

Mr. Chairman:

To begin, I want to thank Director General Swing, who is presiding over his last regular Council meeting, the IOM administration, and all of the IOM staff members for their tireless work around the globe.

Global migration represents one of the top political, economic, and security challenges of our day. Many countries realize that addressing illegal migration, while also capturing the benefits of legal, well-managed migration, requires new forms of cooperation with their neighbors and with countries of origin. It is also a cross-cutting issue that affects all three dimensions of security. For the United States, we seek to reaffirm our sovereign right to develop and enforce our immigration laws, protect our borders, return migrants who are not eligible to remain in our country, and protect the human rights of migrants in line with our international obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

This past year, IOM has undergone a period of transition and change as the organization's new relationship with the United Nations matures, and transition and change will continue over the coming year as IOM member states elect a new Director General. While navigating this change, we must not lose sight of the organization's vital day to day work, and we must work to protect and strengthen IOM by making it an even more efficient and effective organization.

IOM operations around the globe currently provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to people in South Sudan, Bangladesh, Yemen, and countless other places. IOM is assisting human trafficking survivors around the globe. It is also helping governments strengthen border management and facilitate voluntary returns. IOM's work with governments take into account the security, economic, humanitarian, and social aspects of migration that affect both local citizens and migrants. As a voluntarily-funded organization, IOM's success relies on its being an effective field partner in all of these areas of operation.

Part of what makes IOM an effective partner is that it recognizes and respects states' sovereign rights to manage and control their borders, while at the same time assisting governments to achieve better migration management in order to make migration safer. It does not – nor should it – establish or impose norms. IOM accomplishes this by focusing on shared priorities. Countries of origin, transit, and destination all have an interest in developing safe, orderly, and legal migration processes, improving border security, combating human smuggling and trafficking, assisting migrants who may be in need of protection, including those that become or are vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking, and ensuring the timely return of migrants who are subject to removal.

IOM's core characteristics – its adaptability, its operational focus, and its non-normative approach – translate into practical, pragmatic partnerships with governments.

These core characteristics help maintain IOM's effectiveness, but IOM's operational effectiveness – and its operational efficiencies – need to be further strengthened. Prioritizing core funding for investments in IOM's oversight and management structures is essential to sustained and improved operational effectiveness. IOM has an annual budget of over \$1.6 billion dollars. It must have sufficient oversight and management structures to support its global operations. Over the last two years, IOM has used core funding on a broad array of new policy areas and initiatives, while spending on underlying organizational management and oversight has lagged. We urge the IOM leadership and membership to engage in a dialogue on how core funds are used, and to devise a

means to proactively identify when oversight and management structures are insufficient or overstretched.

Throughout its history, IOM has stood out as an organization that achieves success through concrete action. It has been adaptable; it has been innovative; and it has been largely effective. Let us work together to further enhance these qualities so IOM can continue to be an effective partner for all of its member states.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, the United States has been a strong supporter of IOM since it was established in 1951. The preamble to IOM's Constitution acknowledges the need to ensure orderly migration, and this is as true today as it was in 1951. We are in a new era in which governments are recognizing the dangers of illegal migration and the threat it can pose to security and public safety. Governments are increasingly interested in improving how migration is managed. The United States is committed to improving our own immigration system, and we recognize that coordination with other nations to improve border security and stem illegal migration flows will help strengthen our national security and protect our citizens. Migration is multifaceted and complex, and we appreciate IOM as a strategic partner working to advance shared goals of legal, orderly, and safe migration.

In this regard, it is the intention of the U.S. government to nominate in the near future a well-qualified American candidate as the next Director General of IOM.

Thank you.