



**Statement of Bangladesh in the General Debate of the 111th Session of the
Council of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Geneva, 24 November 2020**

Mr. Chair

Director-General

Distinguished delegates,

Let me join other delegates in welcoming your Excellency for assuming the Chair of the IOM Council. We also appreciate the strong leadership of Ambassador Jespersen during the last year, particularly at a critical time for the organization. We also welcome other newly elected Bureau members. Let me also congratulate the Russian Federation as the new member of IOM, and Malaysia as a new observer of this Council.

02. We appreciate Director General's detailed report on IOM's global operations during the COVID 19 pandemic. Indeed, it is commendable that the IOM personnel has been working worldwide to protect the migrants' health and other rights.

Mr. Chair,

03. The pandemic has posed an unprecedented challenge to the public health sector and socio-economic conditions in many societies, particularly in developing countries. Migrants including those in irregular situations are bearing the biggest brunt due to their multiple vulnerabilities including health risks, stigmatization, and social exclusion. Millions of migrants have been facing the grim reality of job loss and forced return. This situation is seriously affecting the prospect of remittance which is the lifeline of millions of families in the global South.

04. The New York Declaration leading to the Global Compact on Migration underlined a global call to build an inclusive society “leaving no one behind”. The vulnerabilities of the migrants further exposed by the COVID-19 has reminded us that we must redouble our efforts to implement the GCM. Its call for inclusive and rule-based migration governance at the national, regional, and global level needs our urgent attention and action to facilitate and promote the protection of migrants’ rights. We also underline that the IOM must play a pivotal role to this end.

Mr. Chair,

05. Migration has always been integral to Bangladesh’s national development priorities. We have been an advocate for making migration work for everyone. With more than 8 million of our nationals working and living abroad, our foreign policy engagements remain focused on human mobility. Bangladesh has consistently advocated for harnessing the development potentials of migration, promoting the rights of migrants, fostering meaningful international cooperation for migration governance, and eliminating unfair practices in labor migration. Our Government has put in place several programmes to implement the GCM. Recently, we have joined the group of “GCM Champion” countries. In the context of COVID-19, we have identified the medium- and long-term challenges faced by the migrant workers, and have taken several initiatives to support our returnee migrants.

Mr. Chair,

06. As you are aware, Bangladesh has been currently tackling an unforeseen, massive humanitarian crisis by hosting more than a million Rohingyas from Myanmar. A robust humanitarian assistance coordination among multiple UN agencies in close cooperation with the Government is in place in Bangladesh. In this regard, IOM’s continued and crucial support to and constructive engagement with the Government of Bangladesh in emergency situations particularly concerning the Rohingya crisis is crucial. We appreciate the IOM’s engagement in Bangladesh in situations of natural disasters as well as its support for our labor migration management. We urge the IOM to continue to remain

an important partner of Bangladesh in addressing the challenges in labour migration sector at this difficult time.

Mr. Chair,

07. To conclude, we underscore that all migrants irrespective of their status must be an integral part of the COVID 19 response and recovery plans. Their health, job, and livelihood security must be ensured. Also, there must be concrete efforts to assure reappointment once the situation comes back to normalcy, and to provide appropriate compensation in the context where termination and return are of absolute necessity. Countries of origin must receive greater support to subsidize sustainable reintegration of the returnee migrants into their economy. We would like to see the IOM continue to play its due role to this end.

I thank you.
