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Statement by the European Commission

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Madam Chair,

1. Thank you for this opportunity to make a brief intervention on behalf of the European Commission.
2. Let me first of all associate myself with the statement delivered earlier by Finland on behalf of the European Union, which reflected the overall policy objectives of the EU with regard to migration. It also underlined the significant expansion in recent years in the scope of the EU's policies on migration, and highlighted the Global Approach to migration adopted by the EU.
3. In this context, the European Commission has systematically integrated migration into its dialogue with third countries and greatly expanded its assistance to third countries in the area of asylum and migration – notably through the inclusion of migration in geographical assistance programmes as well as through the creation in 2004 of the AENEAS thematic programme of cooperation with third countries in the areas of migration and asylum, for which IOM is one of the implementing partners.
4. In the future, the Commission intends to further intensify this cooperation, so as to better address the challenge of migration, in a spirit of partnership and shared responsibilities with its partners. It is in this perspective that the Commission has just adopted a Communication entitled “The Global Approach to Migration one year on: Towards a comprehensive European migration policy”. This Communication presents proposals for a more comprehensive European policy on migration, based on solidarity among the Member States, partnership with third countries and respect for migrant rights. The European Heads of State and Government will have migration policy as one of their

main themes for their European Council on 14 and 15 December.

5. Let me highlight very briefly a number of concrete ideas included in the Commission's Communication, to the extent that they are directly relevant to issues discussed at this IOM Council meeting. To begin with, a number of ideas that were also discussed at this Council meeting are going to be put into practice. In 2007, we will thus launch a specific **programme on migration and development** in Africa. The first objective will be to address the lack of decent jobs in Africa. We want to promote, in close partnership with our partners, investments in labour-intensive sectors in regions with high outward migration. The Commission will reserve €40m for the first phase of this initiative.
6. We will also devote greater attention to the evidence base for migration policies so as to allow for a better understanding of migration realities. One important tool for this will be the **Migration Profile**. This will bring together in a more structured manner information on migration at the level of individual partner countries. It will cover some of the elements also addressed at this Council. To mention only some: What is the state of the labour market; what are the sectors in which there is a need for skills; what are the financial aspects of migration; and how does this impact on GDP and on a country's progress towards development objectives?
7. Building on these Profiles, the Commission will moreover propose establishing **Cooperation platforms on migration and development** – which would seek to manage migration more effectively and in the interests of all, with the active involvement of relevant multilateral organizations.
8. The issue of the brain drain will be an integral part of our approach. The example of the negative effects of excessive migration of skilled workers on the health service of a number of countries is well known. The Commission is proposing a

coordinated EU strategy to address this issue in a serious manner.

9. In due course, as we make further progress on these initiatives together with the Member States of the EU, we will of course be happy also to provide further information to IOM members.
10. Madam Chair, we look forward to continuing our cooperation with IOM. Thank you.