



**Statement by Mr. Frank Davis
Deputy Permanent Representative / Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Permanent Mission of The Bahamas
to the United Nations Office and Other International Organisations in Geneva
at the 109th Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration**

**29 November, 2018
Geneva, Switzerland**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, The Bahamas aligns with the statement delivered by Guatemala, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC).

We extend congratulations to you, Excellency¹, on your Chairmanship, as well as to the other elected members of the Bureau. You may be assured of our full cooperation as you undertake your work and stewardship of this Council Session.

We also wish to warmly welcome and congratulate Director-General António Vitorino on the official assumption of his duties at the beginning of October. The Bahamas looks forward to a continued positive working relationship with IOM, as Director-General Vitorino seeks to fulfil his important mandate.

The Bahamas also takes this opportunity to warmly welcome Uzbekistan to the membership of the IOM, as well as all new observers.

¹ H.E. Mr. Negash Kebret Batora, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Mr. Chairman,

The Bahamas thanks Director-General Vitorino for his informative oral report. We are also grateful for the comprehensive Annual Report for 2017. We welcome its integrated format, which is both informative and results-oriented, in keeping with the Organization's broader transition to greater efficiency and a results-based approach. We congratulate the IOM on progress achieved thus far and encourage continued efforts toward this end as well as in the promotion of gender equality, transparency and accountability, environmental sustainability and upholding the highest standards of conduct and respect for human rights.

We recognize the continued deepening of IOM's relationship with the United Nations system, since it became a related agency in 2016. Moreover, IOM's activities in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including SDG target 10.7 to facilitate safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration, are to be commended. The Organization's significant efforts in support of the global compact process served both to enrich the ongoing dialogue and to clearly demonstrate that IOM fully embraces and continues to fulfil its role as the global lead agency on migration. The decision of the UN Secretary-General to appoint IOM as the United Nations network coordinator and Secretariat rightly attests to this.

Mr. Chairman,

We are now only days away from the adoption, in Marrakesh, Morocco, of the Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which was envisioned by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of 2016. While this will represent the culmination of significant efforts, it is not the end of the road. We must work to ensure that we strike the right balance between the interests of migrants and their countries of origin, transit and destination.

For The Bahamas, as a Small Island Developing State with porous maritime borders, the challenge of irregular migration remains acute. We therefore consider that partnership, regional and international cooperation in the field of migration are critical elements to promote better migration governance. For this reason, The Bahamas was pleased to host, last year, the Second Meeting of the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC) with the participation of IOM representatives, among others. We see the value and vision of the CMC as paramount to the Caribbean's response to migration management and border security.

In this vein, The Bahamas will closely study the recently launched Report ***“Migration Governance in the Caribbean – Report on the Island States of the Commonwealth Caribbean”*** produced by IOM in partnership with the US Department of State. We appreciate that it brings to the fore the region’s unique complexities and opportunities while identifying key needs and supporting evidence-based policy-making in the field of migration.

One year ago, The Bahamas undertook the largest emergency evacuation in its history; moving several entire island communities to the capital, during the passage of Hurricane Irma. It reflects the increasing impact of natural disasters and natural hazards on human mobility. We thank the IOM for its support during this time and encourage the continued work of the Organization in supporting capacity-building for States in this critical area.

Mr. Chairman,

The year 2018 has been one of many notable achievements for the IOM. The Bahamas assures that it will be a constructive partner toward more successes in the pivotal years to come.