

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION
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Agenda Item 10
General Debate

PHILIPPINES

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Allow me at the outset, in behalf of the Philippine delegation, to congratulate you and the members of your Bureau for having been elected to the IOM leadership positions. We recognize the Ambassador Ghana for his work as Chair of the Council over the course of the last year. We welcome Sao Tome and Principe, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Eritrea, Saint Lucia, and Kiribati as new IOM member states.

Allow me also extend my delegation's appreciation to the IOM Director General, Ambassador Swing, and the officers and staff of the IOM, both here in Geneva and those at the field offices. We wish to thank them for their tireless efforts and utmost dedication in providing much needed services and assistance to migrants, sometimes even in precarious situations that endangered their safety, and with some, paying dearly with their lives.

My delegation appreciates the presentation of the comprehensive report of the Director General, which report succinctly described the context in which the organization operated - a context which is nothing but complex, challenging, and full of opportunities - and a testament to Ambassador Swing's excellent leadership that brought the IOM to great achievements.

Mister Chairman, my delegation expresses its full support for the programs and policies the organization had embarked on. In the particular, we wish to highlight our support for the budget strengthening policies and internal controls that the organization had adopted.

We view these reforms as timely and necessary as the IOM grows and expands the services it offers to migrants in support for the safe, orderly and regular migration and migration management.

We also welcome the efforts of the Administration to address the concerns on personnel gender and geographic balance. We eagerly await the follow up report on this matter during the spring session of the SPCF.

Mister Chairman, let me also stress our support for the capacity building efforts of the IOM, especially those in support to regional consultative mechanisms like the Colombo Process, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, and the Bali Process of which the Philippines is part of, to emergency situation responses and initiatives, such as the IOM's support to the Migrants in Countries in Crisis initiative which the Philippines and the United States of America co chairs, to transition and recovery programs, to migration and climate change, and to prevention of sexual and gender violence, among others.

Mister Chairman, in terms of coherence and change, allow me also to express our support for the continuing engagement, coordination, and partnership of the IOM with other UN agencies and international organizations such as the UNHCR and WHO, and the IPU. We also join other delegation in supporting the continuing engagement of the IOM, through the Director General and his team, with the UN, as our organization work to define and refine its relationship with the UN system.

We wish to note that our endorsement for the establishment of a multisectoral platform in support of migration and health, which we referred to in a joint statement we earlier read, is without prejudice to our recognition of the competence of other UN agencies, such as the WHO, in pursuing policies and programs in support of migrants' health.

Mr. Chairman, the coming year will be no less than complex and challenging, and full opportunities. Our community of nations just recently laid down the roadmap for sustainable development – the 2030 Development Agenda, where migration featured prominently. More importantly, it comprehensively addressed development needs and challenges.

We hope that the recent shift of attention to security from development with the recent spate of terrorist activities will be temporary and will not define migration policies. Rather, migration policies should begin with the acknowledgement that migrants have fundamental rights and the recognition of their positive contribution to the development of countries of origin, transit and destination.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. END.