



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

WELCOMING STATEMENT BY

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at the

**Workshop on Inter-State and Intra-Regional Cooperation
on Migration Management in the IGAD Region**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and pleasure for me to welcome you to this ground-breaking workshop on *Inter-State and Intra-Regional Cooperation on Migration Management in the IGAD Region* jointly organized by the African Union, IGAD and IOM. Allow me to thank in particular the Government of Ethiopia for the opportunity to visit Addis Ababa. I congratulate Mr. Jean Ping most warmly on his appointment as Chairperson of the African Union Commission and to extend my best wishes for success in his new post.

Coming to Addis Ababa revives fond memories. In November 1998, just elected IOM Director General, Ethiopia was one of the first countries I visited. I came to sign a Cooperation Agreement with the then Organization of African Unity (OAU). I came back two years later to address the African Union Member States.

It is therefore a great delight for me to be back in Addis Ababa in the New Millennium, which is also the Ethiopian Millennium and the African Millennium, in the beautiful Hall of the African Union.

IOM, an intergovernmental organization of 122 Member States, soon to be 124, is committed to the principle that humane, well managed and well-informed migration benefits migrants and society.

We work to assist Governments across the world in managing the emerging challenges and opportunities presented by global increases in human mobility. We believe regional groupings such as IGAD can play a crucial role and we aim to support them actively.

The regional dimension of migration management has come to the fore all over the world; in Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa. Regional dialogue has proven to be one of the most useful tools in IOM's toolbox.

IOM works with other regional bodies in Africa, such as the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Southern African Development Cooperation (SADC) and the Community of

Sahara-Sahel States (CENSAD), helping them build capacity to effectively manage migration.

All around the world the regional approach is gaining ground, and the IGAD Region can be proud of moving to the establishment of an on-going regional consultative approach at the end of this workshop.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the European Commission and various European governments including the UK, Italy, Netherlands and Malta for their generous funding support towards this workshop as part of the EU-Africa dialogue on migration management.

Finally, and in closing, I would like to make an appeal to those IGAD States that are not yet full IOM Member States to apply for membership in our Organization. You still have five weeks before our next Council to add your voices to the 38 existing African Member States. Among the IGAD member states, Kenya the first African Member, Sudan and Uganda are already there. It would please me enormously to welcome the rest of you soon.

Again, my friends, I thank you for your kind attention and wish you fruitful discussions.
