

- Your Excellency, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Edgardo Riveros Marín,
- Your Excellency, Ambassador Alejandro Marisio, General Director for Consular Affairs and Immigration and Presidency Pro-Tempore of the South American Conference on Migration (SACM)
- Distinguished delegates from the South American countries
- Representatives of International Organizations, guest countries and other fora,
- IOM colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

## **Introduction**

It is an honor to attend the XV South American Conference on Migration and to share this inaugural ceremony with the authorities of the government of Chile, whom I wish to congratulate Chile as the Presidency Pro Tempore of the Conference. I am sure that Chile will be an outstanding Presidency for the SACM during its year of mandate. The topic of the meeting chosen by Chile “*With justice and equality towards migration governance*” underlines the strongly principled approach the South American Conference on Migration has adopted in this field. I will go back to this topic later.

Let me also express my congratulations for the work of the Government of Peru as former Presidency Pro Tempore and my appreciation of the actions carried out during its mandate. I was also honored to attend the XIV SACM meeting in Lima last year, and was impressed by both the quality of the organization and the excellence of its outcomes. In fact, I have attended almost every SACM meeting since I became Director- General in 2008.

I would like to start by expressing my satisfaction with the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which is due to be adopted formally by the United Nations General Assembly later this month. IOM is pleased that, unlike when the Millennium Development Goals were approved, migrants and migration will this time be included under a number of the goals and targets.

On this occasion, I would like to touch upon three topics: Dignity, Dialogue, and Direction.

D) **Dignity** is about the promotion and protection of migrants’ human rights in a context of humanitarian crisis;

II) **Dialogue** draws attention to the role of regional consultative processes and regional integration mechanisms as part of the migration governance; and

III) **Direction** is about the need for planned and purposeful approaches to migration governance.

**I. Dignity: The promotion and protection of migrants' human rights in a context of humanitarian crisis**

We live in an era of unprecedented mobility – a period in which more people are on the move than ever before – more than 1 billion in our 7 billion world. Of these 250 million are international migrants, and 750 million are domestic migrants.

Our demographer colleagues tell us that this population boom is likely to continue beyond mid-century, at which time the world's population is expected to level out at about 9 billion. Migration as such will continue to be the mega-trend of our century. Most of this mobility produces positive social and economic outcomes. In our globalized world migration is an important source of inclusive growth and sustainable development – as clearly acknowledged in the negotiated text prepared for the forthcoming Post-2015 Agenda Summit.

At the same time, however, a large number of migrants flee their places of origin driven by war or conflict; disasters of all sorts - whether natural or man-made - and extreme poverty. During those journeys by land, sea or air, these persons face indescribable hardships which all too frequently have deadly consequences.

Some 220,000 irregular migrants crossed the Mediterranean to Europe in 2014. Already this year, more than 300,000 have followed them. Germany alone has forecast the arrival of up to 800,000 asylum seekers for 2015. On land and on sea these migrants have left a “trail of tears” as criminal gangs of smugglers torture, extort and de-humanize their victims. These “travel agents of death” killed some 3,200 migrants in 2014 and more than 2700 already this year.

This is part of a global phenomenon observed equally in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden; in the Caribbean between Haiti and South Florida; and on the Mexico/US border. Never before has the world faced so many simultaneous complex emergencies. The tragic events, it is sad to say, are taking place against a backdrop of unprecedented anti-migrant sentiment and an erosion of international moral authority on migrant issues, with international humanitarian law being violated on all sides.

Now is the time to stop and reflect on what is really happening. Migration, we need to remember, must not be equated with an invasion. And when numbers rise in the context of a humanitarian crisis – as is now the case – we must rediscover our natural instinct for compassion.

I, together with the UN High Commissioners for Refugees and Human Rights and with the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Migration and Development, have urged the authorities of countries and regional blocks to exercise their moral and political leadership in order to adopt an integral, forward-looking action plan focused on values like humanity, charity, and respect for human rights.

The immediate priority is to save lives. Important conventions establish the obligation of a ship's captain to render assistance to people in distress at sea; and of states to coordinate and cooperate to bring those rescued at sea to a place of safety. These obligations apply regardless of the migration status of the persons in distress at sea. The recent outpouring of grief over the death of a little boy who drowned within sight of safety reminds us all that inaction carries an unbearable price.

Beyond the urgency of humanitarian rescue operations, lies a more profound need for States to reformulate and re-focus their approach to the management of mass humanitarian movements within the context of a broad approach to migration management.

