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Statement by H.E. Dr. Nanguyalai TARZI, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan – during **98th session of the IOM Council** 23-26 November 2009, Geneva

Mr. Chairperson,

Director General,

Distinguished colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me at the outset congratulate you for your appointment as Chairperson and the bureau and wish you all great success in your work and at the same time we remain thankful to outgoing Chairperson. I would also like to Congratulate Ambassador Laura Thompson for her first participation as Deputy-Director in the Council and I am confident that her diplomatic experience and dedication will be a great asset to the Organization to achieve aims and objectives, within its given mandate, under outstanding leadership of the Director-General.

We appreciate the comprehensive Report presented by the Director-General where he has highlighted the growing importance of the IOM in the field of Migration and its challenges. The Director-General has rightly said, “The migration challenges of the day required an Organization that is dynamic, adaptable and responsive to a changing world”. The report has made it clear that the membership of the Organization has increased from 67 in 1997 to 127 States today, similarly there are considerable improvements in its activities as well, but there is no increase in the core budget for IOM to continue to be fully responsive to Member States and the Migrants needs. Therefore, we support the proposed budget by the Director General and we wished more increase in the budget but we adhere to the consensus reached in this regard.

We also support the views of the Director-General that there is need to manage the migration process most responsibly in the best interests of countries, communities and people, especially the migrants.

IOM's support and the contribution which has played a vital role in the migration field and its adherence to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society are appreciated.

We greatly value IOM's activities in Afghanistan where it is increasing its focus on technical cooperation and capacity building of Afghan Governmental institutions in migration management areas, emergency relief to vulnerable displaced families, facilitating long-term return and reintegration to and within Afghanistan and stabilizing migrant communities for sustainable development.

We commend the implementation of the IOM programmes in Afghanistan in close cooperation with national government counterparts and to support the goals of the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDs) as well as the IOM's activities to support the voter registration, reintegration of Afghans returning from Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. Till May 2009, 846 Afghan experts who lived abroad have returned to Afghanistan from 32 countries with IOM's assistance, regulating migration and technical assistance are to mention few.

We are also grateful to the commitments and efforts made by the Director-General, inter-alia, re-structuring of the Organization based on the consultation and views of the member states so that it could overcome the Challenges it faces in the field of Migration.

We wish IOM great success in achieving its aims and objectives.

I Thank you Mr. Chairperson