

Statement by DDG, on the occasion of the closing of the 2013 International
Dialogue on Migration (IDM):

Diaspora Ministerial Conference

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1-It is a pleasure to address you here today on behalf of OIM. I would like to thank all the participants at this first Diaspora Ministerial conference. OIM takes pride in having taken the lead in providing this unique opportunity for Ministers and high level officials from various countries around the world, as well as for representatives from International Organizations, NGOs and Civil society to discuss diasporas policies and programmes and share their experiences.

2-By dedicating this year's session of its' major dialogue forum, the International Dialogue on Migrations (IDM), to the diasporas issues, IOM is responding to an increasing need to take stock of diasporas policies and programmes as implemented by countries in various parts of the world, experiences and good practices. Your inputs will also help us to come up with recommendations that will help provide appropriate responses to identified challenges and gaps.

3-Let us also recall that this ministerial conference is taking place in a particular multilateral context marked by two major events of global significance for international migration: the second UNGA HLD and the debate on post 2015 Development Agenda. There is no doubt that these two events that will shape the future of migration governance stand to benefit greatly from the outcome of this ministerial conference.

4- This **conference** was indeed primarily a **political event** aiming at acknowledging the fact that there is now a worldwide recognition of the role diasporas **can and do play** in both, their countries of origin and destination. During these two days, our gathering contributed to add a concrete and global dimension to an old phenomenon, its importance for our future is what we want to acknowledge here, opening new perspective for the migration and development nexus.

5-Today, we realize that the historical movements that forged our world during the last centuries, and even more during the last six decades, have created global communities who, in turn, gathered the resources that are necessary to achieve what we can only facilitate through effective policies. Indeed, we are not only talking about migrants who left their countries, but also about their descendants, whose transnational identities constitute a precious heritage for tomorrow's history. .

6-For this reason, the political dimension of this event is a mere reflection of the human reality it is based on. Through this gathering, we also acknowledge the very human dimension of diasporas. They have what it takes to make global development a reality. And, this is certainly not only about money and remittances; this is primarily about networks, experience, culture and, above all, attachment to more than one country. Indeed, where is the home of migrants' children? Is it the country where their ancestors were born, or is it the country where they grew up? Undoubtedly, in many cases, both, and this is one main assets of diasporas. By bridging countries for the great benefit of all, they have the potential to be actors of development, but also of cooperation.

For this reason, IOM is happy, to notice that its approach and programmatic vision about diaspora and development, which is based on three pillars: engage, enable, empower, was well received during these two days.

Policy-making has to rely on evidence. It is important to know, in detail, what is the potential engagement of diaspora in development? Second, diaspora engagement is about the desire to participate, but also about the possibility to do so. An enabling policy environment is therefore an asset that may greatly increase and facilitate diaspora potential.

Finally, participation is also about means and know-how: empowering diasporas through targeted programmes aims at assisting them with the necessary framework to fully express their engagement.

IOM is indebted to you, Excellencies, for having honoured us with your presence at this Conference and for sharing your insights, analysis and information on some of the practical challenges and gaps in the daily exercise of policy and programme implementation targeting diasporas as actors of development and agents of cultural and social exchange.

I am happy that the conference was very successful not only in view of the global interest it generated as illustrated by the massive and diversified participation, bringing together over 500 participants from 115 countries 50 Ministerial delegates. But also in view of its rich and valuable outcomes, recommendations and good practices you have identified and put on the table for the international community to consider in future discussions covering diasporas and transnational communities, including the HLD.

On its part, be assured that IOM has taken good note of the many useful recommendations and comments made and will endeavour to ensure the most appropriate follow up in order to effectively respond to governments and diasporas needs.

Although the conference set-up has not allowed for too much interaction from the floor, I was very happy to see that this conference has provided many participants with opportunities to conduct bilateral meetings and to discussions with other stakeholders.

We were very pleased to see that all of you were interested in participating in this event and we are even happier with the message that we have clearly received about your strong interest to meet in the future for more in-depth discussions on specific issues that have been raised during these two days. IOM will look carefully at these and will get back to you with some concrete ideas on how to bring forward this dialogue.

I cannot conclude this conference, Mr. Chairman, without thanking you for your active support and participation to this Conference. I also would like to thank the interpreters and other support staff.

A very warm thank you, finally to my colleagues at IOM, including several young and committed intern, whose work has made not only this Conference a reality but also a success.

I wish you a good trip back to all of you that have travelled from abroad.

Thank you.