STATEMENT BY
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Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

International Organization for Migration is honored to participate in and to be able to contribute to the APFSD. We would like to thank ESCAP for organizing the Forum to facilitate a strong Regional voice to be reflected in the global discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Allow me to make a couple of remarks, along the line of the coordinated inputs we have made to date to the SDG discussions, working with Member States, UN, other Development Partners, CSO and other partners, including those made within the framework of the Global Migration Group (GMG) currently chaired by the World Bank.

Human mobility has become a key factor in the Sustainable Development in this interconnected world where 1 in 7 is on the move. Counting the migrants, their families and communities of origin and destination, its socio-economic impact is significant. Following the global, regional national discussions, this key factor is reflected across goals and targets in the Open Working Group proposal and in the ongoing discussions on the SDGs, noting the Declaration of the General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that took place in October 2013.

Migration remains a significant factor in the Region’s development. Migrants and their families’ contributions have been substantial. Taking the remittances alone, which the World Bank estimates 436 Billion in 2014 globally; the top 6 remittance receiving countries are in this region; 6 countries in this region has remittance contributing to the GDP share surpassing 20%. In addition to some 60 millions migrants in the region and more outside their countries, some of the mobility is known to facilitate urbanization, another key development issue in the region. Student mobility and a large number of diaspora communities are another feature of migration here. Unfortunately, another trend in the region is that the costs and negative impacts of migration is too high – as borne by far many migrants and their families, in a situation that leads to de-skilling, lack of social protection, abuse and exploitation, and subject to trafficking. Moreover, too much migration today is forced, within and across borders as a result of conflicts, natural disasters and other causes.

(Distinguished delegates...) The enabling environment and strong partnerships at all level, with diverse stakeholders are therefore essential to harness the potential benefit of migration and address the negative impacts. Migration can help realize the human development potential if it is governed humanely and fairly. “Planned and well managed migration policies,” for example in the target 10.7, is important for facilitating legal and safe migration, making sure the well-being of migrants and families and societies back home, and contribute to address exploitative form of migration including human trafficking. Secondly, the SDGs cannot disregard forced migration in all its forms and the human toll it
takes – given the scale and protracted nature of many displacement, it’s a developmental challenge for many countries going beyond humanitarian issues. Thirdly, as much has been highlighted, and reflected also in the Sendai Framework, preparing for a world of increased climate vulnerability means including mobility in policies and preparedness – to include strategies to reduce disaster risk and build resilience across the goals such as poverty eradication, sustainable cities and climate change.

(Distinguished delegates......) On the Accountability and monitoring and linked to the APFSD - IOM welcome, and stands ready to support, the establishing of a strong follow-up and review mechanisms for the SDG that is voluntary, based on national ownership. As suggested by several distinguished delegates, regional and sub-regional mechanisms, to be supportive of the national efforts, and also to be collaborative ones, such mechanisms can provide a platform, linked to the APFSD, for sharing of best experiences and innovative approaches. A regional and sub regional mechanisms are also useful, as a large part of migration takes place within or across the subregions, in order to capture the specific characteristics of these inter and intra regional migration and how it pertains to Sustainable Development. In this regard, many of the Regional Consultative Processes on migration can be helpful for the Regional level review. As it is cross cutting issue, a thematic review on mobility and relevant matters could be considered as proposed in the UN SG’s synthesis report.

Indeed, strong partnership is critical to ensuring positive outcomes from migration, to maximize the development potential of migration for migrants, families and societies, and to leave truly no one behind. IOM stands ready to play its part together with the UN/DP/CS and other partners, building on the coordinated inputs and contributions we have been making to the SDG discussions, OWG and IAEG.

Thank you.