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Oceans Conference

Partnership Dialogue 3: Minimizing and Addressing Ocean Acidification

Tuesday, 06 June 2017 – 15h00 to 18h00

Conference Room 4, UNHQ

- 1) Co-facilitators, distinguished panelists, ladies and gentlemen,
 - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is pleased to contribute to this **Partnership Dialogue 3 on Minimizing and Addressing Ocean Acidification**.

This is indeed a topic of growing interest to us, especially **the link between migration, climate change and oceans**.

- A)** As such, **it represents a challenge** as far as population and displacement is concerned.

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), since 2008, an average of 22.5 million people have been displaced by climate- or weather-related disasters each year. Last year, 24 million people were displaced due to natural disasters.

Most of the affected populations live in:

- Ocean coastal areas
- Small Island States
- Climate change front lines across the world.

In addition, we know that at least 40 million people are **at risk of future displacement due to climate change impacts on the oceans.**

B) It also represents an opportunity for migration to not be a survival strategy but an adaption to climate change.

In some countries, best practices in context of climate change already exist, For example:

- a) We see policy efforts in **Kiribati** to purchase new land in Fiji to ensure food security in anticipation of the risk of submersion; or in **Alaska** to plan for the relocation of whole communities affected by climate-changed induced coastal erosion. Some states such as Tuvalu are looking into bilateral cooperation with neighboring countries to facilitate migration abroad.
- b) The Indigenous knowledge in **Papua New Guinea** is helping to strengthen disaster risk reduction responses and avoid forced displacement of the people
- c) We can also think about **Senegalese diaspora** communities in Italy who are investing in land rehabilitation in coastal areas in order to help their people have the choice to stay where their ancestral homes are.

The Ocean Conference should harness the benefits of the discussion on oceans, climate change and migration nexus as one of the “Frontier Issues” confronting

our world, and we can no longer afford to deny or treat it “as business as usual”. We require a more innovative, evidence-based and whole of government approach to address the complexities involved and build better and more resilient communities.

IOM’s vision is for a world in which **migrants move as a matter of genuine choice rather than desperate necessity**, and in which migration is well governed and migrant’s rights and dignity are respected.