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

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GFMD Common Space 2018

**“From global commitments to multi-stakeholder action: inspiring
implementation at the regional, national and sub-national level”**

5 December 2018, Marrakesh

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am grateful for this opportunity to address the GFMD Common Space which includes government representatives together with all other relevant stakeholders and to reflect with you on how we can move forward together to make migration work for all.

The GFMD's Common Space format has been a precursor and model for the multi-stakeholder approach now enshrined in the Global Compact for Migration. It is a crucial platform for you to debate and develop a common understanding towards a common agenda on migration. I would like to commend you on the working methods you have developed over the years since the inception of this Forum. Over the years we have seen closer collaboration and convergence among governments, civil society organizations and networks, the inclusion of migrants and members of diaspora, private sector, academia – and now this year's new addition of the Mayoral Mechanism.

While the GFMD as a forum outside the UN is different from a process in the UN General Assembly, you have brought your first-hand experience, your expertise and commitment to the process of establishing the Global Compact for Migration. This was important for the negotiations earlier this year but will be even more so for the implementation, follow up and review of the compact.

The agreement of a final text of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, in July of this year, is a major success for multilateral cooperation. The Compact recognizes that a comprehensive and collaborative approach is needed to maximize the overall benefits of migration.

The Compact is grounded in values of state sovereignty, non-discrimination and human rights, it reaffirms existing obligations derived from international law and identifies best practices. Yet, it allows for sufficient flexibility for countries to implement the objectives based on realities and policy choices at national level. First, and foremost, however, the Compact is a framework to improve and strengthen cooperation on migration at all levels, be it local, national, regional or international. The implementation of the Compact needs to be a collaborative effort – within and between governments, in partnership with the broad multi-stakeholder community, including migrants themselves.

The GCM – in its own words, is “a milestone, but not the end of our efforts” - and we now need to plan for action to implement the Compact. We will ultimately be judged by our ability to breathe life into the vision and by the impact our efforts will have on the well-being of individuals and societies. We are now transitioning into a next phase - moving from the negotiations, in which the diplomats in New York and the formation of national positions was the center of attention - into the implementation phase, in which practitioners at local and national level will be more prominent.

Within its 23 objectives, the GCM includes both short and long-term actions. Some are urgent and immediate tasks, such as saving lives and preventing deaths on the migratory routes. Others, like improving social inclusion or addressing the adverse drivers of migration, will need attention for extended periods of time. In defining their priorities, governments will favour different actions depending on their national situations.

The GCM underlines that improving cooperation on migration is a task for all levels of government and all elements of society. States are central to shaping and implementing national and international frameworks on migration. Local authorities, the private sector, trade unions, civil society, academia, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the media and other stakeholders – crucially including migrants and diaspora groups – also play essential roles in making migration work for all.

In the preparations for the Dialogue on “Partnerships and innovative initiatives for the way forward”, to be held in the Intergovernmental Conference on the 11th of December, my office has focused on the GCM’s guiding principles on a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach – the promotion of multi-stakeholder partnerships as central to our efforts to address migration in all its dimensions.

It will be optimal not only for Member States to work together but also to involve the widest possible range of stakeholders in the Compact's implementation. It seems important to consider, in designing the new and innovative partnerships for action that are needed at all levels, whether they are sufficiently broad and inclusive to deal with policy questions around migration effectively and with wide public support. Regard should also be paid to whether they are focused on achieving specific policy goals, with clear timeframes, and whether they are able to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise and financial resources.

The GCM identifies possibilities for multi-stakeholder action across all 23 of its objectives and their implementation, follow-up and review. Examples are the gathering, analyzing and disseminating data and information on migration, the empowering, protecting and assisting migrants and the fostering of skills development and fair and ethical recruitment and decent work for migrants. There are, of course, many more.

During the consultations and negotiations of the GCM it has often been said that there are large potential benefits of implementing the objectives and suggested actions enshrined in the text. The GCM recognizes that migration is a reality, which, if managed more effectively, can contribute positively to sustainable development, innovation and empowerment. Successful implementation could improve the lives of millions of migrants as well as the economic and social situation for host communities and countries.

To harness these potential benefits, it is crucial to get the policy development right, gains do not come automatically. There is also a considerable cost to non-action.

To mention but a few actions that could considerably increase the benefits of migration, I would firstly suggest that the alignment of migration policies to meet labour market needs could lead to gains in increased global GDP. Secondly, a reduction in the cost of remittance transfers to below 3% would lead to a considerable boost in funds available to support development in countries of origin. Lastly, by further aligning the conditions of migrant workers to those of native workers, the host societies would notably expand their own tax base. There are of course many other benefits to a dedicated implementation of the GCM, including importantly, a considerable reduction in vulnerabilities associated with migration.

When addressing the benefits and impact of successful GCM implementation, I would like refer you to an initiative undertaken by a private sector actor - McKinsey and Company. Early after the agreement on a final text, they initiated a collaboration with IOM and my office with the aim to articulate the benefits of GCM implementation in order to support first steps towards action. The idea behind this initiative was to present a quantified perspective on the benefits of implementing the GCM and the costs of no action as well as possible impact – in terms of economic, social and humanitarian outcomes – associated with implementing the GCM. These types of public private partnership will be vital going forward.

Coming to the end of my address I'd like to stress that implementation of the GCM will require collaboration and concerted efforts among many different types of stakeholders at all levels of society. The GFMD has spent over a decade in building networks, dialogues and multi-stakeholder spaces and will continue to be crucial for this important work going forward. The Secretary-General now has established a United Nations Network on Migration, coordinated by the International Organization for Migration, to ensure a coherent system-wide response in support of GCM implementation. Only if we work together in earnest will we be able to deliver on the promises enshrined in the Global Compact for Migration.