

## **I.O.M Opening Speech**

### **Talking Points for Opening Statement for LAS-IOM Conference Cairo, 29 June-1 July 2009**

- **Thanks all. Delighted to be able to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab Regional Expert Group meeting on migration and development**
- **Today, we are going through changes in the fundamentals of our politico-economic life. Our experiences over the last one year suggest that the international economic structure established in the wake of the Second World War needs basic restructuring.**
- **Similarly, the migration regime or system that emerged in the wake of the Second World War has come under stress and strain. Emerging new migratory realities are challenging the fundamentals of the old global migration system.**
- **There is a global recognition that the migrant workers are among the most vulnerable groups in the context of the current crisis. Hence, unlike past global deliberations, migration is considered as an important element of the new economic architecture that is being under discussion.**
- **Let me share with you some contemporary factors and phenomena that are challenging the migratory system:**
  - ✓ **1<sup>st</sup> Demographic imbalances between developed and developing countries**

- ✓ **2<sup>nd</sup> Economic crisis and labor market imperatives**
  - ✓ **3<sup>rd</sup> Political instability and population displacement**
  - ✓ **4<sup>th</sup> Climate change and its consequences on human settlement**
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- **The Arab region is currently hosting about 22 million temporary foreign laborers. The labor mobility is a structural feature of Arab economies, either as an origin or as a distinction or as both.**
  - **The labor mobility not only advance regional and global integration, but also annually generates nearly US \$ 20 billion of remittances.**
  - **Over the next 2 days, we will be discussing some of the above issues in its due depth and priorities.**
  - **IOM in the Arab region gives priority to the following areas:**
    - **1<sup>st</sup> operational research into the dynamics of human mobility**
    - **2<sup>nd</sup> policy tools and legal instruments to encourage good migration governance**
    - **3<sup>rd</sup> strengthening migration services to address regular and irregular migration including in emergency and conflict situations**
    - **4<sup>th</sup> engaging regional organizations in migration management including the league of Arab states and the ArabLabor Organization.**
    - **5<sup>th</sup> encouraging the countries and organizations of the Arab region to initiate regional processes to assist governments in managing human mobility**

- **At the end, let me reiterate that IOM is at your disposal and ready to work with you in meeting the migration challenges and in harnessing migration benefits for all.**