



**Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative
at the General Debate (agenda item 12), 112th IOM Council session
01 December 2021**

**Madam Chair,
Director General IOM,
Excellencies,**

Over seven decades, the IOM has witnessed important transitions in its mandate, operations, workforce and budgets. From the initial focus on logistics to resettlements, evacuations, returns and emergency response, the IOM has emerged as the lead international organization at the intersection of global development policy and migration.

Today, the IOM finds itself amidst a global discourse on the social, economic and political ramifications of migration, which have been further amplified by adverse effects of COVID-19 pandemic.

May I take this opportunity to convey our deep appreciation to the IOM fraternity, past and present, for its invaluable role and assistance to people on the move.

Madam Chair,

Migration and global development policy agenda are mutually reinforcing, as has been reaffirmed by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Global Compact for Migration.

A pre-requisite to shaping a common approach to international migration is to anchor it in the international development agenda, policy and programmes. It also requires addressing, in equal measure, both the drivers and manifestations of mobility and migration.

Advancing humane and orderly migration is a shared goal and priority. Achieving meaningful progress necessitates tackling its social, economic and political dimensions by shifting from supply side to demand driven solutions.

Madam Chair,

Inequality and vulnerability are the key features of our times, evident in the COVID vaccines divide, more than 150 million falling back into extreme poverty, 250 million job losses and the worsening impacts of climate change.

There is an organic link between the severe economic and social impacts of the pandemic and fiscal as well as financial capacity of developing states to mitigate them, now and in the foreseeable future.

These impacts disproportionately affect developing countries with large migrant populations abroad or those hosting large number of migrants, given the reduced fiscal space, growing debt burdens and restricted access to vaccines.

Unless these accentuating factors are addressed systemically through a range of policy measures within the global development policy space, the goals of safe and orderly migration would remain elusive.

We share concerns over the growing level of xenophobia, racism and stigmatization of migrants. We commend IOM's advocacy towards easing of restrictions on mobility and reducing the negative impacts of the pandemic on migrants.

We encourage IOM to enhance its advocacy and efforts towards scaling up legal pathways for migration, achieving the SDG target 10.c i.e. reducing the transaction cost of remittances to less than 3 percent by 2030 and for vaccine equity.

Madam Chair,

Pakistan has facilitated its diaspora abroad and irregular migrants in the country amidst the COVID pandemic. We have launched innovative banking solutions and investment pathways for Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs).

Irrespective of legal status or number of migrants and despite economic constraints, we have afforded to refugees and migrants social mobility, employment opportunities and access to health and education.

We have and continue to facilitate evacuations and extend logistical support to several states and international organizations including IOM following developments in Afghanistan since August this year.

We thank the Director General for his recent visit to our region. We commend the IOM for staying and delivering in Afghanistan, preventing large-scale displacement crisis. The humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan remains precarious. A mass exodus of migrants and refugees remains a real possibility and preventing it requires sustained international engagement, humanitarian and economic assistance.

We hope the IOM and its member states drive the contemporary migration agenda that promotes equity, sustainable development and deals with both drivers and manifestations of migration in all its dimensions.

I thank you.

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