly active period under the new IOM leadership.
4. I wish also to warmly welcome and congratulate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and December 18 on their admission to IOM with observer status.
5. Finally, I would like to extend my greetings to all the delegations present here, many of whom have travelled from afar to attend this Council session, and to my colleagues from IOM.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. In view of the fact that my tenure as Deputy Director General draws to a close in September 2009, this is to be my last address to the Council. In this address to the Council, I will focus on three broad areas.
7. The first concerns my accomplishments during the two terms I have had the honour and privilege to serve the Member States of IOM in the capacity of Deputy Director General.
8. Before I proceed, please allow me to bring to your attention that for the past nine years, I have faithfully maintained a log of successful initiatives undertaken as well as of those that fell short of expectations. I have found this practice to be immensely valuable in that it has permitted me to change course as prevailing circumstances demanded, thereby ensuring relevance at all times of actions pursued or undertaken, and to chart a course for the future.
9. Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) has been a core agenda item of my tenure at IOM, being the advocate that I am of the view that migration is by and large a force for good.

Since its inception in 2001, and guided by internal and external evaluation findings and recommendations, MIDA has evolved into a programme framework for a range of actions geared towards enhancing the developmental impact that can be derived from continuously evolving migration realities. I believe that it would not be overstated to suggest that improved dialogue on a range of migration issues between Europe and Africa has been greatly enhanced through the various MIDA efforts so generously supported and financed by various European Union countries over the years. To all of them, I wish to convey my deepest appreciation for their recognition of the relevance of this approach.

10. We now seek to ensure continued relevance of our efforts in this field to the growing interest of Member States in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa by more fully exploring the links between migration and development. Equally, it is critical that we be able to improve funding possibilities for work in this important domain by consolidating the various actions aimed at maximizing the benefits for development that can be derived from migration into a concise and coherent policy framework.

11. To this end, efforts are under way to formulate an overarching policy framework approach to Migration and Development actions building on the experience of MIDA to date, as well as on other Migration and Development-related programming experiences from other regions. I hasten to add that whatever policy framework is ultimately agreed to as a guide to our Migration and Development efforts is entirely your decision, you as the propellers of the direction this Organization takes in the years and decades to come.

12. Closely linked to the MIDA effort is a nascent initiative in response to requests from several developing Member States for assistance in addressing the dearth of national expertise in the domain of migration policy and practice. To complement our ongoing efforts to address this need through our work in the area of Capacity-Building in Migration Management (CBMM), we are getting an initiative off the ground that will see the twinning universities on a North-South and South-South basis share and exchange knowledge and skills leading up to the delivery of academic courses at tertiary level on a variety of migration issues. Once fully-fledged, this is an undertaking that will help to ensure a steady flow of up-to-date migration academics, policymakers and practitioners in developing countries, complementing existing capacity-building efforts in this critical area of governance through a more sustainable approach. Needless to say, this is also a pool from which international organizations like ours could draw from in future.

13. While IOM holds firmly to the view that migration is by and large a force for good that has the potential to positively impact development in countries of origin, we are also cognizant of the need for coherent development policies that take full account of pertinent issues in all domains, migration included. Hence the steadfastness of the efforts I have continuously directed towards the integration of migration into national migration strategies and developing countries' Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). I am certain that all of these efforts are an important step in the direction of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

14. For this reason, I applaud the recent choice made by the Greek Government of this very subject – the integration of migration into PRSPs and national strategies – as the theme for the Third Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD 3) scheduled to take place in Athens in 2009. This decision gives me much confidence that GFMD 3, like its predecessors, will be a

positive step towards equipping developing countries with the tools they need to more fully exploit the benefits migration could have for their development efforts.

15. Continuing on the subject of my accomplishments, I wish now to focus on what we have achieved during my tenure as Deputy Director General in the area of partnerships and the expansion of the IOM membership.

16. As we all agree, migration issues are multidimensional in nature and so demand an approach that brings on board the full breadth of actors to ensure that the challenges they present are responded to in full cognizance of their complexity.

17. I can state with some degree of confidence that the efforts I have made over the years have led to a significant increase in the number of organizations we have brought on board the migration discussion, and to stronger engagement with those that were already on board.

