

**Statement by Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal, H.E. Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, at the 96<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOM Council, December 2, 2008**

Thank You Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your unanimous election. We have full confidence on your wisdom and leadership and would assure you of our full co-operation. My delegation also congratulates the Bureau for their well-deserved elections.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Director General for his comprehensive statement that outlines his clear vision, distinct priorities and resolute commitment to carry forward both structure and performance of the organization to a new height. Nepal welcomes his key priorities of enhancing State ownership in the work of the IOM, strengthening partnership with all stakeholders and enhancing staff professionalism and efficiency. His commitment to greater transparency and collaboration with the member States is laudable. This, we believe, will introduce new dynamics to the organization and new dimensions to its work. Nepal had the opportunity to share its preliminary views with the Director General on the ways and means of enhancing efficacy of the organization. We appreciate his willingness to engage with all member States and stakeholders garnering broadest possible support in the work of the organization. We pledge our support to your efforts to build on the strength of the organization and address the challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

Migration has been one of the defining phenomenons of our time. The scale and intensity of migration has touched all countries in the globalized world turning it as an important catalyst of growth and development both in the countries of origin and destination. In this increasingly interdependent world, migration has potentials to create a win-win situation to all.

The Mission Statement of the IOM commits it to the principle ‘that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society’ and acts to ‘encourage social and economic development through migration’, thus making the organization a pioneer of linking migration with development. Over the years, IOM has acquired the experience, exposure and capacity to manage migration in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Globalization has facilitated greater mobility of capital, goods and services and integration of global markets. But the movement of people remains strictly regulated by a complex web of immigration laws and policies. It is yet to become a meaningful part of the globalization process. Migration brings potential benefits to both the countries of origin and destination. To make the best of globalization, IOM may devise strategies to assist many countries for their successful participation in the global labour market. Raising global awareness of the development potential of migration, remittances are proving to be an effective source for poverty alleviation and recognized as a source of development finance. IOM can help countries in assessing possibilities and constraints for channelling remittances towards productive investment and thus help generate multiplier effects in the development. Non-economic remittances like social capital, flow of ideas, technology, knowledge and skills can be important vehicle of socio-economic

transformation. These aspects could be considered while devising strategies for realizing development potentials of migration.

The emerging and expanding fields, as highlighted by the Director General, such as migration and trade, migration and environment and migration and health are key areas that IOM can stimulate cooperative momentum among the member States. By helping capacity building of member States, it will help protect the rights and interests of the workers, safeguard their safety, security and health in an environment free from discrimination.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the most important questions international community facing today relates to the impact of financial crisis on migration. While it is still difficult to assess the general impact of financial crisis in the migration pattern, the Scenario presented by the representative of the World Bank this morning demonstrates declining trend of remittance in the third quarter of 2008. This is worrisome signal. While financial crisis may result in reduced job opportunities in many sectors, any forced reversal in migration pattern *per se* is unlikely to help speed up economic recovery as migrants are important catalyst for boosting up economic recovery. As our societies are increasingly interconnected and interdependent, our search for economic recovery must be comprehensive that recognizes the role of migration in rebuilding and revamping economies. An equally important aspect that IOM together with international community must pay attention is potential stigmatization of migrants in the face of financial crisis. The human face of migration must be upheld in all circumstances.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal has been actively engaged with various activities of the IOM ever since it became a member of the organization. IOM has provided critical support and cooperation for our migrant workers in times of distress. In August last year, Nepal and IOM concluded a comprehensive Cooperation Agreement that facilitated to widen the scope of IOM's cooperation in the areas of capacity building and technical cooperation in migration issues, migration and health, international migration law and migration assistance to refugees, among others. IOM, as an overseas processing entity, is currently engaged in facilitating third country resettlement of a large chunk of Bhutanese refugees who have been sheltered in the refugee camps in Nepal for over 18 years.

We have also been actively participating in the important regional consultation process, such as the Colombo process, and the Abu Dhabi dialogue. Such regional processes have provided unique opportunity to the participating countries to forge cooperation and partnership and reflect on their priorities to find a workable common ground for a regularized and cost effective labour mobility. Nepal participated in recently concluded Global Forum on Migration and Development in Manila. The conclusion of the Manila Forum can form a very good basis for advancing partnership and cooperation in different dimensions of migration globally.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.