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Statement by Mr Trygve G. Nordby

Chair of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Reference Group on Migration

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Mr Chairman, Director General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, I would like to congratulate and welcome Mr. Swing as new Director General for IOM.

The IFRC is very pleased by your invitation to strengthen partnerships with other organizations and actors in the wider field of migration,

At the moment we are developing a comprehensive policy on how to effectively assess and address the humanitarian challenges faced by migrants along migratory trails. We now work systematically to strengthen and render more effective and coordinated assistance provided our 186 by National Societies, to make the IFRC and the National Societies more effective and predictable partners.

Our approach is based on a broad understanding of the phenomenon of migration. It is not limited to certain categories of migrants. On the basis of the Movement's Fundamental Principles, the IFRC provides assistance to all migrants on the basis of their specific needs and vulnerabilities, irrespective of their legal status.

We were also very encouraged and impressed by Mr. Appave's presentation of the World Migration Report for 2008; particularly for his specific references to the need to protect the human rights of migrants.

The respect for international law, including human rights, refugee and humanitarian law, is fundamental for the protection of migrants and their safety, security and dignity. The IFRC fully supports all the measures aimed at strengthening the implementation of international law taken by competent agencies, such as IOM, as they reinforce the effectiveness of vulnerability and needs assessments.

The IFRC does not have any institutional claim vis-à-vis certain categories of migrants, and we are determined to strengthen the cooperation with all partners with a view to effectively addressing migrants' needs and vulnerabilities. In this context, the IFRC welcomes all mechanisms and partnerships aiming at strengthening collective operational response and assistance.

Thank you.