STATEMENT

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Roundtable 3: Strengthening partnerships and cooperation on international
migration, mechanisms to effectively integrate migration into development
policies, and promote coherence at all levels

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Your Excellency Minister Billstrom, Excellencies, Colleagues, Distinguished
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to be here, and I wish to begin by thanking the Permanent Missions
of South Africa and Sweden for co-chairing this fourth seminar to help prepare us
all for the UN General Assembly’s Second High-Level Dialogue on International
Migration and Development (HLD), to be convened on 3-4 October this year.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been working in close
partnership with our colleagues at UNDESA and UNFPA – and IOM is very
grateful for their partnership - to help ensure a well-informed HLD; an HLD that is
able to take stock of progress on international migration and development since the
first High-Level Dialogue in 2006; an HLD that constructively moves forward our
thinking and action on this critical subject.

I would also like to thank the Government of Sweden, and Minister Billstrom in
particular, for the leadership demonstrated in chairing the Global Forum on
Migration and Development, and more broadly for Sweden’s steadfast and
progressive role in stimulating and helping to lead the global migration debate since co-sponsoring the Global Commission on International Migration ten years ago in 2003.

I am equally honoured to share today’s podium with Johan Ketelers, Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission, the voice of civil society and a friend, a tireless advocate on behalf of migrants worldwide and a deeply valued partner. I would like to contribute three thoughts to our deliberations.

I The Global Migration Scene

We are gathered to discuss how we can work together more purposefully – with a view to strengthening partnerships and cooperation on international migration, integrating migration into development policies, ensuring migrants’ rights, and achieve greater coherence across the board. This week’s Commission on Population and Development compellingly demonstrates that ours is an era of unprecedented human mobility, with the greatest number of people ever living outside their country or region of origin. With over 214 million international migrants today, and their remittances, skills and networks affecting multitudes more, human mobility has become a ‘mega-trend’ of the 21st century. Migration is now relevant to all countries in all regions, whether as countries of origin, transit or destination or any combination thereof. With one billion of seven billion on the move – mobility affects billions more through the labour, remittances, skills and networks that these migrants produce.
Let us consider, for example, that the total number of international migrants would make them the sixth largest population in the world, somewhere in between the populations of Brazil and Indonesia. Together, migrant remittances would give migrants a GDP as large as Saudi Arabia or a mid-range European country.

One parochial way of looking at the growth in migration is to review the growth of IOM over the last two decades. IOM Member States have grown from 90 to 149; its offices from 150 to 440; our staff from 2600 to 8500; our projects from 800 to nearly 3000; and IOM’s budget from $285 million to $1.2billion.

In view of trends in demography, development and labour demand, migration is inevitable, necessary and - if well managed - desirable. The impact of migration on development - and vice versa - has become evident in all regions and at all levels of society. It is therefore essential that at national, regional and global levels we strengthen partnerships, cooperation, and coherence so that migration can reach its full development-driving potential.

Despite progress in recent years in dialogue and cooperation, migration remains inadequately reflected in development frameworks and broader sectoral policies, both at national and local levels and in global development agendas. Also, many migration policies do not ensure adequate protection of the human rights of migrants, and public perceptions of migrants and migration have not kept pace with the reality of human mobility and remain dangerously negative. In addition, there is the cruel irony that – in this period of historical human mobility - many governments have adopted counter-cyclical policies – policies that reflect deep-seated anti-migrant sentiment. There is an appalling lack of national and global leadership on migration. This greatly limits the contributions migrants can make to
development. Several contemporary developments are contributing to a growing anti-migrant sentiment: the global economic-financial crisis; and the post 9/11 security pre-occupation.

While migration carries significant development potential, positive development outcomes – equally for migrants and countries of origin and destination – are by no means guaranteed. Migration is integral to development but not a substitute for it, and migrants can be agents of development but should not be expected to function as providers of development. The potentially positive impact of migration on development, therefore, hinges upon appropriate policies to govern migration in a humane and orderly way - one which includes a focus on the protection of the human rights and on the well-being of all migrants. Little to no attention has been given to the relationship between migration and development, or between migration and human rights.

