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Remarks to the IOM Council (November 28, 2013)

1. I am delighted to join you again and to be together with Deputy Secretary General Eliasson and with Ambassador Swing—two of our most accomplished international statesmen.
2. DSG Eliasson, for those of you who might not know, was President of the UN General Assembly when I was appointed Special Representative in 2006.
3. He was a wise and indispensable ally then in our efforts to create the Global Forum—and now, as DSG, he is a forceful and articulate champion for the international migration agenda.
4. The IOM under Ambassador Swing, meanwhile, is a transformed institution.
5. Its extraordinary growth reflects how today almost every state must consider and manage the impact of international migration. But this growth, I should say, also reflects profound and justified confidence in Ambassador Swing's leadership.
6. In less than a decade, beyond the positive transformation of the IOM, we have witnessed critical progress in how the international community addresses migration:
 - This progress is best captured by the success of the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Today, the Forum, under its Swedish leadership, is becoming a year-round resource for governments, as well as an engine of international cooperation.
 - We also have seen the proliferation and rising relevance of regional consultative processes.
 - The Global Migration Group, meanwhile, has helped the UN system engage on migration in a more systematic, effective fashion.
 - And, of course, at the national and local levels, migration remains an inescapable political, economic, and social issue.
7. So there is, without doubt, a groundswell of demand from states and stakeholders for greater cooperation in order—above all—to protect the human rights of migrants, and also to fully tap the tremendous economic, social, and cultural benefits migration can generate.
8. Yet, while we have made progress, the migration challenges we face today are much greater in scale and scope than they were even a decade ago. They are far outpacing our capacity to address them.
9. This is not just a matter of institutional capacity. It is a function of our mindset.
10. The 21st century is one in which human mobility will increasingly become the norm.

11. We are not just talking about a static number—about the 232 million people who today live outside their country of birth.
12. We are talking about the members of their families—a multiple of those 232 million migrants—who rely on them.
13. We are talking about the hundreds of millions more, at least, who, today live in their country of birth, but who, at some point in their lifetimes, will move across borders to study or work.
14. And we are talking about the communities in which these migrants live.
15. We are, in other words, talking about all of us.
16. As we ask ourselves what we must do next, we do so with wind in our sails.
17. Last month's HLD was a watershed moment in the history of international cooperation on migration.
18. It wasn't revolutionary, of course, but it marked important evolutionary progress in several ways.
19. First, the HLD produced an outcome document, thanks to the nimble and determined skills of Mexico—which took responsibility for crafting a consensus.
 - The Declaration underscores how much we have in common when it comes to analyzing the challenges and opportunities of migration and development.
 - It also offers relatively clear guidance for all of us on the priorities we need to set.
20. Second, there was an overwhelming endorsement at the HLD of our goal to ensure that migration is included in the post-2015 development agenda.
 - This was featured prominently in the Declaration—in the SG's opening remarks—and in the statements of fully 54 countries during the HLD.
 - My basic premise for why we are pursuing this is simple: The striving spirit of immigrants is one of the world's greatest natural resources. But it is a resource that we squander through inattention and discrimination.
 - i. P2015 offers us a unique opportunity to design concrete, practical, measurable ways to reduce the human, social, and economic costs of migration.
 - I am delighted that the IOM Council is considering a resolution in support of integrating migration in the post-2015 agenda.
 - We need to underscore to the drafters of the post-2015 agenda that migration is the *original* strategy for people seeking to escape poverty, mitigate risk, and build a better life.
 - Migration already has contributed significantly to achieving the MDGs by raising incomes; funding investment in human capital through education and health care; supporting the creation of businesses and

jobs; contributing to the transfer of knowledge, skills, and ideas; and promoting investments and trade flows between countries of origin and destination.

