

PHILIPPINES

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION 107th IOM Council Meeting 5-8 December 2016

General Debate

1. 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.
2. We thank the Ambassador of ~~Australia~~ ^{Belgium} for his work as Chair of the Council over the course of the last year. We welcome Kingdom of Tonga as newest IOM member. We also welcome the 18 new observer organizations.
3. My delegation appreciates the work of IOM Director General, Ambassador William Lacy Swing and the officers and staff of the IOM, both here in Geneva and those at the field offices. We wish to thank you for your tireless efforts and utmost dedication in providing much needed services and assistance to migrants.
4. My delegation wishes to highlight the sacrifices of the IOM field personnel, particularly those responding to crisis, for continuing to perform their duties even in difficult and precarious situations, which had endangered their safety and in certain cases, their lives. Oftentimes, they are the only remaining beacons of hope for those migrants caught in crisis situation.
5. My delegation takes note with appreciation the achievements of the IOM in the course of last year, including the continuing expansion of the IOM membership¹ and the inclusion of IOM in UN family. These are but testaments to Ambassador Swing's excellent leadership.
6. Similarly, we welcome the presentation of the comprehensive report of the Director General. We join him in expressing concern on the "increasing tendency towards narrow nationalism" and rising "rhetoric of fear against migration and migrants, amid a backdrop of large migration flows". We see this development as a complex challenge.
7. But we also believe that it is also full of opportunities.
8. We agree with the Director General that it is now incumbent upon IOM member states to pursue work towards a renewed appreciation of migrants for their collective and individual contributions to society and influencing public

¹ IOM was established in December 1951 and began its operations in early 1952 as the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration. Its Constitution was adopted on 19 October 1953 and came into force on 30 November 1954. The Organization was renamed the IOM effective 14 November 1989. In 21 November 2013 the current governance structures were approved. IOM has now 165 Member States with presence in 400 locations in over 150 countries.

discourse on migrants and migration to a more balanced and historically accurate narrative.

9. For the Philippines, the discourse 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.

10. The Philippines views the process of leading to the adoption of Global Compact on Safe Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018 as one of these opportunities.

11. Like most States, the Philippines would want to see that the Global Compact will not just be mere reiteration of existing norms or restatement of existing international human rights and humanitarian laws. We would like to see a Global Compact focused on implementing the shared responsibilities among States for the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of migrants, with actionable commitments grounded on practice and with the means of implementation and review.

12. The Philippines considers the promotion of the welfare and protection of the rights of migrants as a priority concern and in this regard reiterates its full commitment to actively and constructively engage in forging this Global Compact, contributing our best practices, distilled from almost half a century of experience on migration governance and management.

13. My delegation welcomes the mandate given to IOM to provide not only secretariat support and services but also technical and policy expertise to the negotiations and consultations for the Global Compact. The Philippines would strongly support an IOM Council resolution in this regard.

14. Similarly, the Philippines strongly support, in the UN modalities resolution on the Global Compact, the recognition of the leading role of the IOM in the support structure. As appropriate, we will also join other States in supporting the appointment of DG Swing, as Secretary General of the Conference.

15. Mister Chairman, my delegation takes note of the report of the Chairperson of Working Group on IOM– UN Relations and the IOM Strategy. We support the decision that the Working Group should continue its work. We also support the conclusion of the Chairperson of the WG to postpone decisions on whether or how the Global Compact should be included in the Working Group's work.

16. The Philippines also 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 continuing timely and necessary budget strengthening policies and internal controls that the organization had adopted. These reforms are essential as the IOM membership grows and its service to migrants and migration management expand.

17. The Philippines welcomes the assistance of the IOM in the MICIC initiative as it embarks on implementing the capacity building activities for States at the national and regional levels. My delegation hopes that IOM would continue to support the MICIC initiative.

18. Finally, Mister Chairman, the Philippine delegation welcomes the commitment of the Administration to address concerns on personnel gender and geographic balance, especially in the higher positions in the Organization. The Philippines recognizes that gender and geographic equity of staff is an ongoing challenge for the IOM. We join other member States in highlighting this concern until it is fully addressed.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. **END.**