

**106th Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration**

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**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF IRELAND**

Ambassador Patricia O'Brien

Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geneva

Mr Chairman,

Ireland associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. My delegation also congratulates Ambassador de Crombrughe on his election as chair.

The challenge of unmanaged migration has once more been brought home to us by the tragedies both at sea and on land this year, in which hundreds of migrants have perished. The devastating reports of these events have highlighted the human tragedy that is too often bound up with migration, and illustrate the importance of placing rights at the forefront of managing migration.

Indeed, it is now more important than ever to recognise what the Director General has often reminded us of – that migration is a process to be managed, rather than a problem to be solved. In this regard, I wish to thank the Director General for his skilful leadership and for continuing to speak out with a principled voice in defence of the rights of migrants, and in explaining the benefits that migration can bring to both sending and receiving countries.

In light of the unprecedented increase in complex migration flows towards Europe this year, Ireland welcomes the IOM Response Plan for addressing these flows in the Mediterranean. IOM's long experience in working with governments and partners on addressing migration-related challenges globally means that the organisation can suggest pragmatic and concrete priorities for coordinated action. My delegation commends the tireless work of IOM to facilitate the orderly and humane management of migration, and to uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants. We commend also your staff members in the field who undertake tremendous work, often at great personal risk.

Mr Chairman,

Migration is the story of human development; it is the essential thread running through all our histories. Ireland's global diaspora tells our story as an emigrant people while, at the same time, contemporary Ireland is enriched by the many immigrants that are contributing to Ireland's present and future. A small island at the periphery of Europe, that at one point sent forth almost half its population in starvation and fear to other countries, is now a magnet nation, and we're proud of that.

When migration is well-managed, it has the potential to bring lasting developmental benefits. In this regard, we welcome the inclusion in the 2030 Agenda of a target on facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration. We look forward to (Wednesday/tomorrow's) discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals and the IOM Migration Governance Framework, and welcome the inclusion of this item on the Council's agenda.

Achieving the SDGs is the surest way to tackle the root causes of irregular migration. Agreed actions to end hunger, reduce poverty and sustain our environment are critical to achieving long-term solutions. Underlining these actions is the protection of human rights, which provide the bedrock for functioning democracies and thriving societies.

Mr Chairman,

Migration emergencies, in particular those arising from conflict, require IOM's engagement in leading an international response. Furthermore, as highlighted at the recent Nansen Initiative Global Consultation, we are likely to see a global increase in the movement of people who seek to avoid the effects of sudden- and slow-onset disasters. In light of these predictions, the adoption of IOM's Principles for Humanitarian Action in April this year could not have been timelier. We highly value the unique role IOM plays in responding to the needs of people exposed to the impact of global challenges from a human mobility perspective. In particular, Ireland welcomes the recognition that affected people must remain - at least partly - drivers of their own resilience, recovery and development at household, community and national level throughout a crisis.

Mr Chairman,

Many of the factors driving migration are likely to intensify in the coming years. Ireland will continue to fully support the work of IOM to ensure that migration is managed in a coherent way, recognising the contribution of migration to the international economic, social and cultural landscape, and also that the human rights of migrants must be fully protected. Moreover, as we implement the 2030 Agenda, IOM's continued assistance and advocacy will be crucial to ensure that migration challenges are effectively addressed by the international community in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.