

## Egypt Statement - IOM Executive Council

Egypt enjoys exceptional relations with IOM and we look forward to further developing our strategic partnership in a number of areas, including the migration - development nexus and the development of legal pathways. We highly appreciate the ongoing efforts of IOM's MENA Regional Office, which Egypt has hosted since 1991, and IOM's role as the leading organisation on migration within the UN system.

The issue of migration is a top priority for Egypt as a country of origin, transit, destination and return, experiencing diverse and complex patterns of migration. Egypt hosts some five million refugees and migrants from 58 different countries, while simultaneously acting as a major country of origin for labour migrants contributing positively to the development of their countries of destination.

We are therefore keen to play our part to promote sound migration governance at the global, regional and national levels. In this regard, Egypt is hosting the International Forum on Migration Statistics in January 2020, highlighting our commitment to enhanced data gathering and accurate statistics for evidence-based migration policies.

Egypt also strongly believes in the importance of regional dialogue on migration issues. In September 2019, Egypt hosted the Fifth Pan-African Forum on Migration to discuss "Strengthening Migration Data and Research". This included a Ministerial Meeting which endorsed the implementation of a continent-wide migration survey. Egypt is also actively participating in the Arab League meeting on GCM implementation, taking place in Cairo on 3rd and 4th December, 2019. It

is similarly engaged in multiple cooperation arrangements in Africa such as the Khartoum process and the AU-Horn of Africa initiative.

At the bilateral level, Egypt is already working with a number of key partners to promote the values reflected in the GCM. This year, Egypt's Central Bank and the African Institute for Remittances in Kenya launched an initiative to lower the cost of transferring remittances.

At the national level, Egypt is working towards including migration in its National Development Strategy and is upgrading its vocational training centres to enhance the employability of youth at risk. We have also embarked on a comprehensive economic reform program that reduced the unemployment rate to 7.5%, the lowest in over a decade. Egypt is also engaging its nationals abroad in development efforts.

Simultaneously, Egypt has taken great strides in eliminating illegal smuggling of migrants and human trafficking. The adoption of a comprehensive national law and strategy succeeded in preventing any smuggling of persons from Egypt's Mediterranean coastline since 2016. Simultaneously, the law has codified referral mechanisms and extensive protection for victims, recently establishing the first shelter for victims.

Mr. Chairman,

Combatting irregular migration must be accompanied with a commitment by our partners to increase regular pathways and provide adequate support to addressing root causes. Egypt organised a side event on the margins of the IDM to raise awareness regarding the issue of African Youth and Sustainable Development. The

event emphasised the importance of achieving the SDG's and urged the expansion of regular pathways in order to guarantee that migration is a matter of choice not compulsion. The international community must do more in this regard.

Egypt recognises the growing challenges of increasingly complex migration flows, which together with the expansion of IOM poses challenges to the organisation. In addition, Egypt, welcomes IOM's additional responsibilities under the GCM, including coordinating the recently-launched Migration Network.

We therefore keenly support ongoing efforts to reform IOM, strengthen the organisation's top management, and enhance IOM's internal governance framework. Egypt has engaged constructively in deliberations in this regard, and we look forward to our continued engagement in order to guarantee IOM's enhanced efficiency and effectiveness.

Thank you