18. Ardent efforts, some building on the work of my predecessors, have seen migration become a constituent aspect of discussion and action emanating from the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Division on the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary General on Gender and United Nations specialized agencies such as UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS, INSTRAW. Other United Nations bodies such as UNDESA, DPKO and its regional economic agencies, particularly UNECA, are today more aware of the linkages between their respective mandates and migration, in no small measure due to these efforts. Also, regional bodies such as NEPAD, OIF and the Commonwealth of Nations are others for whom migration is today a key feature of policy discussions thanks to these steady outreach efforts.

19. Clearly, IOM Member States are the drivers of its long-term strategic policy direction and, in this sense, are its most important voice. Another key set of players are the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) comprised of many of the same States that are members of the Organization. With this in mind, the relationship with many of these bodies, such as the AU, the EU, the ACP, IGAD, EAC, ECOWAS, CENSAD, OIC, COMESA and UEMOWA has been established over the past ten years, or greatly reinforced where a relationship already existed. This enhanced collaboration has helped to ensure that regional perspectives of migration challenges and opportunities are factored into dialogues and into the resulting agreements and initiatives.

20. Recognizing the extent to which today's world is interconnected through globalization, and cognizant of the crucial need for regional approaches to migration issues, I have worked tirelessly over the past decade to bring on board Member States from all regions of the world, especially in Africa, so that the International Organization for Migration is truly global and universal, and thus able to execute its mandate more effectively.

21. It is also this understanding of the interconnectedness of actions undertaken in a country or a region with those carried out in another that have driven me to work towards ensuring that large swathes of regions are no longer excluded from full participation in IOM owing to language barriers.

22. To this end, it was important that the francophone countries be a more integral part of the Organization than was the case at the start of my mandate in 1999, and this has happened. Today,

not only is IOM a more trilingual organization than it was about a decade ago, it is also doing a lot more in francophone Africa and Asia. Secondment of Associate Experts from the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) and concerted efforts at recruiting francophone candidates wherever possible are some of the measures that have been carried out to this end.

23. I believe it would be fair to state that the way States across the globe view IOM is significantly different today from what it was even just a decade ago. In large measure this is due to the increasing topicality migration issues. It is also in some measure due to conscious efforts to ensure that IOM actions are of relevance to all countries along the migration continuum, and not just to some. Understanding as we all do that migration has long ceased to be a national issue, the broadening of IOM membership has greatly facilitated intraregional, regional and interregional dialogues, which continue to prove an effective forum through which to address migration issues of common concern.

24. There is one area in which I am less than proud of my accomplishments to date. Gender mainstreaming, both in terms of human resource decisions as well as project development, planning, implementation and reporting is an area in which a lot more work needs to be done. Despite efforts to ensure gender is mainstreamed into all aspects of IOM's work, gender considerations are frequently still only an afterthought. That said, I have every confidence that under the enlightened leadership of Director General Swing, the Organization will advance with this kind of approach to gender mainstreaming, which has sometimes been characterized by lip service and tokenism.

25. It is my view that ten years in a position such as the one I occupy is ample time to introduce and carry out a significant body of policy and programmatic goals. It is against this background that I will be passing on the baton on all these important ongoing initiatives in some ten months' time to my successor, fully satisfied with what I have accomplished and confident that they will be sustained over time.

26. Ladies and Gentlemen, my second area of focus today covers three recommendations that I wish to put forward for your consideration and that of Director General Swing, based on my experience of service to the Organization over the past nine years in my capacity as Deputy Director General.

27. As you look to steer IOM, your Organization, to greater heights of achievement in the years and decades to come, and to equip it with what it will need to cope with ever greater challenges and to deliver in what is an increasingly complex migration landscape, I imagine that many questions and ideas cross your mind. For my part, I consider three recommendations to be key.

28. Over the years, I have advocated the need for fundamental reforms in how the Organization is governed through its three governing bodies: the Council, the Executive Committee and the Administration. Some of you are sure to remember the statement by Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba at the 2005 Council session which echoed very forcefully these views. I salute Ambassador de Alba for his well-informed analysis of these issues. I also note with some satisfaction that these views are now increasingly and more clearly at the forefront of deliberations on the Organization's future direction, more recently under the leadership of Director General Swing.

