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ICMPD and Egypt discuss cooperation; reaffirm the need to foster a more balanced discourse on migration

VIENNA, 29 January 2016 - Newly-elected Director General of the Vienna-based International Centre for Migration Policy Development, Michael Spindelegger, met yesterday Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Austria / Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in Vienna, Austria, Mr. Khaled Abdel-Rahman Shamaa. The meeting, which was held at the Egyptian embassy in Vienna, tackled various key issues of relevance to ICMPD and Egypt, including the prospects of cooperation in the immediate future on several subfields of migration.

Spindelegger reiterated that migration will remain at the top of the agenda, both within Europe and at the global stage. He highlighted the need to continue pursuing adequate solutions to address emerging migration trends and developments, and to find mechanisms to address migration in all its aspects with a balanced and pragmatic approach.

He also reaffirmed ICMPD's commitment and interest to work with Egypt at a concrete level, and touched on ICMPD's role within various established mechanisms, including the Rabat and Khartoum processes, and encouraged more tangible cooperation initiatives with Egypt within the framework of these mechanisms, and beyond.

Shamaa thanked Spindelegger on ICMPD's continued interest in deeper cooperation with both Egypt and the wider MENA region, and reaffirmed Egypt's readiness and willingness to consider all aspects of cooperation with ICMPD. He invited the good offices of ICMPD's Director General to propose concrete initiatives, and expressed his support to facilitate such proposals with relevant Governmental stakeholders in Cairo.

Both Mr Shamaa and Mr Spindelegger highlighted the importance of a collective European approach in addressing emerging migration challenges, as well as solidarity in tackling the impact of the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis. "We need mechanisms to foster regular migration" said Spindelegger. Both counterparts highlighted the need for a more balanced discourse on migration, noting that the discussion on migration issues has been increasingly limited to the security approach or the humanitarian/right-based approach.

Director General Spindelegger agreed with Ambassador Shamaa to undertake a mission to Egypt in the Spring of 2016, during which ICMPD will conduct meetings with all national stakeholders of relevance to migration, with the aim of paving the way for deeper European cooperation Egypt.

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For more information, please contact:

Bernhard Schragl

Spokesperson, Communication and Media Coordinator

ICMPD

Tel: +43 1 504 4677 2444

bernhard.schragl@icmpd.org

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) is an international organisation with 18 Member States and more than 350 staff members. Active in more than 90 countries worldwide, it takes a regional approach in its work to create efficient cooperation and partnerships along migration routes. Priority regions include Africa, Central and South Asia, Europe, and the MiddleEast. Its three-pillar approach to migration management – structurally linking research, migration 3 dialogues and capacity building – contributes to better migration policy development worldwide. The Vienna-based organisation has a mission in Brussels, a regional office in Malta and project offices in several countries. ICMPD receives funding from its Member States, the European Commission, the UN, and other multilateral institutions, as well as bilateral donors. Founded in 1993, ICMPD holds UN observer status and cooperates with more than 700 partners including EU institutions and UN agencies.

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