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## Protection, governance and partnership in the ‘Seventh Decade’

Statement presented ~~verbally and~~ in writing to the  
International Organization for Migration – 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary; 100<sup>th</sup> session of the Council  
6 December 2011  
by John K. Bingham, ICMC Head of Policy

*Check against delivery*

Mr. Chair, Director Swing, dear IOM colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

**A heartfelt happy anniversary** to you and to all at IOM, from all of us at ICMC, who like you and UNHCR, were founded in this town 60 years ago.

1951 was a year the world rose to meet one of the epic migration challenges of our times: the displacement of millions of migrants when they, or borders, moved in World War II. The world then saw the value in responding to manifest human need with protection—newly recognized in an international convention; with good governance—*new* governance entrusted to efforts pooled in organizations like UNHCR and IOM; and in partnership, including with non-government organizations sharing similar objectives, like ICMC.

May we touch briefly on the importance we see, on the ground, of stepping up to the need for greater governance, protection and partnership today.

**Governance.** As emphasized last week by civil society at the Global Forum on Migration and Development, international agencies like IOM, UNHCR and civil organizations like ICMC “*came into being as a direct response by governments and peoples to humanitarian and protection urgencies of their day. Delegates see similar urgency in the experience of millions of migrants and their families worldwide...*”<sup>1</sup>

60 years on, we all see the globalization of economies, politics and human mobility. These next years call absolutely for the globalization of *rights and responsibilities* to catch up—both practically and with consistency. Global approaches are not to replace national and regional governance, but, as with refugee and other convention-based regimes, to complement and inspire them.

We appreciate the attention in your five-year plan to improving the global governance of migration. As in so many IOM initiatives over the years, and in our own project this past year, the *Conversations on Global Governance of Migration* in which so many from IOM participated, we

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<sup>1</sup> Click [here](#) or access <http://www.icmc.net/article/civil-society-urges-governments-fill-leadership-gaps-migration> to download the **Statement of the GFMD 2011 Civil Society Days**; presented 1 December 2011 to the Opening Plenary of States, Civil Society and Observers, Global Forum on Migration and Development 2011.

commit to re-doubling our engagement with you, with other international organizations, with governments and with regional entities for good movement and result on governance.

Governance moves and breathes best in partnerships, and so does protection.

**Partnerships.** In two projects in particular this past year, ICMC has been fortunate to work with IOM on improving protection: the first, regarding integration and reception of refugees being resettled in Europe; the second on strengthening responses of assistance and protection to boat people and other migrants arriving in Southern Europe. As elaborated in our publications *Paving the Way* and *MAYDAY!*, both projects demonstrated how *partnerships* provide protection: each was funded by the European Commission, and engaged UNHCR as well as IOM and other international organizations together with local and national governments and NGOs, working side-by-side in seaports and airports, in cities, transnationally and in networks. We further appreciate the recent consultations that IOM organized with civil society organizations last month. Together with NGOs worldwide, we look forward to new and broadened partnerships, and partnership models, with IOM these next years.

**Protection.** Over the past 60 years, protection has been an area of enormous, if at times under-respected achievement: the institutionalization of refugee identification and solutions; the sure—though painfully slow—globalization of protection of victims of human trafficking; expanding attention to children on the move, among the most prominent examples.

As reported in our *MAYDAY* publication however, our members and partners on the ground “*point to an important gap in protecting and assisting those who have suffered violence and trauma along their journey.*” Indeed, we see serial violence against migrants in transit: trails of trauma and rape routes across land and sea in the Americas, cross-Africa and to the Middle East or Europe, and in Asia. These migrants are not just stranded and vulnerable: a great number are in mortal distress.

Representatives of government and governance, partners in protection: at the Global Forum last week, civil society called on “...*states and international agencies to join us in urgently putting in place consistent responses of assistance and protection to those victims, in particular women and children* [emphasis added]. *Improved mechanisms are needed to ensure that migrants are rescued at sea when such rescue is needed, and differentiated upon arrival for the specific protection to which they are entitled under international, regional and national law.*” Similar urgency was expressed by the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement at its 31<sup>st</sup> international Conference, also held last week just across the street here. Like ICMC and other civil society organizations worldwide, the Red Cross added further clarity: because these migrants are victims of serious violence and trauma, our response must be human, immediate and needs-based, without regard to their immigration status.

As we enter our seventh decade of work together, may a clear appreciation of profound need—and human dignity—inform the further development of governance, protection and partnership for the benefit of migrants and societies everywhere.

*Thank you.*