29. I therefore wish to humbly recommend that if you deem these suggestions to have value, we get down to revisiting them to some conclusion under the exacting direction of Director General Swing. I am persuaded that doing so would help to ensure that Member States, to whom this Organization belongs, can continue to have confidence that the Organization is being managed with efficiency and transparency in all financial and programme-related matters. Director General Swing stands ready to work with you to that end and to do what it takes for the team to work and deliver the action you expect from the Organization. He is firm, attentive and above all determined.

30. Now, on to my second recommendation. The experience of serving two terms as Deputy Director General of IOM leads me to believe that the time has come for a Council resolution by Member States assigning more clearly defined tasks to the Deputy Director General.

31. IOM has done very well in its 56 years of existence with a Constitution that mandates two elective posts, that of Director General and Deputy Director General. As is to be expected of any elective post, experience has shown that the post of Deputy Director General requires a skill set predicated on a strong political background. Over the years, the main fields of work of the Deputy Director General have been formulated in consultation with the Director General on an *ad hoc* basis. The result of this *ad hoc* approach has been that the role and function of the Deputy Director General have tended to change with each period of leadership, and above all with its moods, resulting in loss of coherence in some instances, and great ambiguity and confusion – whether deliberate or not - in others, needlessly distracting our attention from the essentials we should be focusing on. Defining fields of work for the position of Deputy Director General and enshrining these in a Council resolution could help to ensure that the services owed to Member States are under no circumstances compromised.

32. My recommendation therefore is that under the leadership of Director General Swing, the process of defining fields of work for this position be initiated. I believe this would greatly serve my successor, and thereby the Organization, its Member States and the migrants it is our task to help. You will see, as time passes, that the Director General combines great grace and firmness – two characteristics that are not contradictory.

33. The third and final recommendation I would like to make has to do with an ardent wish that has often been expressed by our Director General, Ambassador Swing, and that I strongly endorse. The Director General has made clear his intention to enhance the professionalism of the Organization's staff at all levels, both at its Headquarters here in Geneva and in the hundreds of Field Offices across the world.

34. Many factors contribute towards strengthening or undermining staff professionalism. Staff moral was greatly eroded by the *ad hoc* management style of the past few years. My experience of IOM thus far leads me to believe that increasing workloads and ever-diminishing human and material resources, plus the fact that not all staff have been treated the same, not to mention IOM's poor management, have often thwarted the Organization's efforts to retain its top talent and/or to attract more of the existing talent that is needed now more than ever on a larger scale if we are to keep pace with the significant growth and complexity of IOM in programming in a structurally weak context in which coordination is notably lacking.

35. Our spirited discussions, year after year, on the subjects of zero nominal growth versus zero real growth and of outstanding contributions are for me evidence, if ever any was needed, of how deeply you care about this Organization. Therefore, I would urge that under the new leadership of Director General Swing, we begin to reflect anew on positions that we have previously held on this question and work towards giving him the tools he will need to steer IOM in the direction you need it to go.

36. Ladies and Gentlemen, the third and final area of focus of this statement is one that is very special to me. As I prepare my exit from the Organization in September 2009, I feel great optimism regarding the future of IOM, particularly now with Ambassador Swing at its helm. With your support, I have little doubt that he will steer this Organization in the direction you, its Member States, wish it to go. Equally, I am confident that the direction he is setting will ensure enhanced responsiveness to migration challenges through creative, innovative and relevant approaches.

37. Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to express my most profound gratitude to all of you for the unwavering support you have shown me throughout my two terms as Deputy Director General of IOM. Thanks to you, the Member States of this remarkable Organization that I have been so privileged to serve in, and to a very talented group of individuals that make IOM work so well both on the frontline and behind the scenes, in our Headquarters here in Geneva as well as in some of the most remote corners of the globe, the IOM episode of my professional life will have been not only most challenging and educational but also rewarding. It would be remiss of me to conclude without thanking the Chairmen of the Council who spared no effort in ensuring respect for the integrity of the Deputy Director General function at IOM, namely Ambassador Amina Mohamed of Kenya and Ambassador Massood Khan of Pakistan.

38. I will forever be grateful for the confidence you showed in electing me to serve in this eminent role and during what was a critical decade in global migration discourse. I can but hope that I have lived up to your expectations and was worthy of your confidence.

Thank you very much.