

(draft)

**Philippine Statement delivered by Mr. Evan P. Garcia, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations**

110<sup>th</sup> IOM Council, 26-29 November 2018

Speaking slot: window morning of Wednesday, 27 November 2018

Thank you Chair for the opportunity to address this body.

At the outset, I have the honor to thank our Director General, **António Vitorino**, and our new Chairman, Ambassador **Morten Jespersen**, for their leadership in this Council. I likewise express my appreciation for the membership for selecting the other Members of our Bureau, myself included. I also take this opportunity to express appreciation for the hard work of the outgoing Chair, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, **Zenebe Kebede Korcho**, for his leadership over what has been quite a year for the Council.

The Philippines is of the view that it is in the discourse of Migration that we can demonstrate the effectiveness of multilateralism in delivering a coherent voice, and at the same time effective action on the ground. The IOM has been an important pillar in this effort. Over the past year, we have heard the Director General articulate in various fora his strategic vision for the IOM, reiterating how the vision is intended to propel the Migration Governance Framework forward, support the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the SDGs and other cooperative arrangements – a coherent mission amid a diversity of pathways. We believe in the vision of the DG and offer our support.

As we have said on previous occasions, for the Philippines, the GCM was a vital platform for facilitating open discussions on all aspects of migration, and for all parties to discuss their interests, be they national, regional or global in scope. It has been a year since the GCM was adopted, and in our national context, we have found the articulation of its objectives to be a useful impetus for re-energized bilateral and regional discussions, and a good basis for enriching existing agreements along clearer lines.

Filipinos overseas have contributed to the development, welfare and quality of life in the host countries and communities where they reside, while also finding ways to provide financial support needed for the well-being of their families in the Philippines. To help alleviate the impact of migration, the Philippine Government is investing in education and health services for the families left behind by migrants through the implementation of policies towards Health for All and Lifelong Learning. We are also revisiting social security agreements, and looking towards negotiating more, to facilitate portability of benefits upon return, in line with GCM Objectives 21 and 22, on the “safe and dignified return and readmission... sustainable reintegration” and establishing “mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits”.

All 23 objectives of the GCM provide the framework for the review and renewal of existing agreements, and the negotiation of new ones, for which we are as pragmatic as we have ever been. The Philippines is ready to negotiate at any level, through any

channel, as we and our partners share the same good intentions of sound migration governance.

Strengthening the institutions and processes that are in place to build migration governance at the national, bilateral, regional and global level, within the framework of state sovereignty, and of the international dialogue and cooperation, for improved global migration governance is important. It is for this reason that the Philippines co-sponsored the thematic workshop on GCM implementation at national level, through the auspices of the Ecuador Chairmanship of the GFMD this past March 2019. The GCM also informs our continued engagement with the Colombo Process, ASEAN Migration discussions and other regional and sub-regional fora.

In the context of the IOM's role as Secretariat of the UN Migration Network, the Philippines is glad to be able to contribute as a member of the Steering Group of the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund. The first meeting will be held in December, and the Philippines welcomes the opportunity to participate, and provide inputs from our perspective as a country of origin for migrant workers.

As we have said before, migration governance has many points of origin, pathways that converge in our shared goal of development, with migration being an option, and management policies being set in place to ensure that in the course of mobility, migrants are protected, policies and activities related to migrants, including integration and return are mainstreamed, and that the development impact of migration, on the individual and to the society, is positive.

People on the move could easily become vulnerable and it is our job, as governments, to provide safe pathways, to eliminate situations of exploitation, abusive working and living conditions, violence, sexual harassment, human trafficking and migrant smuggling. To reduce or remove the negative impacts of hyper-nationalism, xenophobia, hostility to migrants and refugees. It is our shared responsibility as an international community, through the IOM, through the implementation of the GCM, and through relevant arrangements at all levels, to preserve and protect the human rights of migrants as individual rights-bearers, and to balance the excessively negative narrative to which migration has been subjected.

To conclude, the Philippines expects that the IOM will remain a flexible, action-focused, results oriented organization. That this organization continues to build on its core strengths of providing capacity building and governance assistance to its Members, in furthering the discourse between human rights and international migration law, in supporting policy dialogue through research and data, in enhancing regional and international cooperation, in expanding migration health cooperation, and in more fully integrating the gender dimension and equitable regional representation, in building broader partnerships with the private sector and in engaging the diaspora.

The Philippines will remain actively engaged in this process.

Thank you Chair.