

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Arab Group.

At the outset, the Arab Group would like to welcome the admission of Lebanon to the membership of IOM, increasing the membership of Arab States to eleven members in addition to four observers. The Group hopes that Arabic will be added as an official language of the Organization, especially in light of IOM's accession to the UN in 2016.

The Arab Group affirms its member States' interest in international migration, as countries of origin, transit and destination. The past decade has witnessed a remarkable increase in migration from a number of Arab countries as a result of instability and deteriorating economic conditions, which underlines the urgent need for peaceful settlement of all conflicts in the region, and addressing other root causes, especially poverty and unemployment.

The Arab Group takes note of the Director-General's report on the activities of the Organization and the document on the "Strategic Vision", as well as proposals to reform the Organization to enable it to fulfil its additional responsibilities, and thanks the Secretariat for the efforts made in the preparation of all documents presented to the Council. The Arab Group reaffirms its support for IOM as the leading organization in the field of migration in the UN system.

The Group would like to refer to the section on "Strategic Priorities" in the Strategic Vision, which emphasises the importance of addressing the drivers of migration, including climate change and environmental degradation, creating regular pathways, combating irregular migration, addressing the migration-development nexus, as well as capacity-building in the area of migration management.

The Arab Group wishes to once more reaffirm the IOM's important role in supporting States to safeguard the dignity and rights of migrants, and develop a positive discourse on migrant's contributions, which helps combat intolerance, racism and xenophobia. We hope the Strategic Vision will adequately address these issues.

The Arab Group supports efforts to enhance IOM's efficiency and effectiveness, and reaffirms its commitment to strengthening the Organisation's senior management in light of the magnitude of the challenges it faces, and its increased responsibilities following the adoption of the GCM. It also notes the importance of continued commitment by IOM's leadership to ensuring transparency, accountability and strengthening the Internal Governance Framework. The Group simultaneously emphasises the importance of maintaining the operational, flexible and decentralised nature of the Organization.

The Arab Group, which the majority of its members adopted the GCM in Marrakech on 10 December 2018, reaffirms its aspiration to implement the GCM, in accordance with national priorities, and emphasises our regional cooperation in this regard, including the meeting to be held at the Arab League approximately one year after the GCM's adoption on 3 and 4 December 2019. This meeting will address the implementation of the GCM in Arab States.

The Arab Group welcomes IOM's assumption of its new role under the GCM including as coordinator of the Migration Network, while recalling the importance of continuing interaction with all States, all of which are affected by migration as either countries of origin, transit or destination.