



AUSTRALIA

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General Debate Statement

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**98TH IOM COUNCIL MEETING
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GENERAL DEBATE: Australian Statement

Mr Chairman, Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Laura Thompson on her election to the position of Deputy Director-General.

We value Ambassador Thompson's extensive experience in humanitarian assistance issues and have no doubt these qualities will benefit IOM and its membership.

Ambassador Thompson, Australia looks forward to working with you over the coming years and we extend our best wishes for a successful term of office.

Mr Chairman, now that the roles of Director General and Deputy Director General have been settled, Australia looks forward to a period of consolidation within IOM.

We value Director General Swing's consultative approach in progressing the priorities he announced upon taking office: improving partnerships with member states and international organisations; addressing human resource management issues and strengthening service delivery performance.

We see the structural review, ably led by Gervais Appave, as an important process which will assist IOM to achieve these objectives while maintaining its characteristics of responsiveness and flexibility, as well as retaining its global reach.

We would like to see IOM remain as a strong and efficient organisation that continues to deliver high quality services to its Member States. We acknowledge the limited resources available to IOM, and are concerned that future budget restraints will impact on IOM's ability to remain flexible and responsive to the needs of Member States.

Mr Chairman, Australia values IOM's ability to deliver a wide range of services. As an active country of migration and humanitarian settlement, Australia is a major purchaser of a wide range of IOM's services, such as cultural orientation, transport of humanitarian entrants and assisted voluntary return. We particularly value IOM's support in the management and care for irregular migrants in our region.

Managed, transparent migration is the best way to protect the rights of migrants and combat irregular migration flows which potentially leave migrant workers open to exploitation and risk.

Irregular migration highlights the need for closer cooperation between states and other key actors. Australia remains active in the region seeking to

implement stronger protection mechanisms with governments and international organisations.

Mr Chairman, A key element of our approach in this regard is our engagement with key regional consultative processes, such as the *Bali Process on People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Related Transnational Crime*, the *Asia Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants*, and the *Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference*.

Australia congratulates IOM for its role in facilitating the “Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration”, held in Bangkok in June, to which we were pleased to contribute. We believe the meeting highlighted the critical and increasingly sophisticated role RCPs play in fostering regional cooperative approaches to different migration issues.

Mr Chairman, Australia believes IOM is uniquely placed to assist governments to contribute toward the management of international migration.

Australia sees IOM's global presence, broad mandate, and fee-for-service project model as its key strengths, and would encourage IOM to retain these assets. Australia strongly values IOM's ability to flexibly deliver a wide range of services to assist us to achieve our migration policy objectives.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.