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Statement by the Government of Canada Delivered by H.E. Leslie E. Norton

Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva

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Déclaration du Gouvernement du Canada Prononcée par H.E. Leslie E. Norton

Ambassadrice et Représentante permanente auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies et de la
Conférence du désarmement à Genève

Genève, 24-27 novembre 2020

Mr. Chair,

We would like to begin by remembering those who have lost their lives and livelihoods as a result of the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the world finds itself grappling with the impacts of this virus, Canada extends its gratitude to the IOM and Member States for their actions in support of affected individuals and families across the globe.

Canada applauds the IOM's response to address the impact of COVID-19 on mobility and displacement and commends efforts to ensure that the response to the pandemic is migrant-inclusive.

Des réponses efficaces aux défis et opportunités liées à la migration mondiale dans le contexte de la COVID-19 nécessitent de plus en plus une collaboration internationale dans le cadre d'un système fondé sur des règles.

Nous réitérons ainsi notre engagement afin d'assurer que l'égalité entre les sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes et des filles demeurent au cœur de l'intervention face à la pandémie.

En outre, nous reconnaissons que les migrants font preuve de leadership, de résilience et d'innovation, et ils ont illustré que les solutions à la crise doivent les impliquer directement.

Canada has long recognized that during times of both stability and crisis, migration has and can help shape our nation's history and prosperity.

We continue to view immigration as a positive contributor to economic growth, innovation, workplace diversity and to help address labour market shortages.

Canada strongly supports ethical recruitment and the principle of decent work for all migrants and therefore welcomes the IOM's upcoming Global Policy Network for Recruitment.

Canada was honored to have been invited by the UN Network on Migration to be GCM champion. Canada's efforts will focus on:

- 1) A gender-responsive approach to migration management;
- 2) Creating more regular migration pathways;

- 3) Balanced narratives on migration;
- 4) Integration and social cohesion issues; and
- 5) Cooperation for returns and reintegration.

Dans ce contexte, nous reconnaissons que les femmes, les filles et les groupes marginalisés vivent une expérience différente de la migration par rapport aux hommes et aux garçons. Par conséquent, nous pouvons plus clairement cibler les vulnérabilités auxquelles elles font face.

Nous croyons fermement que les voies de migration régulière créent des occasions équitables, plus transparentes et prévisibles pour les migrants et permettent aux États de répondre à leurs besoins économiques uniques.

We also understand that it is important to focus on how we speak about migration, and to foster collaboration on migration narratives on the global stage. Accurate communication about migration can lay the groundwork for the meaningful inclusion and integration of migrants within their host communities, by building trust, belonging and social cohesion.

This is why Canada took on an active role to create and co-chair a Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration within the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).

- One concrete initiative of this working group is the creation of a global communications campaign to showcase migrants' contributions to society. We are very pleased to be working closely with the IOM on this campaign, as well as several other countries, including our co-chair Ecuador, to further develop and roll out this initiative throughout 2021.
- In addition to national governments and international organizations, the campaign will also engage local authorities, civil society and businesses in sharing stories and messages online, in a way that resonates in their own communities. We look forward to a soft launch of the campaign on World Migrant's Day (December 18).

On an institutional level, we are encouraged by the IOM's continued emphasis on governance and financial reform, including adopting a more sustainable core budget model and repurposing the former Working Group on IOM-UN relations, to discuss IOM governance and priority issues.

We specifically look forward to coming to consensus on clearly defined geographic representation on the IOM Bureau – an issue that affects approximately 20 percent of Member States, including Canada. The reality is that, at present, these Member States are unable to be candidates for a position on the Bureau due to a lack of clarity on the constituency to which they belong. We look forward to working with our Member State colleagues to quickly address this gap in governance.

In closing, Canada recognizes that international cooperation in the area of human mobility is more important than ever. With the help of organizations such as IOM, the international community can work together within a rules-based international system to fully realize the potential of migration as we navigate our way through the turbulence caused by COVID-19.

Thank you.