- As the global community debates a post-MDG agenda, the case for including migration is both stronger and more urgent than in 2000: increasing human mobility—rising demographic imbalances and economic inequalities—high youth unemployment—the prospect of more frequent economic shocks and environmental disasters—and global competition for skills and talent require a deliberate, collaborative global approach to migration and development.
- Your resolution can be critical in helping us make this case.

21. A third important outcome of the HLD was the formalization of the initiative to protect migrants affected by crises—an initiative that I first began urging states to pursue two years ago.

- For those of you who might not have followed this effort until now, the goal is to establish a set of principles and guidelines to protect migrants affected by acute-onset crises like the civil conflicts in Libya and Syria, Hurricane Sandy in the US, or the tsunami and nuclear meltdown in Japan.
- To offer just one example of a principle in action: During Hurricane Sandy and its aftermath, the US suspended immigration enforcement actions and offered government aid to all affected individuals, including immigrants regardless of their legal status.
- The initiative will define the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin and destination, neighboring states, employers, international organizations, and civil society. It complements the vital work done by the IOM with its Migration Crisis Operational Framework.
- I'll leave it there, since this effort is now in the hands of states—specifically, the US and the Philippines, who offered to organize this initiative. They already have met and spoken several times in recent weeks, and I'm sure you'll be hearing from them soon.
- I also should underscore that I believe the model we are using to address migrants in crisis—a form of mini-multilateralism, wherein small groups of states dedicate themselves to developing solutions to specific problems—is one that we can deploy to address a range of migration issues.

22. Fourth, the HLD made clear that there are a great many challenges and opportunities related to migration that we are ill-prepared to address. Thus, we need to think creatively about how to foster more effective, results-oriented cooperation among states and all stakeholders.

23. We have several milestones ahead: The GFMD in Stockholm next May, the GFMD in Turkey in 2015, and, throughout that period, the marathon of post-2015 deliberations and negotiations.

24. As for my own activities, I intend to focus on four fronts in the coming year and beyond, building on the conclusions and guidance we received at the HLD.

25. First, I am acting on the Secretary-General's formal request to me, in his address to the HLD, that I meet regularly with the leadership of the GMG and the GFMD, so that we can do everything possible to coordinate our work and reinforce each other's efforts.
26. Second, I will be intensely focused on ensuring that migration is given full consideration by the drafters of the post-2015 development agenda.
- Last month, I convened again the informal working group I first constituted last year to help develop the evidence, arguments, and advocacy regarding migration in the post-2015 agenda.
 - The group includes several member states—Sweden, Mexico, Bangladesh, France, and Switzerland—as well as the most relevant UN agencies, numerous experts, and civil society.
 - i. IOM, of course, has played an indispensable role as a leading member of the group.
 - ii. We would be happy to have other states join our group as well—the only prerequisite is a willingness to work very hard.
 - The informal group is in the midst of drafting what we call a “reference document” that summarizes why migration deserves to be in the post-2015 agenda, and also proposes how this might be done.
 - Equally, our group has been focused on advocacy. We are coordinating our outreach efforts to states to persuade the relevant decision-makers to champion migration in the post-2015 agenda.
 - We need your help on this front, to identify the key actors in your governments who will shape the post-2015 agenda. Together, we must make the case to them for why migration should be included.
27. Third, I will remain intimately involved in the crisis migrants initiative.
28. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, I have promised the Secretary-General that I will systematically assess the challenges and opportunities we face with respect to international migration, and I'll develop recommendations on how to improve cooperation.
29. I have no doubt that, in considering the future of international migration, IOM's role will only grow. This issue is, of course, in your hands to determine.
30. But without question, the IOM's reach in the world of migration is unique. Its experience on the ground is unparalleled. Its institutional memory runs deep.
31. I greatly look forward to working closely with Ambassador Swing, with his staff, and with the IOM Council to determine how we can take all the lofty words we all speak in forums such as these and—through vision and grit—transform them into real, tangible improvements in how migrants live their lives and in how our communities thrive.
32. Thank you.