STATEMENT
ON BEHALF OF
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AGENDA ITEM 19: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
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Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In June 2012 – at the Rio + 20 Conference – the international community reaffirmed the importance of sustainable development and committed to bringing its three dimensions to the center of our collective development strategies.

Since then, we have all made significant efforts to ensure that development policies and programmes properly reflect the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including in the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) welcomes this opportunity to speak and would like to highlight three points on how we can further progress our efforts to achieve sustainable development.

First, if we are to have any success in bringing about a sustainable future for the planet and for present and future generations, we need to take proper account of the global trends and challenges that can impact on development.

For IOM, this means taking into account migration. In the Declaration adopted at the recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, Member States acknowledged the important contribution that migration has made to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the fact that migration is a key factor for sustainable development.

Today, more than one billion people, including an estimated 232 million international migrants, rely on migration to improve their livelihoods, enhance the health and education of their families and to escape dire economic, social, political or environmental situations. At the same time, migration trends are increasingly complex and diverse.

These dynamics will significantly impact our future development, including our national economies and labour markets; national demographic profiles; and our built and natural environment. It will create
challenges and opportunities for governments, such as how they deliver health, education and employment to increasingly diverse societies. We cannot think about these things without thinking about migration.

**Second**, the best way to ensure that migration is a predominantly positive factor in sustainable development is to incorporate it fully in the post-2015 development agenda. This would not mean creating a single goal for migration, but rather, to incorporate it in targets and indicators where it is directly relevant to the achievement of other development goals, or where the quality of migration might itself be affected.

For example, migration could be a key component of a new global partnership, recognizing that migration cannot be managed by countries acting alone. It could be included in progress indicators for goals such as poverty alleviation, disaster risk reduction, education, health and decent work, particularly where efforts to reduce the social and economic costs of migration would have positive effects on those goals. Finally, the human rights and well-being of migrants should be addressed through disaggregated indicators across the board.

**Third**, and on a slightly different note, IOM would like to draw attention to the issue of disaster risk reduction. The Secretary-General’s report on this issue highlights the challenges we have all faced in this area in recent years. Since 1992, more than 4.4 billion people have been affected in internationally reported disasters, and over 1.3 million lives have been lost.

Migration is closely connected to this issue, as it can be both a driver and a result of the pressures associated with disaster situations, and can also be an important coping strategy.

Rural to urban migration, for example, is a key driver of increased urbanization and population growth, including in locations that are prone to earthquakes, droughts and floods. It can, without proper management and in the absence of corresponding urban planning frameworks and risk strategies, increase the disaster risks that may manifest in particular places. Where disasters occur, significant forced migration often results, and IOM attaches great importance to resolving the plight of migrants caught in crisis.

It is therefore vital that disaster risk reduction strategies take the human mobility implications into account, including in the pre and post-disaster environments.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, let me reiterate that migration is a phenomenon that has significant implications for sustainable development. Governments must recognize this link, and should ensure that our sustainable development efforts take that relationship into account, including by incorporating migration in the post-2015 development agenda.

Thank you.