

**Statement of International Emergency and Development Aid (IEDA RELIEF) IOM 109<sup>th</sup> Council, Geneva 27,2018**

**Delivered by Phil Maanulwa, Founder, President & CEO**

**Distinguished Chair,  
Distinguished Director General,  
Excellencies, Heads of Delegations,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am humbled and privileged to be here today addressing this distinguished Council. It is an honor to refer the collaboration and relationship cemented between the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and International Emergency and Development Aid (IEDA RELIEF). IOM works on migration is of interest to IEDA RELIEF and we are looking forward to develop a closer relationship. The probability of someone like me, coming from a small ethnic minority group in Eastern DRC is just as odd as winning the 1,5 Billion-dollar recent Mega million Jackpot in the US. My journey as a refugee, seeking asylum in Uganda to being resettled in Houston, Texas is a living testimony.

Allow me to start by expressing our gratitude for being given this opportunity to be part of this body and bring a unique perspective on Migration issues as a former refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who once was given a change to resettle to his new Country, The USA is now making a difference around the globe addressing poverty, human rights and development while giving back to communities in need regardless of who they are, their origin and where they live around the Globe.

**IEDA RELIEF acceptance as a New IOM Observer Member has special meaning way beyond your imagination. My very first exposure to the work of International Organizations started with IOM in Goma, former Zaire, now DRC as a locally hired support staff. Thanks for the work and commitment of this August Assembly and IOM hardworking staff and leadership. Here now**

It is our belief the collaboration between IEDA RELIEF and IOM on global scale will be an added value to both Organizations work on Migration specifically with respect to diaspora role as part of the global Migration narrative and framework while changing its narrative and the current negative connotations and rhetoric portraying migrant as "invaders" and "criminals". Migrants don't only bring burden and liabilities to their new world but rather crucial assets if treated in human and dignified manner in their new host countries. Actively Engaging and bringing Diasporas around the world to the table on a serious and honest dialogue to address Migration roots causes will improve governments and Policy makers understanding.

We are confident and convinced such consultations and inputs will be critical to figuring out Migration global and holistic solutions. We are willing and able to undertake our responsibility to improve human sufferings and wellbeing.

**My organization is committed and ready to play a role in this endeavor and brings me to give you a little background of IEDA RELIEF in a nut shell.**

**Since 2008, we have worked in 12 countries with a \$62M investment over 250 projects** helping people as they transition to longer-term socio-economic development. Our **more than 1,000 current staff focus on marginalized** people, as well as internally displaced persons, refugees and migrants. We have facilitated and delivered the key components of support and coupled activities with community capacity building to develop a local voice, ownership, and technical capability for communities to support their transition to longer-term sustainability.

**Why IEDA Relief |** We know communities – we do not just say it, **we practice it.** We are working intimately with communities from Day One. For us, it does not make sense to work in communities without understanding them and learning from them – their people, their needs, what drives them, social structures, cultural practices, and interactions. When the situation calls, we work quickly so that we do not lose time further down the road when problems arise.

**We build trust |** Fundamental in any community anywhere in the world – we value humans and what each person brings to their community. Focusing on community, **we naturally build strong local ties**, especially with delivery of health activities, livelihood and small-scale infrastructure. Communities value these fundamental life lines and automatic trust is built.

**We Have the Networks and Access** | Our engagement process gives us an immediate footing to understand and listen to communities – what they need, what they do not want, and what impacts them. **We have become known for this approach which helps to widen our network.** Our office structure allows us to be in the middle of communities. When others do not have the ability to gain entrance into a community, we have the access. While we do not work with individuals or entities that are listed, or are not supported by the communities, we **understand their perspective to understand their impact.**

**We Incorporate Sustainability** | **This is fundamental to the way we do business.** The way we engage, design, and implement an intervention is framed with sustainability in mind. We build meaningful community ownership to ensure our projects are responsive and generate a positive impact that lasts.

**Our Model Works** | Our direct implementation approach is management-intensive, but it works. We understand that it requires up-front costs that over a period of time, **generate a return on the investment.** With this, we ensure a **low-cost, simple, achievable approach** that makes sense. Our technical skill, thinking, and understanding of the local situation – are part of our risk management and project processes that supports our management. We keep operations' costs down because **we have local resources – staff, materials, and supply chain** – to the extent possible – we reduce the “middle man,” a heavy security apparatus, and rework. We are able to **do things right the first time** because we have the right people and the right resources working together to deliver which ultimately **creates cost savings.**

Excelsior, hope these few paragraphs sticks with you and gives you grasp of who are as organization, our simple yet practical strategy and vision.

We are honored to be included in the work of International organization for Migration and offered a platform to contribute as observers to meeting of this Council.

Finally, I would conclude Congratulating Mr. Antonio Manuel de Carvalho Ferreira for his successful election in the summer as the new Director General. Thanks for your leadership sir. Finally, let me recognize the professional work, flexibility, openness, patient and support shown throughout the four years long process by IOM staff here in Geneva and in New York. They've opened their doors, adjusted their busy agendas to spare sometime with us, guide us, and make this a reality today. Our sincerest thanks to all women and men of IOM doing their best to make a difference in lives of many.

Thank you for your attention.