

*109. session of the IOM Council, general debate*

*28 November 2018*

*Statement by Denmark*

*Check against delivery*

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Chair, Director General, Distinguished delegates,

Aligning with the EU statement, let me welcome the Director General at his first IOM council.

Chair,

Migration is a global phenomenon, presenting both challenges and opportunities to people on the move, countries and the international community as a whole.

Denmark recognizes that safe, orderly and regular migration can be a catalyst for growth, welfare and stability, whereas irregular migration can have negative political and economic consequences for countries of transit, destination and origin.

We see a clear link between strengthening global migration management and effectively preventing irregular migration. We would like to reiterate our strong conviction that managing irregular migration and fulfilling human rights obligations go hand in hand. By working through a human rights-based approach, we regard the 2030 Agenda as the main vehicle to address root causes of irregular migration and to ensure human rights of migrants in vulnerable situations, including women and girls.

We reiterate the fundamental importance of maintaining a clear distinction between migrants and refugees in order not to put the international regime for the protection of refugees at risk.

Chair,

The Danish government is a strong supporter of multilateralism.

The GCM presents a common approach at global level to addressing the challenges of irregular migration and seize the opportunities of regular migration.

While it remains the sovereign right of states to determine their national migration policy in conformity with international law, we clearly need international cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration.

We therefore see the GCM as a useful and timely framework for improving international cooperation on migration, including preventing irregular migration and fighting smuggling and trafficking, which entail immense human tragedies.

We stress the obligation of all States to duly receive and readmit their own nationals and the facilitation thereof. We welcome that this is a cornerstone in the GCM as it is an essential element of well-functioning global migration management.

Chair,

During last year's Council, we adopted the resolution 1358 marking the first anniversary of IOM's entry into the UN system. In that connection IOM's member states made a strong call for IOM's continued role as the global lead agency on migration.

Against this background, we are pleased that IOM has been designated as the coordinator of the UN Migration Network and welcome IOM's role in the implementation of and follow-up to the GCM.

We support IOM in its new tasks and we trust that IOM will continue to ensure constructive and transparent cooperation with member states and relevant agencies – in full respect of existing mandates – as well as with civil society and the private sector.

We do stress the need for maintaining IOM's core competencies in areas such as the well-functioning AVRRE programmes. These traditional core tasks are in full convergence with IOM's new responsibilities in the UN system.

Finally, we attach importance to IOM's character as a responsive, efficient, cost-effective, and independent agency with an effective field presence and as a *non-normative*, but *norm-based*, organization.

Chair,

We know that IOM faces challenges. IOM has been given new responsibilities in the UN system and also experienced growth on a number of parameters, not least the amount of projects it undertakes. In addition, IOM will have to implement the important UNDS reform.

It is therefore timely to focus on ensuring that IOM's core structure is sufficiently supported. We particularly see a need for strengthened internal capacities and internal governance as well as accountability and oversight mechanisms, budget reform and a continued focus on strengthening anti-corruption efforts and efforts to combat sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. We welcome regular updates on risk management and on the work of the Inspector General.

Denmark would also welcome a new organization strategy to be elaborated in consultation with member states and we encourage the development of a results

framework for measuring the impact of IOM's work. We know you do good work, but would like to see enhanced possibilities for assessing the impact of your work as well as a better focus on lessons learned.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Denmark's strong support to IOM as the global lead agency for migration. To this end, Denmark will provide core funding for IOM in the amount of 4 mio. USD this year and – subject to parliamentary approval – next year as well. We see a need for IOM to be less dependent on project funding and encourage other member states to provide core funding in order to allow IOM to live up to its new responsibilities and the expectations that comes with them.

I thank you.