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**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

Statement

Statement delivered by Ambassador Bilal Ahmad, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan during the General Debate at the 114th session of the IOM Council on 28 November 2023

**Distinguished Chairperson of the IOM Council,
Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,**

At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate Ms. Amy Pope for her first Council session as the Director General of the IOM.

We also thank you Madam DG for presenting a comprehensive overview of the IOM's activities and your vision for the Organization.

We believe that the evolving landscape of international migration has placed more responsibilities over the IOM.

Similarly, the role of the Council in guiding the Organization and executive function of the Director General has become even more important.

Chairperson,

Pakistan is a country of origin, transit and destination.

Currently, over 10 million Pakistani migrants are residing in 115 different countries across the globe. They are playing a vital role in development of their destination countries. At the same time, they are partners in socio-economic growth of their home country through financial and knowledge transactions.

Pakistan has also been one of the largest refugee hosting countries for the past four decades.

Based on our longstanding experience in the governance of migration, we firmly believe in its potential to deliver shared dividends for all people, societies and countries.

Chairperson,

Migration is a vector of sustainable development and shared prosperity. However, like any other transnational phenomenon, it has its own share of challenges which require effective global engagement and cooperation.

The Global Compact on Migration provides us a template to address those challenges and realize the win-win potential of migration for all countries.

The IOM as the lead organization on migration has a key role to support countries in operationalizing the Global Compact, and optimizing the positive impacts of migration.

Mr. Chairperson,

Illegal migration is a global concern.

Pakistan appreciates the crucial role of the IOM in addressing illegal migration including through capacity building of member States as well as by facilitating the repatriation and reintegration activities.

The potential risks and costs of illegal migration warrant coordinated international actions to address its root causes and drivers, particularly by bridging economic disparities among countries of origin and destination, and by enhancing legal pathways of cross border mobility.

Member States need to create bilateral and multilateral agreements that facilitate legal migration based on mutual needs. This would not only safeguard the dignity and safety of migrants but also address the labour and skills gaps in both origin and destination countries in an orderly manner.

Chairperson,

A growing nexus of climate change and displacement is presenting a new dimension of human mobility. Climate related events have the potential to disrupt socio-economic factors that might drive people to cross international borders.

To address the cascading effects of climate change on migration, we need innovative approaches such as expansion of complementary legal pathways as well as global investments to support climate resilient development in countries at risk.

We commend IOM's contribution in bringing the climate-related displacement to the fore at international forums.

We encourage IOM to continue its advocacy and engagement with governments and other stakeholders to highlight concerns of climate vulnerable countries and seek practical solutions for the impacts of climate on migration governance.

Chairperson,

Pakistan recognizes the importance of ongoing reform efforts to make the organization more efficient, effective, responsive and fit for purpose.

Last year, despite the pressing fiscal situation in several countries including Pakistan, we agreed to increase the assessed contributions to the Organization. This shows the level of support and expectations of member States from the IOM.

To fulfill those expectations, Pakistan encourages IOM to continue the expansion and diversification of donor base to scale its efforts, particularly to support developing countries in creating enabling environment for sustainable livelihoods and building their capacity to engage in bilateral and multilateral mobility partnerships.

Remittances from migrants serve as the engine of inclusive social and economic growth in low- and middle-income countries. We encourage IOM for more efforts and advocacy for removal of higher transaction costs on remittances of migrants.

Before I conclude, we express our serious concern on humanitarian situation in Gaza. We appreciate IOM for launching a flash appeal for the people of Occupied Palestinian Territory.
