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IOM International Organization for Migration

William Lacy Swing Elected Director General of the International Organization for Migration

Geneva-18 June 2008- Ambassador William Lacy Swing of the United States has today been elected as the next Director General of the International Organization for Migration.

Ambassador Swing was elected by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council, which brought together IOM Member States.

Speaking after his election, Mr. Swing said: “My vision for IOM is for a collaborative organization of professionals built on trust and one that listens to Member States and which efficiently and cost-effectively helps them manage migration to the benefit of all.”

Mr. Swing, who was the official US candidate for the post of Director General, brings to the 125-member Organization a breadth of international experience, a proven ability to manage complex multilateral operations and to collaborate productively with foreign governments, United Nations agencies and other inter-governmental institutions.

As UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) from May 2003 till January 2008, Ambassador Swing successfully led all facets of the largest UN peacekeeping operation in history.

Prior to his work in the DRC, Ambassador Swing served from 2001 to 2003 as the Special Representative to the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and Chief of Mission for the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

During a long diplomatic career at the U.S. Department of State, Mr. Swing was a six-time ambassador, managing some of the largest diplomatic missions and foreign development and humanitarian aid programmes in two hemispheres, with a record of strengthening bilateral relationships.

Through his diplomatic assignments in countries facing significant migration movements, he has acquired a deep understanding of the multiple factors affecting international migration.

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Ambassador Swing graduated from Catawba College in North Carolina (Bachelor of Arts) and Yale University (Bachelor of Divinity), and did post-graduate studies at Tubingen University in Germany and at Harvard University. He also speaks fluent French and German.

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