

STATEMENT BY Mr. PEDRO LUIS PEDROSO CUESTA, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 108th SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

28 November 2017, Geneva

Mr. Director General

Ms. Deputy Director General,

Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates,

It is a high honor for me to address this 108th session of the Council of the International Organization for Migration, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cuba, on the occasion of the official admission of our country as a full member of this Organization. We thank the members of the IOM for approving Cuba's request to be part of the membership of this important institution.

I also make the occasion appropriate, in the name of my Government, to recognize and express our gratitude to IOM for the support received in different opportunities and in different situations in which we have counted on the assistance and cooperation of this entity, which has contributed to forge a relationship of mutual trust, understanding and respect that has allowed us to reach this historical moment.

Mr. Director General,

Upon entering as a full member of the International Organization for Migration, Cuba ratifies its willingness to continue building a close relationship with it and its willingness to work to contribute to the achievement of the purposes of IOM, aware of the importance of fostering dialogue and international cooperation to face the challenges posed by the growing complexity of this phenomenon, as well as to promote a better understanding of migratory issues and respect for human dignity and the well-being of migrants.

Cuba hopes that its adhesion to IOM will offer the opportunity for more active interaction with its Member States, in order to foster and contribute to an open and balanced debate on migration and its underlying causes, particularly when these are the result of the different levels of development among countries, poverty, lack of opportunities, the severe impacts of climate change or armed conflicts, among other causes.

We live today in an extraordinarily complex world, in which migration has become a phenomenon of global reach and consequences. Therefore, IOM offers an essential space for debate and cooperation in order to help States to face the challenges of irregular migration and for the exchange of information and good practices in the management of migration.

Cuba feels honored to be able to belong to the IOM family and will work to contribute to the treatment of an issue that due to its universality and impact is of common interest. In this context, we reaffirm our commitment to safe, orderly and regular migration.

Mr. Director General,

We all have the moral responsibility to bequeath to future generations a world with fewer inequalities, in which there are no restrictive and xenophobic measures, a world without physical and discriminatory barriers just for the fact of being a migrant. We must work together to achieve a world in which the countries with greater development honor their commitments and fulfill the moral duty to help the development of those who have served to build their wealth.

The mental and physical walls that are raised today will not be enough protection for the accumulated wealth of those who look the other side today, nor will be the solutions to contain the valid aspirations of the millions of people who have nothing or who have lost everything and that only aspire to have a life with decent conditions.

Let us work together for that world in which there is space and dignified living conditions for all. The Government of Cuba is committed to that purpose.

Thank you very much.