

Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

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Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues

Today, the international community is witnessing a truly historic moment: an overwhelming number of UN Member States have gathered here in Marrakech to adopt the first-ever UN-level agreement relating to one of the most pressing global issues of our time: international migration.

What started in New York in September 2016 is going to be completed in Marrakech today. Two years of intensive debate and negotiations have in themselves helped to create a better understanding and appreciation of national priorities, regional challenges and global imperatives. The process has helped to bring out more clearly where we find global convergence and where we need to continue to work to create a more resilient consensus on shared objectives. In this way, the process has laid out a global plan for a phenomenon of global concern.

Representing a regional organisation, I would like to congratulate the two co-chairs for their great efforts of facilitating the negotiation process. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Ms Louise Arbour for her vision and determination (and I take this opportunity to commemorate the former SRS, Mr Peter Sutherland – without his leadership we wouldn't be here today).

As a regional organisation with a global outlook, we have advocated for global frameworks, to reinforce regional co-operation. We, therefore, welcome the great leap forward that is reflected in the GCM. Today, of course, is a day that celebrates the broad consensus around the principles and objectives of the GCM. We must recognise, however, that the adoption of the GCM is not an end in itself. Rather, it marks the beginning of an ambitious, long-term endeavor. The polarised debate that accompanied the adoption has largely overshadowed an informed discussion of the strengths and imperfections of the GCM. Tomorrow, therefore, we need to focus on the delivery on its overriding objectives: to create safe, orderly and regular migration.

We will be able to convince those who have concerns towards some provisions or the agreement as a whole as soon as we can show that the GCM brings the envisaged results of better regulated migration. We need to be careful that the high ambitions don't stand in the way of concrete delivery. We need to continue to include those that have decided to abstain from the adoption in a cooperative and pragmatic way. By doing so, we will reestablish public confidence in the ability to order and regulate international migration effectively.

Ladies and Gentlemen, migration connects people, communities, countries and regions in unprecedented ways. It is here, that we need to make a difference. We need to place needs, priorities and realities of the regions firmly at the centre of our efforts. In the European context, there are well developed migration partnership frameworks in place. The Marrakech Action Plan of the Rabat Process, the Valletta Action Plan, The Khartoum Declaration, the Budapest Process (with its upcoming Ministerial Conference in Istanbul) to mention only a few regional frameworks in which ICMPD plays a role. Together, they represent a quite comprehensive framework for regional cooperation. We look forward to the GCM to create an enabling global climate to reinforce these established regional frameworks.

There is a number of very potent regional actors, platforms and frameworks in other regions, too, who do a tremendous job. For all of us it is of crucial importance to find an inclusive environment in which we can bring in our efforts, strengths and know-how. Conversely, for the GCM to fully unfold its potential and fire power it needs to effectively include the regions and their actors in the equation and to ensure that everyone remains engaged. We therefore count on IOM's inclusive leadership to mobilise and keep the regions engaged. We have full faith in the UN structures to foresee a place for us regional actors.

Concluding my statement, ladies and gentlemen, I can report that ICMPD is ready and prepared to contribute its part to making migration safe, orderly and regular.

Thank you very much for your attention.