IOM's thesis is that "migration is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be managed". Further large-scale human mobility in the decades ahead is: inevitable given demographic realities, disasters and demand for labour; necessary, if skills are to be available, jobs to be filled and economies to flourish; and desirable if it is managed in a responsible, humane and dignified manner;

Ad-hoc policy responses will not be sufficient to address this complex reality. The international community's effort needs to be comprehensive in several ways by:

- addressing all facets of mobility: whether regular or irregular, temporary or permanent;
- mobilizing all stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, civil society and the private business sector; and
- covering the whole migration cycle including addressing root causes ensuring safe movement, integration within the host society and eventual return home.

## **II. Dialogue: Regional consultative processes and regional integration mechanisms**

My second topic concerns the regional processes and the promotion of dialogues on migration. Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) are meeting platforms specifically designed to enable consultation and information exchange on migration issues and policies among like-minded states. Found on every continent, they are neither similar in size nor uniform in mode of operation. They do, however, share some essential features including a strong sense of “ownership” by participating states and openness and informality of discussion.

A quick inspection of RCP agendas reveals that they frequently address matters such as the development of legislative frameworks, policy and regulations, the setting up of administrative infrastructures, the creation of information systems and institutional capacity building. More specifically, they touch upon the promotion and protection of migrants’ human rights; responses to the needs of vulnerable migrant groups; and the contribution of migrants to social and economic development.

The SACM has been remarkable since its inception, 15 years ago, for its very strong focus on Migrants’ Human Rights. Although it is a non-binding process, the SACM has largely set the tone for reform in the field of migration across the sub-region. Its guidelines on migration issues have been the source of inspiration for many both unilateral and bilateral initiatives. I would like to commend, in particular, efforts made by countries in this region towards the regularization of migrants, freedom of movement for migrants, assistance to citizens abroad and support to returned migrants. The enactment of laws against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants is another superb achievement.

As I stated in my speech at the XIV Conference in Lima on last year *“SACM has become an example at a global level for its accomplishments in terms of the establishment of a set of principles and guidelines focused on the Human Rights of the Migrants”*. The right to migrate, the positive contribution of migrants to societies of destination, the rejection of any discrimination and xenophobia against, and criminalization of, migrants has been consistently and explicitly expressed in all the Declarations of the SACM, from the first meeting that I attended in Montevideo in 2008 and successively in the following Conferences in Quito (2009), Cochabamba (2010), Brasilia (2011), Santiago de Chile (2012), Cartagena (2013) and Lima (2014) .

I believe that the successes and good practices of the SACM’s Member States, deserve to be better known in international fora, and we are committed, at IOM, to promote the dissemination of the South American best practices on migration management.

I would like to reiterate that IOM fully supports the SACM in its capacity as Technical Secretariat, by offering its technical resources and, to the extent possible, its financial resources as well. We are proud that this support contributes to the development of the South American Plan for the Human Development of Migration. We are pleased that the administrative and logistic backup we provide to the Pro-Tempore Presidencies keeps the SACM machinery turning smoothly.

Two recent initiatives which IOM contributed to deserve special mention: a) the implementation of training courses on the Human Rights of Migrants to South American governmental officers; and

b) the studies conducted on the impact of the Agreement on Free Residency of Mercosur and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Family Members in South America.

The Agreement on Free Residency of Mercosur is a policy landmark. Its implementation in the countries of the region will greatly facilitate the free movement of South American migrants. IOM has recently signed an agreement with Mercosur, under which we expect to contribute significantly to the efforts of the regional block in the field of migration. As regards UNASUR, I would like to emphasize the progress made towards the definition of a concept of South American citizenship. This paves the way for next steps to be taken at the political level in the regional integration processes. I will meet with the Secretary General of UNASUR, Ernesto Samper next week in Geneva and I expect to ratify and consolidate the already excellent relationships established between IOM and UNASUR.

Let me take this opportunity also to congratulate the Presidency of Chile and the Members of the Conference for the invitation to Civil Society Organizations to attend the SACM's meeting. Communication and interaction among governments, Civil Society Organizations and migrants are a prerequisite to effective policy formulation.

Given that there are both commonalities and differences in migratory behavior across regions, dialogue between regional groups is necessary if globally harmonized approaches to migration management are to be found. There is therefore much value in maintaining close coordination between the SACM and the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), known also as Puebla Process.

