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CONCEPT NOTE:

Moldovan Diaspora policy consultation workshop:

Prioritizing SDG accelerators for sustainable development in support of formulation of key commitments to accelerate the contribution of human mobility to the development in the Republic of Moldova

Date: 18 August 2023, 13.15 – 14.45

Place: Palatul Republicii, Str. Maria Cebotari 16, Chisinau (TBC)

General context:

Since its adoption at the UN General Assembly in September 2015, member states around the world have been encouraged to bring the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into the policy and practice of their countries. The 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets sets out an ambitious agenda that seeks to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, protect the environment and tackle climate change.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that migration is a powerful driver of sustainable development, for migrants and their communities. It brings significant benefits in the form of skills, strengthening the labour force, investment, and cultural diversity, and contributes to improving the lives of communities in their countries of origin through the transfer of skills and financial resources.

The 2023 Sustainable Development Goal Summit (SDG Summit) will take place on 18 and 19 September, during the high-level week of the seventy-eighth session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), at the UN Headquarters in New York.

Marking the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and three years into the Decade of Action, the Summit comes at a time of unprecedented challenges. According to the UN Secretary General (SG) report, just 12 percent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets are on track; progress on a further 50 percent is weak and insufficient; and we have stalled or gone into reverse on more than 30 percent of the SDGs. During the Summit, Heads of State and Government will review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and provide high-level political guidance on the actions that will be needed in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

The outcome of the Summit will be a negotiated political declaration, led by two co-facilitator States, Qatar and Ireland. IOM's overarching objective is to ensure that the full spectrum of human mobility (international migration, internal migration, and displacement) is incorporated into discussions and outcomes of the SDG Summit, including key commitments to accelerate the contribution of human mobility to development.

Human mobility is driven and impacted by today's major global transformations, such as growing inequalities, mistrust, exclusion from decision-making and hyper individualism, nationalism and protectionism, increasing number of violent conflicts, changing demographics, climate change and environmental degradation, financial constraints etc. At the mid-way point of the 2030 Agenda, these challenges risk leaving hundreds of millions of international migrants, internal migrants, and displaced persons behind. That is one in every eight

people in the world. As the human mobility is a global common good, not a problem to be solved, the inclusion and integrating human mobility considerations can be part of the solution.

The SDGs can only be realized with strong global partnerships and cooperation. A successful development agenda requires inclusive and multi-stakeholder partnerships — at the global, regional, national and local levels — built upon principles and values, and upon a shared vision and shared goals placing people and the planet at the centre. This necessitates a multi-stakeholder approach, with the wide engagement of not only local authorities, civil society and academia, but also non-traditional partners such as diasporas and the private sector.

Diasporas have been widely recognized as key actors not only in the local and national development agendas, but also at the global level, as influential partners in addressing major societal and humanitarian challenges and crises as well as across humanitarian, peace and development nexus. Their potential to create bridges between societies and countries to transfer skills, knowledges and technologies, connect and create transnational networks and bring economic and social development benefits to their communities of origin have been widely acknowledged in the global international agendas and forums.

To address the above-mentioned challenges, IOM put an emphasis on the strong partnerships it has developed with a broad range of stakeholders, not least as Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration, and by pursuing joint advocacy with ongoing UN partnership initiatives, and by showcasing successful joint practice, for instance through flagship Joint Programmes, such as SDC funded, IOM – UNDP Joint Global Programme on “Making Migration Work for Sustainable Development” which promotes the valorization of the positive outcomes of migration and support the implementation of migration-related SDG targets.

National context:

In 2015, the Republic of Moldova, along with other 192 Member States of the United Nations, committed to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, announcing that by 2030 key actors in society would make common cause to eliminate all forms of poverty, combat inequalities and address environmental and climate change issues, ensuring that no one is left behind. Since 2017 the country is going through the process of nationalization and adaptation of SDGs to its local context.

In 2020, after five years of implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda, the Republic of Moldova developed and presented its first Voluntary National Review (VNR), which was based on the complex analysis of progress and challenges on each of the assumed objectives. According to VNR report the Republic of Moldova registered noteworthy progress since its commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda. As of 2020, significant progress was registered in achieving SDG 1 (No poverty), 8 (Decent work and Economic Growth), 13 (Climate Action) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), while moderate results and less noticeable results were obtained in achieving SDG 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and respectively SDG 4, 6, 10, 12, 15 and 16.¹

In 2022, the Government of Moldova adopted a new long-term strategic planning document - the National Development Strategy ‘European Moldova 2030’, a document based on the principle of the human life cycle, human rights and quality of life, built to a great extent, around the targets and goals of the 2030 Agenda. The

¹ UN Moldova, Moldova’s first Voluntary National Review (VNR) unveils the progress towards Agenda 2030 implementation in the country. <https://moldova.un.org/en/53352-moldova%E2%80%99s-first-voluntary-national-review-vnr-unveils-progress-towards-agenda-2030>

Strategy underlines that Moldova is committed to accelerated achievement of the SDGs through the implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU, and implicitly the 2030 Agenda.

