

Mr. Chairman,

At The outset, allow me to welcome Ambassador Swing as the new IOM Director General. We are convinced that Mr. Swing's knowledge and experience will contribute to strengthening and developing of the IOM. We also hope that the new Director General will ensure constructive succession in terms of IOM's priorities and programs. Our understanding is that Mr. Swing shares this approach and is ready to take over and steer successful projects, already benefiting IOM and its member states. On our part, we are ready to support Director General's endeavors to make IOM even better and more effective.

Mr. Chairman,

One of IOM's priorities, enshrined in its strategy, is combating trafficking in human beings. Belarus-IOM cooperation in this area has been successful and even exemplary. In 2007, we jointly established International training center for migration and combating human trafficking in Minsk, where by now over a dozen international groups have concluded training on various aspects of migration. We are currently working together to expand the training curriculum. We are also organizing a training program for representatives of other regions.

Mr. Chairman,

A few days ago the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution tabled by Belarus on the issue of coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons. The main objective of this resolution is to elaborate a global plan of action, that will combine in a comprehensive manner efforts by all stake-holders in the area of human trafficking. We would like to use this opportunity to thank IOM for their extremely useful and pertinent comments and support in the process of preparation of this resolution. We are ready to continue to work together with IOM and others to make global plan of action on human trafficking a living reality.

Mr. Chairman,

The Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between IOM and the Commonwealth of Independent States was signed in Minsk in September 2008. We consider this document a very useful and flexible framework for expansion of cooperation between IOM and the CIS in all areas of mutual interest. IOM activities at the regional level should complement existing bilateral cooperation between IOM and CIS member states and entail multilateral programs in the area of migration. We expect that CIS and IOM experts will get together soon in order to discuss ways and means for IOM's deeper involvement in the region.

*Finally, We would like to thank D.D.G for her dedication and support throughout the tenure of her office.*