

## THE 108TH SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL

Geneva (28 November - 1 December 2017)

Thank you chair.

With Australia's time as a member of the Council Bureau now concluded, we would like to warmly congratulate you, ambassador, together with the other bureau members, on your respective appointments.

We look forward to working closely with the Bureau during what will be an important period for IOM. We also welcome, as members, the Republic of Cuba and the Cook Islands, and Kuwait as an observer.

Chair, Australia considers IOM to be the lead global agency on migration now and in the future – full stop.

There are other agencies that deal with elements of migration, but there is no other body that deals exclusively with migration.

There is no other agency that can provide practical, real-time support and assistance across all levels – national, regional and global.

This position, which Australia held before there was a compact on the horizon, needless to say will inform our approach to the upcoming stocktaking meeting in Mexico and to the negotiations on the compact next year.

Director General, allow me to express Australia's appreciation for your leadership.

Under your guidance, IOM's membership has increased from 125 to 168 and the organisation has witnessed a remarkable growth in activity globally.

And, of course, IOM has successfully entered the UN system, which adds another dimension to its important work in assisting states to build their capacity to manage migration, to conduct confidence-building dialogue, and to share with one another examples of best practice.

IOM can bring to the UN an example of an organisation that is responsive, flexible and able to get things done not despite being practical and non-normative, but because of it.

And we believe this is a model the UN would do well to understand, appreciate and draw lessons from.

Chair, Australia is a nation built on migration.

One in four Australians alive today was born overseas – which is one of the highest percentages in the OECD.

We have and continue to realise the benefits of migration through a carefully managed approach, linking migration to labour market needs especially, having in place sound integration strategies, and effective border management.

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Critically, public confidence in the benefits of migration remains strong and this confidence is the bedrock of our ability to be a global leader in providing safe, regular and orderly pathways and as one of the world's most generous refugee resettlement countries.

Chair, Australia places a high value on its relationship with IOM.

IOM's delivery of migration management, capacity building, and humanitarian assistance both globally and within the Asia Pacific region form a key part of Australia's approach to managed migration.

Together, we deliver numerous services around the world to ensure the effective, efficient and humane management of migration for the benefit of all.

In 2016-17, Australia was proud to contribute funds to IOM to deliver capacity building activities, including

- the provision of services for refugees in Cambodia,
- training for Iraqi and Jordanian border control authorities,
- document verification services throughout Africa,
- capacity building in migration management in Papua New Guinea,
- as well as assisted passage, medical and related services for refugee entrants and humanitarian applicants under Australia's offshore Humanitarian Programme.

As we close 2017, I would like to thank the Director General and his staff around the world for their continued high standards of work, in often trying circumstances.

We look forward to our continued close engagement at all levels with the organisation.

Thank you