

**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE 109TH SESSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION 27 – 30
NOVEMBER 2019**

Thank you, Mr. Chair

I have the honour to welcome the Director General of IOM, Mr. Antonio Vitorino, to the new task of steering this esteemed organisation at this critical time in migration governance. We are convinced that you will bring your rich experiences to bear on addressing the myriads of challenges in global Migration governance. We will continue to give you all the necessary support to succeed in your duty. Meanwhile, I wish to align with the statement earlier delivered by Morocco on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation wishes to thank the outgoing Chairman of the Council and as well welcomes the new Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia and his newly elected team as they take up their task at this session. In the same vein, we welcome Uzbekistan as a member of the organisation as well as the International Monetary Fund and the International Emergency and Development Aid (IEDA Relief) who joined on observer status.

Furthermore, Nigeria wishes to commend the IOM for its efforts throughout the negotiation of the Global Compact, which would soon be adopted at the Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakech in the coming month. We as well welcome the leading role of the IOM at the implementation phase of the Global Compact.

May I also express my appreciation to IOM for its continued collaboration with Nigeria in addressing its unprecedented challenges of forced displacements. We believe in greater collaboration with IOM and all its partners in the future with the adoption of the Global Compact. This will enable us to strengthen the implementation of national migration policy framework to adapt to the dynamic nature of the current migration trend, build capacity of migration related agencies, ensure dignified return and sustainable reintegration of migrants as well as establish effective data management strategies, to review and update Nigeria migration profile among others.

Nigeria welcomes the IOM's role of coordinating the UN Network on Migration. In this regard, IOM will definitely need extra hands and as well build its capacities while ensuring that these don't override its current mandate. It is pertinent to note that there would be need for additional

resources to carry out this new responsibility and IOM should ensure that it doesn't put additional burden on member states or deprive them of their benefits.

Mr. Chairman, the adoption of the Global Compact in Marrakech will present an excellent opportunity for all member states to renew their commitment in sustaining the momentum of the 2016 New York Declaration. States should be encouraged to give this universal non-binding document a trial. IOM should work assiduously to change the narrative of migration from current global political, social and economic undertones. The IOM expertise, strategies and implementation mechanisms should be able to show case the positive aspect of migration which had been for a long time largely nuanced negatively. We strongly believe that the universality of IOM would be achieved not only through the effective coordination of the UN migration network, but also the gigantic strides of its achievement expected in helping member states through the implementation of the Global Compact.

Nigeria is currently poised to strengthen its national migration coordination strategy, data management strategy and integrated border management for a result-oriented implementation of the GCM. A multi-stakeholder approach, which includes the government and local actors in the migration field is considered appropriate.

We are also in the process of finalising the standard operating procedure for the conduct of returns and reintegration of migrants for a more coherent and sustainable approach. My delegation therefore, welcomes strengthening the capacity of countries to establish sustainable reintegration frameworks. The reintegration processes should be need-based through continuous assessment and evaluation to avoid one-size fits-all approach.

Mr Chairman, my delegation believes that while it is the obligation of member states to accept the return of their nationals who did not qualify to reside in another country's territory under international law, return of migrants should always be carried out in collaboration with countries of origin. Consistent with international legal obligation, it is also State's sovereign right to determine who should remain on its territory. However, the need for cooperation with the countries of origin in assisted return can never be overemphasised to ensure that migrants' states of origin are well ascertained and appropriate procedures followed in line with basic human rights.

More so, the Nigeria National Diaspora Commission Establishment Act of 2018 will create an enabling environment for Nigeria diaspora to contribute to national development while working closely with all organs of government in Nigeria.

To conclude Mr. Chair, I wish to reiterate the need to mainstream migration into sustainable development goals. IOM should urgently develop a policy tool to enhance remittances and as well help states of origin to channel these remittances towards development goals through mapping out efficient strategies to engage the diaspora.

I thank you.