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**UNFCCC Statement to the High-Level Panel at the Council
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
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by

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The story of the human race is a story about migration; one that continues to both define and divide humankind. It remains at the heart of many social, political and cultural conversations.

For many, migration represents an opportunity to build skills and gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the world. Those less fortunate are driven by more desperate needs, including shelter, safety and sustenance.

As the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Director General, William Lacy Swing, recently noted, there are nearly 250 million international migrants, and some 750 million domestic migrants, throughout the world today. This represents one out of every seven people—never have so many been on the move at once. All of this in a world with rapidly-rising temperatures and rapidly-decreasing resources.

If we fail to address climate change and build a more resilient, sustainable society, those numbers will exponentially grow. We'll live in a world of: increased urbanization in expanding mega cities, mostly in coastal areas; millions fleeing rising sea levels; crop failure and famine; acidic oceans and extinct animals; a world where we value water as we do precious metals.

A world affected by unchecked climate change is a world with billions on the move—all hungry for the same things. It's not the world any of us want, but if we don't act with the utmost urgency to stop it, it's the world we will have.

To manage migration successfully, it's imperative that the global community address climate change. To do that, we must work together to urge nations to urgently raise their current level of ambition.

Parties made significant progress at the recent COP23 negotiations in Bonn, underlining that support for the Paris Agreement is stronger than ever, representing an unstoppable movement supported by all sectors of society, across all parts of the globe. One important outcome was the adoption of the Talanoa (Facilitative) Dialogue, which allows nations to better measure and share progress towards their climate change goals. This raises ambition further, faster and together.

Parties recognized that we must help strengthen the resilience of those currently facing the impacts of climate change. This resulted in more funding for climate adaptation. Parties also launched a global partnership to provide millions of climate-vulnerable people the world over with affordable access to insurance. Furthermore, COP 23 adopted Gender Action Plan and a platform for Indigenous People.

Bonn showed how partnerships at all levels, representing the full spectrum of society, are vital if nations are to fulfil the promise of the Paris Agreement.

The IOM continues to be a strong partner with UN Climate Change; specifically, the IOM's partnership with the Warsaw International Mechanism and as members of the Task Force on Displacement. The Task Force is due to report its finding at COP24 in Poland in 2018.

The IOM remains a strong partner in other areas as well, including building resilience through training workshops, cooperating with research and civil society, and committing to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. UN Climate Change is therefore pleased to report that it is now an observer organization to IOM, admitted at this Council session. This will ensure that the policies of both organizations are better aligned, crucial to our future work together.

UN Climate Change sees this future work—through the Global Compact on Migration—addressing three key issues in order to address climate change, build resiliency and manage migration as positive force.

First is the pre-emption and reduction of risks so that people have the option to live and thrive in their homes, and migration is a choice rather than a necessity. Second, proper planning so that people can capture opportunities and harness the potential of migration as a positive factor in adaptation. Third, the establishment of contingency arrangements that ensure that if people do move, that they can in a dignified, orderly, safe, and humane manner that builds rather than undermines human welfare.

The story of the human race is a story about migration, but it is *also* a story about capturing opportunity. By fulfilling the Paris Agreement, meeting our Sustainable Development Goals and raising our ambition, nations can create a world that is cleaner, greener, and more prosperous for all.

Earlier this year, a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development showed that bringing together the growth and climate agendas could add one per cent to average economic output in the G20 countries by 2021. This represents hundreds of trillions of dollars.

For those living in developing countries, or small communities, or someone who is facing hardship, this means embracing new, more sustainable, business models that can provide safety and support within communities.

This includes solar energy, which is providing energy in underserved areas. UN Climate Change's Momentum for Change program, which shines a light on practical examples of what people across the globe are doing to combat climate change, supports such initiatives.

One project, called We Care Solar, saves lives in childbirth by bringing solar power to remote, off-grid, under-resourced medical centers throughout Africa. This initiative has reached more than 2,400 health facilities with its compact, rugged, Solar Suitcases that provide power for medical lighting, essential electricity, and fetal monitoring for essential obstetric care.

Renewable energy is also growing in regions of India and China where businesses and cities are leapfrogging the dirty-energy phase that marked the 19th and 20th centuries. An evolutionary shift to electric vehicles is also occurring throughout the world. Those born today will, in their time, see environmentally-damaging, fossil fuel-based vehicles replaced with cleaner forms of transport.

Throughout the world there are examples of exciting projects building up individuals and communities; projects helping to avoid migration problems while also addressing the world's most pressing environmental issues.

UN Climate Change urges cooperation at all levels of society to keep this optimism and momentum going. Specifically, UN Climate Change remains hopeful that the Global Compact on Migration will provide the world with a comprehensive framework to better manage human mobility. The Paris Agreement should serve as a good guide to achieve a Compact that is politically sound and operationally feasible.

If the past was marked by division and despair, let the way we address climate change today begin with cooperation—a new era that is defined by people who move to capture opportunity instead of escaping despair.
