

Mr. Chairman:

To begin, I want to welcome Director General Antonio Vitorino. Director General, we appreciate the commitment you have made to this organization and to its member states by taking on this position. We look forward to working with you over the next five years to ensure IOM remains an effective partner for its member states, and we are eager to learn more about your plans for the organization. You are surrounded by an amazing staff who are dedicated to the organization, and we wish you every success.

We also wish to welcome the new IOM member states. IOM is member-state led, so our collective engagement is the key element in building a stronger and more resilient organization. We look forward to working closely with all of you.

Mr. Chairman, member states, and distinguished delegates:

Migration represents one of the top political, economic, and security challenges of our era. It is a complex crosscutting issue that touches upon security, economics, and human rights. Each state experiences these challenges differently, and each state applies different initiatives and policy approaches to address the distinct challenges it faces. There is no 'one size fits all' to migration management.

IOM recognizes these complexities and the multi-faceted responses they require – and it uses its global presence to work with member states to identify their unique migration goals and then implement tailored activities in support of these unique goals. IOM's strength is in the flexibility and adaptability that allows IOM to work with countries to develop safe, orderly, and legal migration processes while fully respecting states' sovereign rights to manage and control their borders.

IOM operations provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to people in South Sudan, Bangladesh, Yemen, and countless other places around the globe. IOM is assisting human trafficking survivors, it is helping governments resettle refugees so they can start new lives, and it is helping governments strengthen border management and facilitate voluntary returns. When working with governments,

IOM prioritizes the security, economic, humanitarian, and social aspects of migration that affect both local citizens and migrants.

The United States has partnered with IOM for decades to support shared priorities and foreign policy goals, including: strengthening border security; preventing violent extremism; addressing trafficking in persons; combating the smuggling of migrants; and providing humanitarian assistance. We hope to continue this partnership with IOM -- and by extension with IOM member states -- but this partnership is dependent upon IOM being an effective, efficient, and transparent implementing partner with appropriate oversight and management structures.

It is incumbent upon us as member states to provide clear direction to the IOM leadership. Last year, we implored the IOM membership and the IOM administration not lose sight of the organization's vital day-to-day work, and the organizational architecture that makes this work possible. At the request of member states, IOM's programmatic budget has grown by more than 500 percent in the past twenty years. In view of this growth, we must ensure IOM's core structures remain fit and scaled for purpose. This goal merits repeating: we must work together to protect and strengthen IOM by prioritizing funding for investments in the core structures of the organization, specifically IOM's oversight and management structures.

We welcome the initiative to review IOM's procurement and internal justice systems led by the Deputy Director General, and we applaud the Director General for initiating this review so early in his term. Improving procurement systems -- including by looking for ways to coordinate with other humanitarian organizations -- is an important element within IOM's Grand Bargain commitment to reduce duplication of management costs. We continue to expect definitive and measurable progress in each of the Grand Bargain commitment areas from our partners. We encourage IOM to ensure any revised policy outlines policies and provisions to prevent and address human trafficking in its own institutional procurement of goods and services, including supply chains. Supporting a sufficient independent investigatory capacity to examine claims of fraud and abuse, and thus prevent further malfeasance, is a vital component in any organization. This is particularly important as organizations aim to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. We

therefore welcome the analysis of the Deputy Director General, and look forward to her recommendations. These are important and necessary actions to take.

We encourage you to build upon this promising initial effort by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of IOM's organizational structures, and to establish mechanisms that proactively identify when oversight and management structures are insufficient or overstretched. At the same time, we urge you to expand your donor base to increase burden sharing for IOM's operational activities.

IOM's focus on concrete action and adaptability enables it to be an effective partner for all its member states, supporting distinct migration policy goals and priorities of these states. IOM's effectiveness in this role, however, is dependent on the seriousness with which we accept our shared responsibility to engage with the IOM administration on these organizational management issues.

Let us work together to ensure IOM remains an efficient and effective operational partner for all of its member states.

Mr. Chairman,

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 likewise recognize the danger it poses to migrants themselves, and the vulnerability of people who move outside of legal systems to trafficking and other abuse. Governments are increasingly interested in improving how migration is managed. The United States is committed to improving our own immigration system to 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.

Thank you.