

98th Session of the IOM-Council
Statement of Director General Ambassador
Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger
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Director General, excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me first join in the **words of welcome for the new Deputy Director General Ambassador Laura Thompson**. Austria wishes her all the best for her new position and looks forward to closely cooperating with her.

I would like to start by **expressing my high appreciation and gratitude to the Director General** for his committed leadership, his adherence to the principle of member-state-ownership as well as his emphasis on dialogue and openness. Thanks to his open-minded approach he is rendering the organization even more efficient for the benefit of migrants.

Austria would also like to **commend the Director General for his ambitious initiative of launching major reforms** within IOM, in order to allow the organization to successfully deal with new challenges, many of which have arisen from the global crisis.

In his comprehensive statement the Director General has identified the main areas of impact on migration due to the global economic and social crisis. Austria shares the Director General's view that the impact of the crisis on migration should be carefully monitored. We consider it equally important to remain vigilant on the negative effects that are possibly still to come.

With regard to the Director General's outreach activities, Austria highly welcomes his close interaction with and involvement of various actors in the field of migration such as other International Organizations or Non-Governmental Organizations, the Global Forum for Migration and Development or the Global Migration Group. In this context I would like to **underline that Austria attaches great importance to a truly global migration organization** such as IOM.

Given the fact that migration issues are of increasing importance within the European Union Austria particularly **appreciates the Director General's interest in the discussion of migration policies at EU-level**, as well as his active participation in EU-related events.

In his statement the Director General also pointed out the **wide range of activities IOM carries out** around the world in order to respond to new challenges and Member-States' requests. Austria highly appreciates this impressive record of activities, which clearly reflects the Organization's

ability to adapt to new circumstances and to respond to requests by Member States.

With regard to Austria, I would like to mention one area of activity that is especially important to us, namely **counter-trafficking**. The Austrian Foreign Ministry, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, has initiated and carried out different activities in this field with the aim of raising greater awareness of human trafficking at the European level. We have thereby closely cooperated with the IOM-country office in Vienna as well as with the Vienna Migration Group.

In conclusion, let me thank the Director General, his Deputy as well as the dedicated staff of IOM for their commitment to offer invaluable help to migrants around the world, in order to ease suffering and pain whenever it is most needed. Austria wishes the Director General and his team well in their reform efforts and expresses her support for them. We look forward to continuing our excellent cooperation.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.