**National level policy coherence**

And these policies must begin to evolve first and foremost at the national level. The starting point for coherent international migration policies is the development of agreed national objectives. While the exact nature will vary according to national traditions, requirements and circumstances, these objectives must be consistent with international law and uphold migrants’ rights. The dignity and wellbeing of migrants need to be put at the centre.

Instead of this “low road” policy, we at IOM believe the HLD should endorse a “high road” scenario.
II A High-Road Scenario

In view of these realities, IOM works with governments and partners to promote a “high road scenario” for migration governance – one in which facilitating, not restricting, migration is the priority; one which sees migration as a process to be managed rather than a problem to be solved: a scenario that strives to expand options for people to realize their human development aspirations and potential through mobility, within the framework of the rule of law. A “high road scenario” aims to offer governments a range of options to meet short-, medium- and long-term objectives through evidence-based migration policy and in a spirit of multilateral cooperation. A “high road” policy starts with the recognition that, throughout history, human mobility has been overwhelmingly positive in the development of our societies and economies.

In its global efforts to harness the positive impacts of migration on development while mitigating its negative consequences, IOM promotes comprehensive migration approaches that empower migrants, protect their rights and promote safe and dignified migration; and ensure that migration is beneficial for sustainable development in home and host communities.

A “high road scenario” is based on the understanding that migration is relevant for the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development as well as for peace and security. It aspires to enhance migration’s benefits equally for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination. A “high road” approach should be based on objective analyses of how migration can help or hinder the achievement of development objectives in each of the four dimensions - economic, social, environmental, and peace and security - recognizing that outcomes may differ for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination.
At the same time, policymakers should take into account that development, as well as specific social and economic policies, can influence patterns and levels of migration.

In a “high road scenario” migration would be mainstreamed into development planning at local, national and global levels and in both developing and developed countries, aiming to harmonize migration policy with objectives for economic and social development. Likewise, it would integrate migration into broader sectoral planning, such as health, education, labour market and disaster risk reduction and environmental policy, and account for migrants in the target populations for these policies.

A “high road” scenario would “de-mythologize” the myths about migrants and dismantle the stereotypes that lead to discrimination, prejudice and xenophobia. Concrete measures to improve the development outcomes of migration include investing in:

- more systematic and comparable data collection, for example by adding migration questions to national censuses;
- reducing recruitment and remittance transfer costs and ensuring broader access to financial services;
- greater protection and support for families separated by migration, especially children remaining in countries of origin; and
- smarter engagement with diaspora and transnational communities to leverage their contributions as business, trade, investment and cultural partners for development.
To this end, it will be necessary to strengthen capacity on all aspects of migration management: migration policy and dialogue, international migration law, labour migration, immigration and border management, migration health, engagement of diaspora and transnational communities in development and post-crisis reconstruction, remittances, counter-trafficking, and managing migration in crisis and post-crisis situations;

**What would a high-road scenario for partnership, cooperation and coherence on migration look like?**

While national level policy coherence is necessary, it is by no means sufficient. Under a “high road scenario”, governments would commit to cooperation with all partners, while recognizing the sovereign prerogative of States to determine the entry and stay of non-nationals in their territories, within the limits set by their international legal obligations. A “high road scenario” would strive for an integrated policymaking process to maximize synergies and minimize contradictions between different policy sectors. To do so, governments would pursue “whole of government” and “whole of society” approaches to migration, for example through inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral coordination as well as engagement with non-governmental actors. Amongst others, the private sector – employers and recruiters – have a stake in well-managed migration and their specific roles and responsibilities should be clarified.

In countries of origin, a “high road scenario” for successful mainstreaming of migration into national development planning depends on national ownership of the process and institutions or inter-ministerial coordination bodies dedicated to coherence of such ownership. The process should account for cross-cutting issues
such as labour market policy, migrant health, gender and human rights and social protection; and should, for example, tie the labour emigration dynamic more closely to skills training and labour market planning.

