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Press Release 27 January 2016

EU needs to stem four main challenges to solve migration crisis according to new director general of key European organisation

BRUSSELS, 27 January – During his debut visit to Brussels, the newly-appointed Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Michael Spindelegger, met key European decision makers including Commissioners and addressed press for the first time. He points to four issues that Europe and its partners need to address to solve the current migration crisis. Spindelegger also outlined plans for his organisation, ICMPD.

With record numbers of migrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean last summer and similar figures expected for this year, Europe needs to regain control of the movements and regulate entry to its states in the short term. “Curbing smuggling of migrants and refugees is key, but Europe also needs to provide safe and legal ways towards protection - one does not work without the other.” Spindelegger said to press, introducing the first measure.

Second, Europe needs to ensure smooth functioning of its protection system, including providing proper reception under decent conditions to refugees. It will also need to implement return when needed, as this is essential to guarantee a functioning protection system.

Third, refugees who stay in Europe should be given the possibilities to integrate and participate. Commitments of both the newly-arrived and of the host societies are clear. “Only through successful integration in the labour market and educational systems can we reap the full benefits of migration.” Spindelegger said, pointing to research ICMPD has done.

Finally, in the longer run, Europe will need to develop a new common migration regime, defining clear objectives of its mobility and protection systems.

These four priorities are complex, demanding and have to be tackled at a time of insecurity about the future of Schengen, or Europe even. Spindelegger, a former vice chancellor of Austria, also stressed that Europe has to act in solidarity, with a clear distribution of responsibilities.

Mr Spindelegger underlined that ICMPD is ready to play its role to support its 15 member states and partners. He will work to strengthen ICMPD’s capacities to act as a platform for dialogue and mediation on migration – a forum for discussion, listening to everyone’s concerns, proposing solutions and ways

to break through deadlocked situations. Furthermore he will strengthen ICMPD's work as a think tank providing independent research on future developments of migration, linking policy and practice and moving from ideas to action.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development is a key European player in the migration field. The organisation has 15 member states and carries out activities throughout the world. Besides its headquarters in Vienna and a mission in Brussels, it has 8 field offices and a total of 150 staff.

ICMPD strives for comprehensive, sustainable and future-oriented migration governance. The work of ICMPD is based on a three-pillar approach: research, dialogue, capacity building.

Our activities cover on a broad range of topics including asylum, border management and visa, irregular migration and return, legal migration and integration, migration and development, and trafficking in human beings.

The organisation was founded in 1993 to serve as a support mechanism for informal consultations, and to provide expertise in the newly emerging landscape of multilateral cooperation on migration and asylum issues.

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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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