From a global perspective, I am pleased to announce that on October 21 and 22, the Fifth Global Meeting of the Regional Consultative Processes on Migration will be held under the auspices of

IOM and the League of Arab States in Cairo. At this Meeting, progress made since the Lima meeting in 2013 will be discussed and prospects for future international consultations assessed.

### **III Direction: Planned and purposeful approaches to migration governance**

My third topic is about migration governance. A topic that is often talked about but not necessarily understood in the same way by all stakeholders.

You will recall that the declaration following the 2013 High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development called for migration to be addressed in a “coherent, comprehensive and balanced manner”. There is currently no single document that provides guidance on this. The discussions leading to the post-2015 development made frequent reference to “well-managed migration” without specifying what that entails.

IOM response to this assignment begins with the identification of what we see as 3 important challenges.

First, we must change course from the current toxic migration narrative to an enlightened and compassionate discourse. Through open dialogue and examination of evidence, we can re-discover that migration has always been helpful in the area of development and that migration and development belong together.

The second challenge is learning to manage diversity. Demographics mean that most countries of the world will in future become more multi-ethnic, more multi-cultural and more multi-religious. If we are to succeed, we will need a lot of political courage to be pragmatic and a lot of investments on\_ public information, awareness and dialogue; on moving the debate from one of identity to the identification of common values: the idea that others may not look like me or speak as I do but they can and do share commitments and values.

The third challenge is partly related to the first two, and is integral to good migration governance: conjugating sovereign rights and obligations with the rights, obligations and dreams of migrants; reconciling national security and human security; balancing sovereignty and individual freedom.

Based on these principles, the Migration Governance Framework that IOM has now developed sets out a coherent, comprehensive and balanced vision for migration governance. The Framework does not create new standards or norms, but draws its substance from existing principles, commitments and declarations, including the international law in force, the outcomes

of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development of 2013, IOM's Constitution, Council Resolutions, and the IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework.

In brief MIGOF consists of 3 principles that form the foundation for good migration governance:

- Adherence to international rights and fulfilment of migrants rights;
- Evidence-based, whole-of-government policy approach; and
- Engagement with partners to address migration issues.

And of 3 objectives that a state should seek to achieve through its migration policy and law:

- Advancing the socio-economic well-being of migrants and society;
- Responding effectively to the mobility dimensions of crises; and
- Providing safe and regular access to available migration channels.

Taken as a whole, these elements make for a framework that is coherent since it consistent with international law; that is comprehensive since it encompasses the multiple issues relevant to migration governance; and that is balanced since it takes account of the well-being of migrants, as well as that of communities and states of origin, transit and destination.

IOM will use the Migration Governance Framework to guide its work in capacity building, in the provision of advice and in the development of specific projects. IOM will also use it to anchor results-based planning and reporting. IOM trusts that this framework will also help governments meet their migration governance at the regional and international levels, creating better conditions for the development of good migration policies and processes.

I hope that this framework will be formally approved by the membership at the session of the IOM Council at the end of this year.

One pressing migration governance challenge is the increasing urbanization of population. To discuss this topic, we have convened a High Level Conference on Migrants and Cities, which will be held in Geneva on October 26 and 27 of this year, in which we will count on high-level representation from South American countries. In addition, the IOM's World Migration Report

2015, will be dedicated to “Migrants and Cities: New urban alliances for mobility management”. The report will be released for the Conference.

I know that in many municipalities in South American countries there are highly creative and effective initiatives addressing this issue. The special session of this Conference, which will take place this afternoon, will highlight some of these valuable initiatives that are being undertaken in Chile by the national and local governments.

I would like to make brief mention of another challenge currently confronting the global community, one which carries significant implications for migrants and migration policy. This is the impact of environmental and climate change on migration, an increasingly observed phenomenon in many areas of the world -.

On this issue IOM aims to

- build stakeholders’ capacities to explore the relationship between migration, climate change, natural disasters, and environmental degradation;
- contribute to the efforts made by governments and other social stakeholders to integrate migration as a potential adaptation strategy in the plans of both national and local governments, and implement actions to mitigate the risks derived from natural disasters; and
- extend assistance and protection to the people affected by climate change.

I know that several countries in this region have been directly affected by the mobility impact of environmental change and take this opportunity to commend and congratulate the government of Chile for the organization of the Regional Workshop on Environment, Climate Change and Migration that took place in Santiago in October 2014, with the attendance of governmental officers of the whole South American region.

Many thanks