Countries of destination would consider how migration fits into their broader growth, employment and labour market strategies, for example by pursuing a mix of foreign recruitment in cooperation with countries of origin and incentivising the local workforce to meet demands in certain sectors, such as health care and domestic care workers in ageing societies.

Under a “high road scenario”, policy coherence is also relevant in other areas – such as the role of human mobility in disaster risk reduction strategies, disaster preparedness, national climate change adaptation programmes, and sustainable urban planning.

Lastly, inter-State and inter-agency cooperation on migration is fundamental to a “high road scenario” and the number of venues for multilateral, multi-stakeholder and inter-agency collaboration has grown significantly in the last decade, most notably through Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) and other regional or inter-regional fora as well as the GMFD for inter-governmental dialogue and the Global Migration Group (GMG) for interagency cooperation.

**III Partnerships**

Partnerships are a central tenet of IOM’s work – and, indeed, a central element in the “high road” scenario. IOM coordinates its activities with partner agencies and promotes cooperation among governments through bilateral and multilateral
dialogue and agreements on the full range of migration issues. Select IOM activities include:

- Promotion of policy coherence and evidence-based policymaking by facilitating multi-sectoral coordination on migration within governments and making available necessary research and data. Prime examples of this include the IOM-supported European Commission-initiated national Migration Profiles, which assist governments in bringing together at the national level various sources of data to provide a more coherent picture of national migration trends, challenges and relevance for development, as well as the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States Observatory on Migration, focused on enhancing migration and development research and capacity, with a particular emphasis on South-South migration flows;

- Support to the development of specific national migration and development policies; as well as tools, training and programmes to better understand and make the links between migration and human development and to enhance the capacity of policymakers to identify opportunities and areas for more robust policies and programmes. A prime example of this is the Swiss-sponsored joint pilot project with UNDP to facilitate the mainstreaming of migration into the national development strategies of four States, pursuant to the methodology set out in the IOM-initiated GMG Handbook on the same subject;

- Support for strengthened inter-agency cooperation and partnership on migration, including through the GMG which IOM will chair between July and December 2013. IOM is mindful of the desire of Member States to hear more from and have the opportunity to interact with the GMG, requests which IOM
plans to honour during its tenure as chair;

- Support for and facilitation of global and regional policy dialogue on migration, including through IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration, the Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, and the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

At the regional level, the past decades have witnessed increased cooperation and partnerships. Partly in recognition of the limitations of ad-hoc and bilateral approaches to managing international migration, Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) were first established in 1985, to address the need identified by states for greater inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration issues. While state-led, RCPs bring together representatives of states, international organizations and, in some cases, NGOs for informal and non-binding dialogue and information exchange on migration-related issues of common interest and concern.

There are now over a dozen and a half RCPs globally, and their informal and non-binding nature has been effective in building trust, increasing understanding of migration issues and harmonizing regional positions, amongst others. In May this year, the Government of Peru, with IOM support, is organizing the fourth Global RCP Meeting in Lima, bringing together the chairing governments and secretariats of the RCPs. The main theme is “Defining the Place of Regional Dialogues and Consultation, RCPs in a Changing International Migration Landscape”. Participants will have an opportunity to reflect upon and provide inputs to the 2013 HLD, as mandated by the 2nd Committee modalities resolution.
We have also seen this increased coherence within the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Commissions. Established to achieve greater economic integration at the regional level, the REC’s have recognized migration’s link to this purpose by establishing mobility agreements.

Finally, we are indeed seeing increased cooperation, increased partnership, which will hopefully lead towards greater coherence on migration and development, at the global level. Governments have not only come to realize the need for global migration dialogue, but there has also been progress in partnerships and cooperation at the global level. This discourse began long ago, with an important milestone at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development nearly 20 years ago in 1994, and has continued through the Berne Initiative from 2001 - 2004, the Global Commission on International Migration from 2003 – 2005, on to the first High-Level Dialogue in 2006, which was a watershed in the international migration and development discourse. The ensuing state-led Global Forum on Migration and Development convened annually for the past six years has advanced that debate by leaps and bounds, focusing on improving our shared understanding of migration dynamics today and on practical, concrete measures that States and other stakeholders could pursue to improve human and societal development outcomes from migration. This was the missing piece in the migration mosaic.

