



CANADA

The Permanent Mission of Canada
to the United Nations
at Geneva

La Mission permanente du Canada
auprès des Nations Unies
à Genève

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STATEMENT

by

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to the

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INTERVENTION

de

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Mission permanente du Canada auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève

à la

98^e Session du Conseil
de l'Organisation internationale pour les Migrations
Genève, le 22-26 novembre 2009

Mister/Madam Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

First, I would like to congratulate Ms. Laura Thompson on her appointment as the new Deputy Director General of the IOM. Canada recognizes the breadth of Ms. Thompson's international experience and looks forward to working cooperatively with her; moreover, Canada would be very pleased to extend a formal invitation for Ms. Thompson to visit Ottawa in the near future.

Next Canada commends the progress that Ambassador Swing has made in reducing arrears in membership dues. This is a very positive step and a well timed one.

Looking at the IOM and global migration in 2009 there have been many changes in the last decade. As membership has expanded dramatically so has the range of activities. An expanded membership adds diversity. The increase in programs and activities makes IOM an increasingly indispensable provider of migrant services to individuals, stakeholders, and states. The exponential growth of IOM, however, does raise concerns around the organizational and governance structure - all the more pertinent with the impact of the global economic and financial crisis. Canada would like to acknowledge Director General Swing, and the significant contribution made under his leadership in advancing IOM restructuring toward a more efficient and better governed organization. Canada wishes to emphasize that restructuring efforts, to be successful, must maintain an overall focus on the best interests of the organization and those we serve, rather than any special interests of the individual members.

In the context of both the global economy and also the exercise of restructuring, Canada calls upon IOM to strenuously examine all aspects of the organization - its mandate, outreach, programs, membership, budget, staff numbers, assets and resources. The goal must be to improve efficiencies and reduce costs. The current global economic reality has many governments trying to mitigate recessionary impacts through programs of stimulus spending. At the same time the immediate and long term impacts are obvious and hopefully understood. As governments spend more so does it become necessary to seek all possible savings elsewhere. It becomes necessary to evaluate every program - to reduce that which is less important to be able to contribute to that which benefits more; moreover, in the long term governments will have to contemplate options to address expenditures and deficits through growth, taxation, restraint, or program review. It will be a long and challenging process which will demand strong stewardship. This will be a duty to be shared by our international stakeholders. It will not be enough to simply make modest the size of budget increases. If member governments are compelled domestically to make difficult decisions to reduce costs this will be equally expected of organizations funded by those same governments.

Across the globe many countries make use of the extensive and efficient range of migrant services offered by the IOM to enable effective management of the movement of people in support of immigration and humanitarian programs and policies. No longer as a niche issue, migration gathered global attention. Changes in demography, technology, and global economic markets are among many factors which bring migration to the fore of current global discussions. Increased attention encourages a diverse range of new stakeholders and new actors to engage in this sector bringing new ideas and new methodologies. Much of the change will be positive and dynamic. Traditionally IOM's strengths have included its "agility" - a flexibility and entrepreneurial spirit that has facilitated high quality services delivered to meet diverse needs. IOM must ensure that it continues to offer this high level of responsiveness - that it remains the leader in this sector. IOM must ensure that as much as possible it remains unencumbered by unnecessary bureaucratic restraints - that its mandate is not blunted by involvement in unnecessary activities or processes.

Canada values IOM independence. We understand that the administration is seeking in New York the support of some member states for a United Nations General Assembly resolution which attempts to have the IOM incorporated into consolidated reporting to the General Assembly. We also understand that IOM works closely with the UN-system and other organizations on migration and humanitarian operations; however, Canada believes that the administration has the responsibility to report primarily to its membership, which in a large percentage is represented at the UN as well. We note that this proposal for a UN General Assembly resolution has not been included in the Council's agenda for discussion. This is also an issue of concern to Canada.

Thank you, Mister/Madam Chair.