

Mr. President,  
Mr. Director General,  
Madam Deputy Director General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Meeting 465  
Date 29.11.05  
Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Tape No. \_\_\_\_\_

May I take this opportunity to thank the International Organisation for Migration for granting us the observer status at the Council.

Islamic Relief was established in 1984 in Birmingham (UK) to act against a devastating famine in sub-Saharan Africa. It has since then grown into an international organization with 31 permanent offices addressing the needs of the poor worldwide without racial, religious, regional or cultural discrimination.

We are a neutral, impartial and financially independent organisation, receiving (80 to 90 %) of funds from voluntary contributions and private donors mostly in Europe and the USA. While the remaining revenue comes from governmental or United Nations agencies.

At the beginning, Islamic Relief focused its efforts on providing emergency relief for victims of conflicts and natural disasters. Soon, it was realized that providing short term relief was not enough. People in need should be given the means to support themselves in the long term. The

focus then moved on to include long term projects such as providing clean water, health services, education as well as encouraging local communities to set up enterprises to support themselves via micro credit programs.

To maximize the impact of these projects, Islamic Relief has built alliances with numerous United Nations organizations (UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, UNDP etc), with governmental agencies (ECHO, DFID, SIDA), as well as many NGOs (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, OXFAM, CARE International, Save the Children etc.). Since 1993, Islamic Relief enjoys consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

We are delighted to build a constructive and dynamic partnership with the International Organisation for Migration, being the leading Organisation in the domain of migration. In fact, there is a great potential of collaboration between us.

Firstly, providing rapid humanitarian aid to displaced populations affected by conflict situations and humanitarian emergencies, area in which Islamic Relief and IOM has a wide experience. An example of joint working is the current support for Pakistan earthquake victims.

Secondly, the return and reintegration of the internally displaced and refugees. Islamic Relief managed numerous returnees operations especially in Afghanistan, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Mali.

Thirdly, the establishment of economic and community development projects as well as providing community and micro-enterprise programmes, particularly on migration and development.

Finally, we can work together to implement capacity building projects through training and transfer of skills.

Therefore I am confident that the new partnership between Islamic Relief and the International Organisation for Migration will benefit both of us, but first and foremost will benefit all migrants around the World.

May I thank you once again and wish our 90<sup>th</sup> session all success.