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

Statement

**Statement by Permanent Representative of Pakistan
Ambassador Khalil-ur-Rahman Hashmi**

**110th IOM Council Session
(26 November, 2019)**

**Honourable Chairperson,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As the new Permanent Representative of Pakistan, I am pleased to join the proceedings of this Council's Session. On behalf of my delegation, I commend you, Chairperson, for ably steering the Council's work.

We also appreciate the reform efforts of Director General Vitorino for making the Organization more effective, responsive, agile and fit for purpose.

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 assumed corresponding significance.

Mr. Chair

Given the new dynamics, challenges and opportunities in the area of migration, the Organization needs political support more than ever.

The Compact on Migration reflects that, despite divergent interests and views, we have demonstrated political will to address questions relating to migration in ways that are largely agreeable to most of the countries of destination and origin.

We look forward to IOM's evolving role in helping the Member States to advance the objectives of the Migration Compact.

It goes without saying that no State or organization can address issues related to migration either on their own or in isolation. Hence, the need for dialogue and cooperation among and between States, businesses, organizations and other stakeholders.

Regarding the proposed manner to strengthen the senior management structure of IOM, we would underline that the election of DDG is a democratic process which helps in maintaining political support for the Organization, both from migrant sending and receiving countries. The number of membership has risen manifold since its establishment. Similarly, the complexity of challenges and role of the Organization have evolved. Therefore, it is important, more than ever, to maintain a consensual approach within the decision making process in the Council as much as possible.

Mr. Chair

As a country of origin, transit and destination, Pakistan believes in the promise and potential of migration. We consider migration a source of prosperity, innovation and win-win for all countries.

As a host country, Pakistan has been hosting the largest protracted refugee population of Afghans for the last 40 years, which stands at 1.4 million registered refugees.

Acknowledging the right of all individuals to a legal identity and in line with Pakistan's policy on 'Voluntary repatriation and management of Afghan nationals', the Government of Pakistan undertook a registration exercise of around 0.9 million Afghans during 2017-18 to provide better protection to the undocumented/illegal Afghan nationals living in Pakistan, to enable them to safely return to their country of origin, obtain legal travel documents, benefit from generous visa policy of Pakistan towards Afghan nationals and contribute to the development of their country of origin as well as destination as regular migrants. Despite this around 0.7 million Afghan nationals remain unregistered.

Their numbers, time and status notwithstanding, they have enjoyed social mobility, employment opportunities and access to health and education. Despite strains on our state and society arising from the presence of a large foreign population, our politics have not resorted to xenophobic rhetoric or populist sloganeering.

Mr. Chair

As a country of origin, our diaspora helps not just in our national development but also contributes to economy and society of destination countries.

They have supported their motherland in a big way, particularly through their remittances. Pakistani doctors, engineers, software developers, electricians, craftsmen and other blue-collar workers have earned respect and recognition in their destination countries.

In terms of migration governance, we are cognizant of the multi-dimensional character of migration. Accordingly, we are pursuing a whole-of-government approach- developing effective migration policies and implementing them through legislative and administrative actions.

In order to curb trafficking of migrants, we have enacted a new legislation (i.e. Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act, 2018) which has empowered our LEAs to effectively prosecute criminals associated with human smuggling, while protecting rights of smuggled migrants.

Mr. Chair

Given the evolving role and responsibilities of IOM, we encourage the Organization to uphold the principle of ‘national ownership’ and work out the details of its activities in accordance with the national priorities of origin and destination countries. While noting the project-based operations of IOM, this would bring greater acceptability and confidence for the Organization.

Realizing the Right to Development (R2D) for all, including for the migrants, is important to achieve the SDG Agenda 2030.

A common denominator for the origin and destination countries as well as for the IOM is improving the scale of human development of migrants. IOM can optimize its work in this regard to ensure that

migration process yields economic and social benefits for both the origin and destination countries.

I thank you