



## **Opening Statement**

Ms. Susan Martin, Georgetown University

Opening panel – looking back and beyond the HLD 2013

Thank you Ambassador Jeremic and Deputy Secretary General Elliason. Let me begin by expressing my appreciation to the United Nations for hosting these hearings and to the International Catholic Migration Committee, led by John Bingham, and the HLD civil society steering committee for their hard work in organizing not only this session but also the previous two days of preparatory meetings. I should emphasize that these last few days were preceded by months of regional consultations and thematic meetings, the findings of which will be presented today.

As was mentioned, Dennis Sinyolo and I will be moderating the informal interactive hearing on migration and development. We will take turns throughout the day. The format is straightforward. With the exception of the opening panels in the morning and afternoon, we are seeking to have as much discussion as possible. In each action theme panel, we will begin with presentations on the major issues under that theme. Each theme is derived from the civil society five year agenda and is relevant to the discussions that will be held at the HLD in October. We will then entertain responses from governments and afterwards open the floor for comments from the floor. If everyone sticks to their time limits -- 5 min for the panelists and no more than 3 for comments-- we will have time for a good discussion. I apologize in advance if we seem rude in cutting people off if they exceed the time limits but we are determined to be ruthless time keepers to permit as many to speak as possible.

The aim is to be as concrete as possible in outlining where we are with respect to the issues we discuss, where we need to go and what are the actions we need to take to get there. I use the plural 'we' purposefully because everyone in this room must be part of the solutions whether we come from government, civil society or international organizations. By the end of today, I hope we will have discussed specific recommendations to improve the lives of migrants and to enhance international cooperation in addressing the many challenges and opportunities inherent in migration. Many of the presentations and comments will come from those who are themselves migrants. I urge all of us to listen carefully to their voices as they have lived the migration experience themselves and know first-hand both the costs and the benefits.

Today we will be focusing on the intersections of migration and development. The relationship is complex and dual directional. Migration results from economic, political, social, demographic and environmental factors. The successes and failures of development profoundly affect the movement of people. Certainly the level of economic, social and human development and security affects whether migration is by choice or necessity. At the same time, migration is itself a factor in influencing the

development of both source and destination countries. Understanding these linkages is essential not only in the context of the High Level Dialogue but also in the lead up to the post 2015 development agenda.

(Turn to Dennis if there is time)

Let me now introduce the members of our opening panel.

William Gois, regional coordinator of the Migrant Forum in Asia and member of the Civil Society steering Committee

Gibril Faal, Director of GK Partners and Chairman of the African Foundation for Development and also a member of the Steering Committee

Ambet Yuson, Chairperson of the Council of Global Unions and General Secretary of Building and Wood Workers International

Peter Sutherland, Special Representative of the Secretary General for International Migration and Development who is joining us by video.