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**Statement by Louise Arbour, Special Representative
of the Secretary-General for International Migration**

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On repositioning the UN system on migration

(GCM Negotiations, Round III – April 2018)

New York, 6 April 2018

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thank you for this opportunity to brief on our consultations pursuant to the Secretary-General's decision to strengthen the UN system's support to Member States on migration.

But before I do, let me take this opportunity to echo what Ambassador Lauber stressed on Monday morning. That is to bring to your attention the urgent need to replenish the Multi-Partner Trust Fund to support the Global Compact.

Since its establishment last year, the Trust Fund has supported over 90 government officials from over 60 countries in the preparatory, stocktaking and now negotiations phases of this Global Compact process. The Trust Fund is now empty and if no more funds are forthcoming we are not in a position to support travel either to the remainder of the negotiations or, critically, to the intergovernmental conference in Morocco this December.

I therefore call on Member States as a matter of urgency to provide contributions for its replenishment and thank you in advance for your support. We are extremely grateful for the earlier contributions made by the Governments of Australia, Austria, Cyprus, Ireland, Norway, Philippines, Slovakia and Switzerland.

Turning now to the subject at hand, you will appreciate that in light of the short gap between rounds two and three of these negotiations I can only brief you on the progress of the on-going consultations without being in a position to outline possible outcomes.

That being said, I would like to provide you with the following updates, together with a few personal observations.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As outlined in the second round of negotiations, we now have a senior consultant on board to assist the Deputy Secretary-General and me with this task. We have retained for that purpose Ms. Kathleen Newland, a senior fellow and co-founder of the Migration Policy Institute. She brings to this task pretty much unparalleled experience in the field of migration, including regarding its governance. I am very grateful to Kathleen for her agreeing to support us on this project.

We have now received written inputs from all members of the Global Migration Group, in response to a request from the Deputy Secretary-General asking them to look at the following issues:

- Their respective mandates on migration-related issues and current activities in this sector;**
- Their resources – both human and financial – currently deployed on these issues;**
- An outline of their modes of collaboration (including Memoranda of Understanding) in place with other United Nations entities, bi-laterally or otherwise, on migration;**
- Their views on how we can improve on existing coordination mechanisms, at country, regional and global levels; and**

- **Suggestions as to how we can further integrate the competencies of IOM into the broader United Nations System.**

The responses, still being reviewed, demonstrate that all involved are approaching this exercise with the utmost seriousness. I am very grateful for such considered engagement.

Ms. Newland, supported by my office, will now be following up on these written submissions through interviews with senior officials – often at the principal’s or deputy levels – with as many members of the Global Migration Group as time will permit. This will include visits to Geneva, New York, and Vienna.

We will also – through discussions such as those taking place in this room this week, my own consultations with Member States, and your inputs to date on the question of migration governance – seek to reflect your perspectives on this issue in the development of recommendations as to the way forward, which we will then put to the Secretary-General.

To ensure that we have full access to the widest range of views possible, I would urge all of you to provide your suggestions and ideas on this issue to my office through the gcmigration email address (gcmigration@un.org). In particular, it would be useful to hear in more details your views on the ways and means through which IOM could exercise the leadership and coordination function that many have advocated.

Let me end by sharing with you a number of observations as to factors we need to bear in mind as we move forward.

First, the inputs received reveal both a wealth of activity and a wealth of inter-agency cooperation and collaboration. This is particularly so at the country-level. Any adjustments we propose as to how the system engages on migration will need to factor that in – enhance it and not erode or impede it.

Secondly, while everyone agrees that no new mandated structures are either necessary or desirable, it will be necessary to think through how best to configure the system, ensuring a central role for IOM.

Any resulting model will need to take into careful consideration all of the global, regional and national levels of the migration agenda; be mindful of the need to draw fully on the skills, resources and mandates of the entirety of the system; and focus on deliverables rather than on cosmetic institutional adjustments.

Thirdly, we will need to be mindful of resource implications not just as we re-align existing activities but as we position the system to best support the Global Compact. It is highly unlikely that effective support to the many activities contemplated by the Compact will be entirely cost neutral, at least over time. We should ensure that any resource allocation be reflective of mandates and efficiencies, while also directed toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

And, finally, it will not be possible to put in place significant changes to how the UN engages on migration overnight. These new directions, once determined, will need to be aligned with the Secretary-General's broader reform agenda, and the final contours of the Global Compact. They will likely also entail some strengthening of IOM capacities in a number of areas.

What is clear, however, is that all concerned are now fully engaged in the process of supporting the Global Compact, mindful of the desirability of integrating IOM more fully and more centrally into the UN system, and attentive to the range of migration-related activities currently undertaken both by IOM and by many other UN actors.

Once again, I stress that we welcome your thoughts and ideas on this issue and I will of course be happy to keep you abreast of the developments resulting from our internal consultations in the weeks ahead.

Thank you.