In 2022, the Government of Moldova approved a decision regarding the national framework for monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which aims to support the reporting of the Republic of Moldova's progress in the implementation of the SDGs. In the preparation of its participation in the 2023 SDG Summit, the Moldova Government is working on its national progress report on SDGs implementation during the last three years. While the national report is still being finalized, and migration is mainstreamed across the majority of SDGs, relevant to mention at this stage is that the progress of achieving the migration governance target 10.7 (responsible and well-managed migration policies) is assessed as being significant.

To further strengthen momentum and demonstrate that every country has a clear path to SDG success, UN is encouraging states to outline a forward-looking National Commitment to SDG Transformation at the Summit that includes (i) priority transitions and areas for investment that will help maximize progress across the SDGs; (ii) a national benchmark for reducing poverty and inequality by 2027; and (iii) steps towards strengthened national planning and institutional frameworks to support progress in these areas².

Based on the national SDG progress report, the Government is in the process of formulating key messages and its national position heading into the SDG Summit, as per above UN Guidance Note for States.

To support the above process and effectively implement whole-of-society approach, ensure inclusivity, diverse perspectives, and identify effective accelerators for the implementation of the SDGs, the Moldovan Government, in partnership with UN Agencies in Moldova, will consult civil society, youth, and migrants/diaspora to incorporate their challenges, perspectives and innovative ideas while preparing the national position and commitments to the SDG Summit 2023.

Drawing upon its technical expertise and existing collaborations with the Moldovan diaspora members across countries, IOM Moldova will support the Government of Moldova which seeks to consult its diaspora as a distinct group on priority SDG accelerators for sustainable development through conducting an online survey targeting Moldovan diaspora members as well as organization of a diaspora policy consultation workshop in Chisinau in the framework of the 10th edition of the Diaspora Congress.

The consultation workshop:

Overall objective: Co-organized in partnership with the Diaspora Relations Bureau of the State Chancellery, the workshop aims to engage Moldovan diaspora members to share their valuable insights and experiences to inform the identification of effective accelerators related to mobility, return and reintegration, social inclusion, economic empowerment, climate change among others to boost progress across multiple, interconnected SDGs along with national development goals, and can respectively support the development of the national position and prioritization of national commitments to the SDG Summit 2023.

Format and thematic focus: Facilitated by IOM, the workshop will take the form of a participatory discussion on the 6 priority topics such as: (i) pre-conditions for migrants' return and sustainable reintegration, (ii) types and sectors of migrants' contribution/investments, (iii) barriers and enablers for diaspora contribution to Moldova's national development, (iv) capacity development needs of diaspora organizations, (v)

² UN, SDG Summit 2023 National and Global Commitments to SDG Transformation: Pathways, Investments and Means of Implementation Guidance Note for States. <https://hlpf.un.org/>.

development policies / program areas that could accelerate progress across multiple SDGs along with national development, (vi) national commitments to advance sustainable development and achieve the SDGs. The consultation event which is expected to facilitate discussions on the specified topics will be informed by the preliminary findings of an online survey conducted during mid-July to end-August 2023 and which was specifically targeted towards the Moldovan diaspora and migrant groups.

Expected outcome: During the consultation event, participants will have the opportunity to express their views, share their experiences, and provide input on key issues related to the most migration relevant SDGs targets and policy intervention, including identification of specific proposals for strengthening partnerships. Active involvement of migrants and diaspora in the consultation process, will ensure that their voices are heard, and their needs are addressed in the national development agenda and practical solutions found to improve direct engagement of migrants and diaspora into local and national actions address existing development challenges and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

Following the consultation event, IOM will draft a post-event report summarizing the main discussion points and concrete recommendations on the prioritized accelerators and national commitments. This report will serve as a valuable resource for the Moldovan Government, providing a comprehensive overview of the key issues raised during the consultation. The recommendations outlined in the report will inform the government's decision-making process and guide the formulation of policies and commitments aimed at boosting socio-economic development and achieving the SDGs, while accelerating the contribution of human mobility to the development in the Republic of Moldova. In addition, the recommendations will be used by IOM during upcoming global events and forums for promoting the recognition of the development impact of migration and showcasing the practices and experiences from the local and national levels.

The post-event report will highlight specific actions, policy measures, and interventions that can help improve the well-being and integration of migrants, as well as their contributions to sustainable development. It may include recommendations on enhancing access to education, healthcare, social protection, and other essential services for migrants. It can also propose initiatives to promote the recognition of migrants' skills and qualifications, facilitate their entrepreneurship, foster their social and cultural inclusion and valorize the migrants' contribution to the climate change adaptation action.

DRAFT AGENDA

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Moderator: Nata ALBOT

Key-note speakers:

Ala NEMERENCO, Ministry of Health, the involvement of the diaspora in the administrative councils of the IMS of the Republic of Moldova

Alexei BUZU, Minister of Labor and Social Protection, integration on the labor market

Lars Johan LÖNNBACK, Chief of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mission to the Republic of Moldova

Victoria DUNFORD, President and Founder of MAD-Aid, Great Britain

Oleg CHIRIȚA, Head of Global Initiatives, International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)