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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**MR A. FRASER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL:**

**DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE  
88<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL**

Geneva  
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Mr. Chair,  
Director-General,  
Deputy Director-General,  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen

The South African delegation would like to thank the Director-General and Deputy Director-General for their comprehensive reports on the work of the International Organization for Migration during 2003. South Africa values the work of the IOM and its representative office in our country. South Africa is cooperating with this Office on programmes such as the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) and Partnership on HIV/AIDS among Mobile Populations in Southern Africa (PHAMSA). These programmes are particularly valued for both their regional and interdisciplinary focus. X

Mr. Chair

The Director-General referred to the formation of the Global Commission on International Migration. South Africa welcomes this effort to place migration on the international agenda and see the Commission's work as part of the broader current effort to reform the multilateral system of governance to make it more responsive to the current realities and needs of global migration. With an estimated three percent of the world's economically active population and six percent of Africa's population living outside their country of origin, one cannot but agree with Mr. Kofi Annan's assertion that migration should be seen as an international priority area. We are pleased to be able to share the Commission's perspectives first hand.

In his report, the Director-General also noted a growing recognition of the following aspects of migration during 2003:

- Migration is something that is happening and that measures are needed to make it more orderly, not just to prevent or contain it;
- There are benefits of increased partnerships amongst countries sharing migration routes; and,
- Migration is relevant to development.

South Africa welcomes the recognition of migration as an existing phenomenon that needs to be managed, that migration cannot be separated from the larger issues such as poverty and under-development, and that countries have common interests and responsibilities through the migration routes they share with other countries.

If the management of migration is to be improved, it stands to reason that our efforts and resources should be allocated more evenly along migration routes. This paradigm shift means that the causes of migration in countries of origin will require just as much attention and resources - or perhaps even more if the past neglect of this aspect of migration is taken into consideration - as efforts to control migration in recipient countries.

South Africa would therefore caution against interpreting the need for better management and increased partnerships along migration routes as a rationale for moving the locus of migration control from developed to developing countries. South Africa would rather encourage an interpretation of migration management that would see it as part of a holistic international approach to address the issues of poverty and under-development instead. We would like to echo the remark of the co-chair of the Global Commission on International Migration, Dr Ramphela, that poverty and inequality are central to the dynamics of international migration. X

Mr Chair

South Africa represents a microcosm of the world, especially as it relates to migration. We fall in all three categories of migration and experience the positive and negative aspects of both regular and irregular migration. We have great wealth disparities within our society as well as within our region. Our response to migration is therefore linked to our response to all of these broader issues.

South Africa has enshrined a Bill of Rights in its Constitution that affords rights to all the people living in the country, as opposed to a concept merely benefiting citizens. This approach forms the basis for managing both regular and irregular migrants in a manner that is consistent with the principles on which the new South Africa is built. ~~These rights translate into access to a number of social services including health care and education.~~ X

On the level of governance, South Africa is taking steps to craft a bureaucracy that is equipped to manage migration and to create a appropriate legal basis for dealing with issues such as human trafficking in a comprehensive manner. Through our Financial Intelligence Centre we are addressing oft related issues of <sup>organize</sup> crime and security. We have <sup>also</sup> embarked on a transparent process to deal with the issues of xenophobia through public hearings organized by both Government and our Human Rights Commission. XX

Mr Chair

A recent survey found that 90 % of Africans are proud of their Continent but that most of them would migrate due to material conditions if given the opportunity. This survey highlights the importance of creating conditions that would enable Africans to live on the Continent they love, free of the scourge of poverty and in dignity.

In the African context migration is linked to development. Whilst the World Bank estimates remittances account for some USD 70 Billion channeled to developing countries per year, the net effect of this phenomenon in Africa remains insufficiently tested and warrants more research and further debate. The African Union developed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a blueprint for sustainable development. This clearly recognizes the role that the African Diaspora could play. In this regard it may be of interest to investigate a possible link between development assistance and African migrants' transnational practices.

Whilst the international debate on migration tends to concentrate on the movements from developing countries to the developed world, African migration is far from being limited merely to the North-South axis and to movements from the so-called "deprived" South to the "prosperous" North. The fact is that intra-African migration far outstrips the volume of workers or asylum-seekers knocking at the doors of industrialized countries. It is in this context that we should develop frameworks that deal fairly and comprehensive with the outflow of health workers, teachers and other skilled persons from Africa to the developed world.

Mr Chair

Allow me to conclude with one last quote from my  <sup>fellow</sup> compatriot, Dr Ramphela's presentation: "Our vision should be one of a world in which X

people migrate out of choice rather than necessity, in a safe and legal manner, and in a way that contributes – rather than detracts from – the sustainable economic and social development of their country of origin.”

Thank you.