

## IOM Council

### Australia's National Statement

Thank you chair.

Firstly I would like to warmly congratulate you, Director General, together with the other Bureau members, on your respective election and appointments. Australia looks forward to working closely with you and the Bureau throughout your term, which is shaping up to be an important period for the IOM.

Chair, Australia highly values the IOM, and we reaffirm its status as the lead global agency on migration. No other agency deals with all aspects of migration, or provides the breadth of support and expertise globally on migration issues, that the IOM offers.

Australia appreciates the IOM's capacity to operate flexibly, responsively, and efficiently, and we encourage the IOM to retain its pragmatic outlook, even as it enters this new phase in its history as a UN organisation and as Chair of the UN Migration Network.

We see much of the IOM's success comes from its ability to build consensus and promote flexible solutions. It is for these reasons the IOM has become a partner of choice for Australia – a partnership we are keen to further strengthen in the coming years.

We welcome the IOM's shift from an agency exclusively focussed on project-based migration and humanitarian work, to one that leads on the formulation of robust migration policy to support Member States in exercising their sovereign prerogatives.

Chair, as you will be aware, the Australian Government recently announced that Australia would not be adopting the Global Compact for Migration, and will not be attending the ceremonial adoption at Marrakech.

But let me be clear: while we were disappointed that the final Compact was not something we could support, Australia remains steadfast in our commitment to international cooperation on migration. Australia is a world leader on migration, and we will continue to work with our regional and international partners, and with the IOM, to promote best practice, to champion proven and effective responses to irregular migration, people smuggling and trafficking, and to reaffirm the social and economic benefits of regular migration.

We remain committed to being a strong and ongoing contributor to the international dialogue on migration issues.

Throughout the development of the Compact, Australia strongly supported the IOM having a lead role in relation to follow-up and implementation. And we welcome what the IOM chairing the UN Migration Network represents: recognition of the organisation's world-leading role on migration policy and practice.

However, Chair, we do sound a note of caution in relation to the IOM's role both within the UN system more broadly, and as chair of the UN migration network in particular. While we warmly welcome the depth of expertise the IOM will bring to this role, we would not wish to see a singular emphasis on implementation of the Compact come at the expense of the IOM's other important, project-based work, and its flexible, responsive and Member-State focused approach to international migration.

Chair, Australia is, at its core, a migrant nation. Nearly half of our population of 25 million was born overseas or has at least one parent born overseas.

We are among the most successful cohesive, societies in the world, and we pride ourselves on our non-discriminatory migration and humanitarian programs.

Australia's migration policies are crucial to sustaining public confidence and social cohesion. Our strong border protection policies have disrupted people smuggling and prevented vulnerable people risking their lives at sea.

Effective border management underpins and facilitates mobility, and allows realisation of the benefits of migration, while reducing the risks associated with irregular movements.

The IOM's delivery of support globally—and particularly in the Asia-Pacific—spanning migration management, capacity building, and humanitarian assistance, represents a major component of Australia's practical approach to managed migration.

I would like to thank the Director General and IOM staff across the globe for their exemplary efforts, reflected across all aspects of the IOM's work, which is delivered in often challenging circumstances.

The IOM continues to prove itself as an organisation whose growth and evolution reflects the needs of its Members, and we look forward to our continued close engagement at all levels of the organisation.

Thank you