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**Statement by the Delegation of Kazakhstan
at the General Debate of the 109th Session of the IOM Council**

Geneva, 1 December, 2018

Mr. Chair,

Mr. Director General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, let me join other delegations in welcoming the new Chair of the IOM Council, the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, and the members of his Bureau.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere congratulations to Mr. Antonio Vitorino for his election as the new Director General of the IOM and wish him a very successful term. We are confident that under his wise leadership, the organization will continue to effectively fulfill its mandate at this important new stage of its development.

You can count on our support, Mr. Director General, and we are looking forward to working closely with you and your colleagues.

Let me also warmly welcome the entry of the brotherly and neighbor state of Uzbekistan as the newest 173d member of the IOM.

We are glad that now, with Uzbekistan's membership in the organization, all the Central Asian countries are members of the IOM.

The Central Asian region, in migration terms, is one of the most dynamic and fast changing in the world. Intraregional migration is the key feature in the

region and is underpinned by geographical, cultural, economic, political and social links that are historical in nature.

All the countries of the region already enjoy excellent longstanding cooperation with IOM, be it on the bilateral basis, or on the regional basis within the existing Regional Cooperation Process called the Almaty process.

We are grateful to the IOM for its active participation and support to the Process which aims to address, in a cooperative and coordinated manner, the multiple challenges resulting from complex migration dynamics and mixed migratory movements in Central Asia and the wider region.

On a national level, Kazakhstan has been cooperating with the IOM since 1997. We have excellent partnership relations with the organization which have been further strengthened by the recent visit of the former IOM Director General, Ambassador William Lacy Swing, who visited Kazakhstan in May of this year.

Kazakhstan is looking forward to the implementation of the joint initiatives discussed during the visit. We are also fully committed to continuing the close collaboration on the already existing national and regional projects in the area of migration.

Mr. Chair,

The Global Compact on Migration will soon be adopted in Marrakesh.

We welcome the decision of the UN Secretary General to appoint IOM as the Coordinator and Secretariat of the newly established UN Migration Network which will be charged to ensure effective and coherent system-wide support to implementation, including the capacity building mechanism, as well as follow up and review of the GCM, in response to the needs of Member States.

We believe that the IOM's extensive experience and expertise on migration issues is essential for the effective implementation of the GCM.

As you rightly mentioned, Mr. Director General, the role of IOM in the follow up process will be to support the States in the implementation of the Global Compact in their chosen priorities and fields, based on the non-legally binding nature of the document, which fully respects the national sovereignty.

With regards to the GCM implementation, we would also like to stress the important role which should be played, in our view, by the Regional Consultative Mechanisms.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, let me reiterate Kazakhstan's full support to the IOM and our firm commitment to continuing close and fruitful cooperation with the organization.

Thank you!