



## REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

### **Statement by Zambia to the 107<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of IOM.**

**Geneva, 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

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**Thank you Chairman,**

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Zambia, my delegation and indeed, on my own behalf I wish to take this opportunity to commend you for your leadership shown in the handling the deliberations of this meeting. We also commend the bureau and the IOM Secretariat should also be commended for the good work and support. You can be rest assured of my delegation's support in discharging your mandate.

Further, my delegation wish to join others in congratulating the IOM on its 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and commends the Director-General and his entire team on the successful process leading the admission of the Organization to the UN family. We are therefore, proud to participate in this important meeting along with other states present.

Zambia would like to extend its warm welcome to the Kingdom of Tonga with heartfelt congratulations on its admission to the IOM.

Zambia commends the IOM for its tenacity in dealing with the migration of displaced people across the globe. We value the Organization's active participation in major events in 2016 such as the World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul in May as well as Summit for Refugees and Migrants held in New York in September, to name a few.

**Chairman,**

As you are aware Zambia has continued to be a transit country as well as destination for migrants mostly from the Horn of Africa and beyond. The movements in this context are mixed migrations comprising both refugees and economic migrants seeking safety and better opportunities in Zambia and the rest of the Southern African region, South Africa in particular.

In this regard emphasis is placed on the need for the continued improvement of the country's Border Management System. That IOM will remain an important partner in the program and Zambia is looking forward to resuscitation of the program.

Zambia cannot overemphasize the importance of IOM in promptly addressing the challenges associated with large movements of displaced families and individuals.

In this regard my delegation values the New York Declaration as an important milestone, signifying Zambia's political commitment to the issues discussed at the New York Summit. It has also gone further by calling for the establishment of the Global Migration Compact.

The formulation of the Global Migration Compact should however be based on consolidating the many fragmented efforts that do exist in this field. We are therefore, eager to see what the continent is likely to benefit from an expected comprehensive, coherent and concise Global Migration Compact.

It is worth noting that Zambia's participation at the New York Summit was signified by the involvement of our Republican President, His Excellency Edgar Chagwa Lungu, who chaired one of the Round Table Sessions. He also, on behalf of the Zambian people, made commitments on behalf of the country which culminated into the New York Declaration. This shows the high level of commitment Zambia has to the process of developing the Global Migration Compact.

As we have learnt, the drivers of global migration are various and include among other things, security challenges and regional instability; deteriorating economic and social environments; poverty and unemployment and climate change; all which threaten livelihoods.

Currently, Zambia hosts about 53 000 refugees of most of whom are former Angolan refugees, still considered persons of concern. The rest are from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia.

The relative peace in our sub region has enabled us to focus on the voluntary repatriation of Angolan and Congolese refugees in the last 14 years leading to a remarkable reduction in our refugee population in the country from about 300 000 in 2002 to what it is today.

The Zambian government is currently providing Local Integration as a durable solution to former Angolan and Rwandan refugees who wish to adopt Zambia as their new home. Voluntary repatriation is still identified as the best solution for individuals and families willing to exercise this option.

We are on course in meeting the pledge made in December 2011 regarding the conclusion of the protracted situation of former Angolan refugees,

having screened and approved more than 10,000 former Angolan refugees for Local Integration against a target fifteen thousand.

Former Angolan and Rwandan refugees are being given alternative legal status and are receiving various legal documents, including permanent residence. The small numbers of new asylum seekers arriving in the country now are mainly from the eastern DRC and Somalia.

In view of the political instability in some countries in the Southern and Central African region, the Zambian government, together with the IOM Office in Zambia and UNHCR, has been involved in the formulation of a Contingency Plan to deal with a possible emergency refugee crisis.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I should mention that Zambia remains committed to continuing its collaboration with IOM and looks forward to engagement in other programs that would promote and facilitate safe, regular and dignified movements of migrants regardless of their legal status.

**I thank you.**