While the early days of the GFMD focused on the macro and micro impacts of remittances, the debate in recent years has broadened and deepened to include regular consideration of the social dimensions of migration, including protection of human rights, gender empowerment, and the implications for families separated by migration. In so doing, the GFMD has greatly contributed to building the trust and
confidence of Member States and the broader migration and development communities, not least of which are the migrants themselves. The pivotal contributions of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Migration, Mr. Peter Sutherland, cannot be overstated. While the SRSG was not able to join us today, his invaluable commitment to this discourse has led to greater coherence and cooperation at national and global levels.

And there is one additional linkage at the global level that I would like to highlight: the trajectory of the increased interest, partnership and cooperation on international migration and development reflected in the growth of IOM since 2001. While I do not intend to blow my own horn, I recognize that many of your Geneva based counterparts may be more familiar with recent trends in IOM. IOM is the principal intergovernmental agency on migration, dedicated solely to migration. Since 2001, IOM’s membership has grown from 90 to 149 Member States today, with an additional 12 Observer States, and numerous inter-governmental and non-governmental partner organizations. The number of projects carried out by IOM has more than tripled, with 8,500 staff members worldwide, of whom 97% are based in the field in more than 450 field offices in more than 100 countries. IOM’s programme budget for 2011 exceeded USD 1.3 billion for activities in a range of areas: policy advice, capacity building, training, direct assistance to migrants including victims of trafficking and migrants caught in crisis situations. To IOM Member States – the majority of whom today are developing countries - the link between migration and development is of principal concern.

While IOM was established outside the United Nations, we work closely with the UN at headquarters and field levels, as active participants in UN Country Teams, in country and regional planning efforts, in interagency cooperation mechanisms
such as the Global Migration Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian response and more. At the request of the Secretary General’s Chief Executives Board and its High Level Committee on Programmes, IOM together with UNFPA coordinated the UN system’s proposed recommendations and outcomes for the 2013 HLD. In July of this year, IOM will take over as chair of the Global Migration Group, and we are committed to steering the GMG through the High-level Dialogue and towards Post-2015. The IOM membership currently has the IOM-UN relationship under review and will take this up at its autumn governing body meetings, benefiting from the deliberations here in the HLD.

Now despite all this substantive and institutional progress, in this era of unprecedented human mobility there is still a long way to go. This year’s HLD is particularly timely, necessary and pertinent to the challenge of global cooperation. To support you in your preparations, IOM has produced a Position Paper on the HLD. The paper makes 6 key policy recommendations, including the need to make migration an integral part of development planning, which is pre-eminently a partnership and cooperation challenge. Mainstreaming migration into development and broader sectoral planning works best if this occurs at local, national and global levels, and in both countries of origin and destination, ideally in close consultation among all players to ensure mutually beneficial complementarities. Migration today needs to be recognized as relevant to all pillars of sustainable development and needs to be appropriately factored into the post-2015 UN development agenda. In the evolving development debate, poverty eradication is likely to remain a principal concern and be partnered with the challenge of sustainability in all countries. On migration, the challenge is to improve the governance of international migration at local, national, regional and global levels to respond to
growing interconnectedness and shared challenges – shifting demographics; global competition for skills, labour and care; managing inequalities, diversity and social cohesion; climate change and humanitarian crises, to mention a few. Migration will need to be a cross-cutting “enabler” under different thematic components of a new framework, a part of a new partnership goal on development or both.

Allow me to conclude by stressing that the HLD offers us a critical moment in time to share different experiences and shape common visions about how to enhance the developmental benefits of international migration for all. Partnerships, cooperation, and coherence across countries, sectors, agencies and communities will be essential to this important global joint venture.

Thank you.