



CANADA

The Permanent Mission of Canada  
to the United Nations  
at Geneva

La Mission permanente du Canada  
auprès des Nations Unies  
à Genève

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## INTERVENTION

by

**Jennifer IRISH**

Minister-Counsellor

Head, Humanitarian Affairs and Migration Section  
Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations at Geneva

to the

**103rd Session of the Council**

of the International Organization for Migration  
Geneva, 26-29 November 2013

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## INTERVENTION

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Ministre-Conseiller

Chef, Section des Affaires humanitaires et migratoires  
Mission permanente du Canada auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève

à la

**103<sup>e</sup> Session du Conseil**

de l'Organisation internationale pour les Migrations  
Genève, le 26-29 novembre 2013

## **Canadian draft intervention to the 103rd Session of the IOM Council**

Presidente –

On behalf of the delegation of Canada, let me first congratulate you and your bureau on your election. We are glad to see a close partner of the Americas at the helm, and we look forward to supporting your efforts in every way possible.

Presidente –

You take the Chair at a turning point for the IOM.

- It is a turning point in terms of the IOM's sustainability, as an important decision has been taken on support to the Organization's core structure and budgetary situation;
- It is a turning point in terms of the IOM's relevance, as it will be looked at to move forward a new agenda that reflects the spirit of the recently concluded High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (or HLD);
- It is a turning point in terms of IOM's institutional evolution as we look to it to enhance its relationships with the UN, the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the Global Migration Group, as well as to develop a humanitarian policy framework to situate it closer to other international humanitarian actors and inter-agency coordinating structures.

Let me start with how IOM is at a turning point with respect to its relationship with Canada. **Canada's relationship to the IOM** is long and rich on the project side, as we continue to partner with IOM on a broad range of capacity building and other projects including in such areas as support to migration and border management efforts in other countries and regions, anti-smuggling and trafficking efforts, record levels of humanitarian assistance, post-conflict reconstruction and security sector reforms. For example, with Canadian support from 2011 to 2013, the IOM has been enabled to train approximately 4000 Southeast Asian immigration and law enforcement officers in Frontline Officers' Awareness Training on People Smuggling.

We also have longstanding programming cooperation, including in refugee resettlement, and particularly express our gratitude to IOM for its noble and courageous efforts to help third country refugees leave the troubles of Syria for resettlement to Canada. With more than \$35 million in projects, and close programming cooperation in pre-departure orientation for immigrants and resettled refugees, health, Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration, and most recently with respect to visa processing as well as assistance to stranded migrants, Canada has a broad and growing platform for cooperation with IOM -- which we are committed to see continue to develop and strengthen. We look forward to taking these next steps with the Organization and its very capable Director General and senior management team.

In terms of the Organization's own strategic development, the outcome of the recently concluded **HLD** will help to pave the way.

The IOM should be congratulated for the role it took in supporting this important Dialogue – even if not always under ideal circumstances. The recommendations developed in partnership with UNFPA, its steerage of the Global Migration Group, the innovative report and HLD side event on migrant well-being, the timely High level International Dialogue on Migration focussed on the Diaspora, the High Level Dialogue Roundtable Series held in New York and finally the proposals for high road scenarios, all helped to influence the Dialogue's deliberations in a meaningful and positive way. In support of the IOM's engagement in this process, Canada was pleased to have co-chaired the High Level Dialogue Roundtable Series on international and regional labour mobility, as well as the HLD side event on the positive contributions of migrants and migrant's well-being.

We encourage the IOM to remain engaged in the Dialogue's follow up by incorporating into its own work, agenda, and Strategy, the priority themes highlighted in the Dialogue's Declaration, 8-point plans presented by the UN Secretary General and by civil society, and in the discussions of the various roundtables. Canada sees the IOM as having particular roles to play in fostering managed migration, engaging in ways to reduce the costs of remittances, furthering ethical approaches to recruitment, and continuing its excellent work in improving the perceptions of migrants and of migration. And as a key overarching objective, the IOM – along with the rest of us – should continue to promote safe and orderly migration in ways that seek to maximize positive impacts on development. Finally, we also support the intent of the proposed resolution aimed at encouraging further IOM engagement in helping to define the fit of migration in the post-2015 development framework.

Canada also notes with satisfaction that the HLD gave impetus to further international collaboration to address gaps for dealing with **migrants in acute onset crisis situations**. It was the IOM who was one of the first to draw international attention to such gaps, brought into evidence primarily by the experience with the Libyan crisis, brought into further focus by its innovative and timely International Dialogue on Migration in 2012. While the new effort will be a states-led process, we would welcome IOM engagement. It is also important that this effort be positioned so as to complement existing binding international obligations, including relating to refugee protection and international humanitarian law. The focus should be on developing protocols and guidelines for responding to migrants, in particular when caught in countries experiencing crises. We regard the Migrant in Crisis Operational Framework as a good initial basis for giving definition to IOM's roles and responsibilities. At the same time, we encourage further efforts on IOM's part to define its approach and positioning with respect to broader **humanitarian** crises and operations through its development of a humanitarian policy framework, focused on IOM's role and partnerships. This should build on the initial progress made to enhance its collaboration with other humanitarian actors and coordinating structures, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

In terms of IOM broader engagement with international organizations, we welcome that this Council's High Level Segment is focussing on **the governance of international migration**, with the participation of Deputy Secretary General Eliasson, as well as the ILO, as chair of the Global Migration Group.

This is an opportune time to reflect upon the IOM's relationship with the UN, and accordingly we welcome the creation of a working group to conduct such **a review**. This review, in our view, should be based on a critical examination of current challenges, and develop recommendations which build on existing IOM strengths – including its regional and field-level engagement, its nimbleness, and flexibility - while not opening its fundamental, existing (non-normative) mandate. We continue to regard the IOM as the lead international organization dealing with migration and are convinced that the UN will be able to benefit further from the IOM's knowledge, experience and leadership in an issue which cross-cuts so many other global issues and challenges. However, we should also approach the review with the acknowledgement that bringing the IOM wholly into the UN is not the only, nor necessarily most desirable way to accomplish better synergies. And in the meantime, we welcome continued close cooperation between the GFMD and the IOM, and also between the IOM and the GMG and the Office of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Migration. Canada counts itself amongst those member states who believe the IOM should have a continuing role with respect to the GMG, including as a permanent co-chair. We welcome the ILO as the new chair of the **GMG** – which itself has an important mandate with respect to labour migration – and encourage its close collaboration and engagement with the IOM.

In sum, Chair, in many ways the IOM is at a turning point – in terms of capacity, in terms of important relationships, and in terms of its role with respect to a renewed global migration agenda. We hope to see a more strategic partner emerge from this, and we look forward to working with others, and IOM's capable senior management, to ensure that our common aspirations for the Organization are fulfilled.

Thank you.