**Statement of IOM Deputy Director General**

**Ambassador Laura Thompson**

**19 June 2018 GFMD Thematic Meeting**

1. IOM is fully committed to international dialogue as a means of enhancing understanding and cooperation on the full range of migration issues. I would like to congratulate the current GFMD co-chairs, Morocco and Germany, and their many predecessors -- as without their leadership we would not be where we are today as an international community, on the verge of agreeing on a comprehensive international cooperation framework on migration, the GCM. Equally importantly, I would like to congratulate the GCM’s tremendous co-facilitators, Ambassadors Gomez Camacho and Lauber, for the inclusive and comprehensive work they have been leading since early 2017 to skillfully bring us all to this point – bravo. And I would also like to thank and congratulate SRSG Arbour and her stellar team for so ably guiding the UN system’s work on this critical effort, including but not only the work to develop a new coordination mechanism on migration in the UN, in the form of the UN Migration Network we just heard about.

2. To help take our collective thinking yet another step further, I will focus my remarks today on how the GFMD and IOM – both as IOM proper and in its new role as coordinator and secretariat of the UN Migration Network – might work together in an even more joined up way to help facilitate Member State implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM.

3. To do so, I will first take a look back to what has been done, before moving to look forward to what could be. The IOM International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) and GFMD are both mentioned in the Rev 2 version of the GCM as fora which can be used to exchange good experiences, best practices, innovative approaches, recommendations, etc., and to foster partnerships to further implementation of the GCM.

**IDM**

2. The IOM International Dialogue on Migration was set up in 2001 as a result of reflections and discussions at the time of the IOM 50th anniversary in order more effectively to fulfil the constitutional purpose (Article 1(e)) of providing “a forum to states as well international and other organizations for the exchange of views and experiences, and the promotion of cooperation and coordination of efforts on international migration issues, including studies on such issues in order to develop practical solutions”. It has been held in various forms every year, sometimes at technical level and sometimes at Ministerial Level, with the wide participation of states (not just Member States), international organizations, academia, CSOs, local authorities and migrants. Surveys of Member States and participants have consistently shown that the IDM performs a useful function. In recent years, the IDM has taken place in both Geneva and New York, due to the subject matters addressed.

**GFMD**

3. The GFMD first met in 2007, following the decision at the 2006 United Nations General Assembly High-Level Dialogue to establish a state-led, state-run forum. IOM has been supporting successive chairs since then. Most well-known is that IOM has hosted and continues to host the firewalled Support Unit, whose tasks have, on paper at least, been confined to logistics and administrative support to the chairs. Less well-known, perhaps, but equally importantly, IOM has provided substantive advice and drafted many of the background papers for most if not all the successive GFMD chairs. From the establishment of the GFMD in 2007 until Sweden assumed its chairmanship in 2013, IOM seconded a senior migration management specialist to work with each GFMD chair as part of their team, and helped provide critical substantive support, drawing on IOM’s substantive expertise in many areas of migration governance, from labour migration, to migration and development, to environmental degradation and migration and more. This practice has continued, albeit in a more informal manner, with successive GFMD chairs, including Turkey, Bangladesh and with the current co-chairs, again drawing on a wide range of IOM’s substantive expertise. There has, for a while, been discussion of the possibility of **removing the firewall** between IOM and the Support Unit and having IOM provide both substantive and logistical support to the GFMD. This makes a lot of sense, not least of which in light of the UN Secretary General’s recent decision – just presented by Jonathan Prentice of the SRSG’s Office -- to replace the GMG with a new UN Migration Network and to have IOM serve as its coordinator and secretariat.

4. The GFMD also now includes a variety of stakeholders, having increasingly incorporated CSOs in its deliberations, and, more recently, having created a business mechanism more effectively to incorporate business sector participants. It has also extended the scope of the topics it considers beyond those recognizably falling under migration and development. Last year, IOM and the partners who organize the Global Mayoral Forum held the Forum immediately before the GFMD in Berlin to build synergies. This year the same is planned in Marrakesh, with a view formally to incorporating local authorities into the GFMD process. The continued robust engagement of each of these non-governmental stakeholders will be essential for effective GCM implementation, follow-up and review.

**Other considerations**

6. The UN has now decided to create an IOM coordinated UN Network on Migration, to ensure UN system support to Member State implementation of the GCM.

7. There is a strong wish to minimize duplications and overlaps in migration processes, while maximizing those elements whose value is clear.

8. Now may be the moment to consider **establishing explicit synergies between the IDM and the GFMD**, with IOM as secretariat of both, bringing in and drawing on its role also as coordinator of the UN system on migration. This could help to maximize the potential of the GFMD and IDM to act as the fora to foster continued dialogue on and successful implementation of the GCM -- and migration-related SDGs -- on an ongoing basis in between the International Migration Review Forum meetings currently anticipated to occur every four years in the UN General Assembly. This would also help address the concern of many Member States to ensure that the technical expertise of Geneva – both of the many UN and non-governmental entities based here but also of the Member State representatives who participate in their work and governance – is fully utilized in GCM implementation.

9. **Regional dimension**: For many years, IOM has been holding a Global Meeting of the Regional Consultative Processes on Migration and other inter-state consultative mechanisms on migration every two years, with annual meetings recently because of fast-moving developments. Given the importance of the regional dimension as noted in the GCM text, and in the UN Reforms, it might make sense to have meetings of the RCPs and other regional entities as a regular part of the GFMD/IDM programme of thematic and other meetings, aside from the annual summit. This could help foster important synergies – and in both directions – between global and regional state-led dialogues on migration.

10. I know I have given you much food for thought and many elements to consider. No doubt further discussions and consideration will be required over the coming months. My key point is to acknowledge that on the eve of concluding a Global Compact for Migration – with IOM’s sincere appreciation to its co-facilitators here with us today, with IOM’s entry into the UN and the Secretary General’s decision to establish a UN Migration Network with IOM as its coordinator and secretariat, we have both an enormous opportunity and a significant challenge ahead of us to move from business as usual to making a real difference in the ability of governments to manage migration and in the lives of migrants. As part of this, IOM believes it is time to think outside the box and consider how best to organize our collective work to produce the best results for migrants and governments. It is in this spirit that I have raised the many matters I have put on the table today. You can count on IOM’s continued commitment to work with all of you, Co-Chairs, Co-facilitators, Executive Office of the Secretary General, partner UN entities, civil society, the private sector and more to continue to review and improve our efforts on behalf of migrants and better governance of migration.