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STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF IRELAND

Ambassador Patricia O'Brien
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geneva

Mr. Chairman,

Ireland associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. My delegation also congratulates the new chair of the Council on their election.

I want to first thank the Director General for his strong and effective leadership. His principled voice in defence of migrants, in the face of an increasingly negative migration narrative in some parts of the globe, brings much-needed balance to the debate. We thank him also for his thought-provoking report, which underlines the contributions of migrants to both their home and host societies.

Mr Chairman,

As the Director General has said, the increasing social, ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of nations is inexorable and must be managed in ways that promote tolerance and cohesion. Ireland has a long history of emigration. But we are also today a country with a relatively large migrant population: 12 per cent of the population in the latest census. This recent immigration has transformed Irish society – and, for the better. Persons of non-Irish origin play

an increasingly important role in the community, and have greatly enhanced the fabric of our society.

While demographic changes present challenges, we must all adapt to increasing diversity. How we effectively integrate immigrants needs to be addressed more closely, and we welcome IOM's work on migrant integration programmes, as well as its key advocacy role in reminding us of the skills and benefits that migrants bring to their host countries.

Mr Chairman,

We welcome the enhanced coordination between IOM and the UN, in particular UNHCR. We also welcome IOM's active participation in the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and support the further deepening of IOM's strategic partnerships with the wider UN system. As *the leading international migration agency*, IOM provides important input into ongoing humanitarian reform. Ireland commends, in particular, IOM's willingness to take up new areas of work where there is need, such as the operation of Ebola Treatment Units in Liberia this year. We commend also your staff in the field which undertakes tremendous work, often at great personal risk.

Mr. Chairman,

Many migrants suffer exploitative or dangerous working conditions and are often unable to obtain the assistance they need from their host states.

Conscious of this particular vulnerability, recently enacted legislation in Ireland ensures access to legal redress for undocumented workers, providing a means by which to claim unpaid wages through the courts. It is important to remind ourselves that human rights are for all – not just citizens or those with the

appropriate permits and visas. The strong role played by IOM in addressing harmful rhetoric with evidence is vital in undercutting attempts to dehumanise irregular migrants and deprive them of the law's full protection.

Mr Chairman,

Many of the factors driving migration are likely to intensify in the coming years. Ireland will continue to fully support the work of IOM to ensure that migration is managed in an orderly and coherent way, recognising the contribution of migration to the international economic, social and cultural landscape, and also that the human rights of migrants must be fully protected.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.