

108TH IOM COUNCIL SESSION: 28TH NOVEMBER – 1ST DECEMBER, 2017

AGENDA ITEM 9: GENERAL DEBATE

STATEMENT OF THE AFRICA GROUP DELIVERED BY GHANA ON
TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER, 2017

Thank you, Mr Chair.

Ghana has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Africa Group,

Mr. Chair,

Human mobility and free movement of all persons within the African continent constitute one of the pillars of an integrated Africa as envisioned in the African Union Agenda 2063. The commitment shown by African States this year towards the realization of this goal continues to yield good results.

On this note the Group commends the Government of Uganda, the African Union, and IOM for jointly hosting the 3rd Pan African Forum on Migration in Kampala in May of this year on the theme ***"Towards an African Common Position on the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration"***. The Forum produced a draft outcome document that reflected some of Africa's priorities and concerns as inputs to the Global Compact on Migration negotiations to be adopted in 2018.

The Group expresses appreciation to IOM for its continuous support to African States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECS) on the continent for the holding of national and regional consultations on the Global Compact on Migration which has witnessed a surge in the last couple of months. In this regard, the Africa Group calls upon the IOM and other relevant actors and partners to support African States in the follow-up on the outcomes and implementation mechanisms resulting from the GCM in line with continental, regional and national priorities.

To this end, we welcome the decision by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco to host the Intergovernmental Conference to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in December 2018.

While noting with regret the deplorable conditions and ill-treatment of African Migrants in Libya, the Africa Group commends the collaborative efforts of the African Union and IOM for the joint visit to Tripoli over the weekend to assess the situation to aid possible remedies going forward.

The Africa Group highly welcomes the condemnation by the Libyan Government of National Accord of the recent violation of the human rights of African migrants in Libya by unidentified smuggling groups, including the investigations already launched by the Libyan Attorney-General with the view of bringing the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice.

The work done by IOM to repatriate stranded African migrants this year is commendable. We note in particular the Assisted Voluntary Return of over 13,000 African migrants to their countries of origin this year alone, as well as efforts to scale up and expedite the return of another 15,000 migrants from Libya by end of the year. The Africa Group therefore recognizes the imperative need for the African Union and its member States to work with the Libyan Government of National Accord to improve the conditions and ill-treatment of African migrants in Libya.

The Group also recognizes the need for African States to provide the necessary support and assistance to IOM, including inter alia consular services, identification and issuance of travel documents, and to grant landing rights to IOM emergency evacuation flights to expedite the voluntary return of migrants currently stranded in Libya.

To conclude, Mr. Chair, the Group cannot help but laud the Director-General's efforts towards achieving universal membership of the Organisation which continue to bear good fruit. We welcome today the Republic of Cuba and Cook Islands to the IOM family, as well as the observership of Kuwait to the Organisation.

I thank you.