

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE**

**Twenty-third Session**

**REPORT OF THE**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE**

**ON THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION**

Geneva  
30 and 31 October 2018  
Rapporteur: Mr E.P. Garcia (Philippines)



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**REPORT OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE  
ON THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION**

**Introduction**

1. The Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance met at the Centre International de Conférences Genève for its Twenty-third Session on 30 and 31 October 2018. The Session was chaired by Mr Juan Eduardo Eguiguren (Chile). Three meetings were held.

2. The following Member States were represented.<sup>1</sup>

Afghanistan	Cyprus	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Romania
Albania	Czechia	Latvia	Senegal
Algeria	Denmark	Luxembourg	Serbia
Angola	Dominican Republic	Madagascar	Slovakia
Argentina	Ecuador	Maldives	South Africa
Australia	Egypt	Mali	South Sudan
Austria	El Salvador	Malta	Spain
Azerbaijan	Estonia	Mauritania	Sri Lanka
Bangladesh	Finland	Mexico	Sudan
Belarus	France	Montenegro	Sweden
Belgium	Georgia	Morocco	Switzerland
Benin	Germany	Mozambique	Togo
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Ghana	Nepal	Trinidad and Tobago
Botswana	Guatemala	Netherlands	Tunisia
Brazil	Guyana	New Zealand	Turkey
Bulgaria	Haiti	Niger	Ukraine
Cameroon	Holy See	Nigeria	United Kingdom
Canada	Honduras	Norway	United States of America
Chad	Hungary	Pakistan	Uruguay
Chile	India	Panama	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
China	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Paraguay	
Colombia	Israel	Philippines	Viet Nam
Congo	Italy	Poland	Yemen
Costa Rica	Jamaica	Portugal	Zimbabwe
Côte d'Ivoire	Japan	Republic of Korea	
Croatia	Jordan	Republic of Moldova	
	Kenya		

3. The Member States agreed to a request made by the delegate of the Permanent Delegation of the European Union and the Permanent Representative of Austria, on behalf of the European Union rotating presidency, that a representative of the European Union participate as an expert in the consideration of the relevant items of the provisional agenda (S/23/1).

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<sup>1</sup> The list of participants is contained in document S/23/12. Unless otherwise indicated, all documents and slide presentations are available on the Standing Committee section of the IOM website.

**I. Adoption of the agenda**

4. The Standing Committee adopted the agenda as contained in document S/23/1.

**II. Statement by the Director General**

5. The Director General welcomed participants to the Standing Committee's Twenty-third Session and made his first formal statement to the Committee as Director General, highlighting IOM's activities in response to current migration and humanitarian challenges and giving a brief overview of the agenda items to be discussed during the Session. The statement is contained in extenso in document S/23/13.

6. A number of Member States, noting the unprecedented challenges faced by the international community in the sphere of migration, welcomed the Director General to his new post and stressed their commitment to working with him and IOM for the benefit of migrants. Several representatives welcomed the new role of IOM as coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration and its part in supporting the future implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, with three highlighting the need for adequate resources and capacities to embrace those new opportunities. One participant highlighted the importance of recruiting quality staff and tackling the existing disparity in regional and national representation in the Professional category, while another called for the Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships and the IOM Office to the United Nations in New York to be strengthened.

7. The need to preserve the operational character of the Organization and continue its activities in the field was noted by two representatives: one emphasized the budgetary resources required to keep pace with the growth of operational activities and encouraged the Working Group on Budget Reform to continue its discussions, while the other stressed the need to maintain a clear distinction between refugees and migrants. One representative expressed the view that stronger global migration management, based on human rights principles, was linked to the effective prevention of irregular migration, the root causes of which should primarily be addressed through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Another representative said that efforts to achieve universal membership of IOM should continue and further cooperation should be developed with partners in the United Nations system to ensure the success of the Global Compact.

8. The representative of Norway announced that his Government would make an unearmarked voluntary contribution of USD 1.9 million in 2018, and had plans to make similar or larger contributions in future years, while another Member State committed to providing core funding in 2018 and encouraged other Members to do the same. One representative emphasized the need for ongoing, constructive dialogue between the Administration and Member States, in coordination with the United Nations system and other stakeholders, to meet the coming challenges, and expressed particular support for IOM and its activities.

9. Responding to the comments made, the Director General said that the implementation mechanisms of the Global Compact and the operation of the United Nations Network on Migration were still to be determined. IOM was involved in those debates and would act in consultation with Member States. The challenge of taking on those new responsibilities would be to adapt as needed while maintaining the Organization's existing activities, the majority of which were aligned with the objectives of the Global Compact. While implementation of the Global Compact would be led by Member States, IOM would use its flexibility to support them in that endeavour. He welcomed the financial contributions announced by Member States, which would help IOM adapt to the new challenges it faced. The encouraging words of support for IOM were particularly appreciated in view of ongoing discussions about the future of the Headquarters building in Geneva.

### **III. Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2018**

10. The Standing Committee had before it the Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2018 (C/109/9), which had to be considered in conjunction with the Programme and Budget for 2018 (C/108/6) and the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2018 (S/22/9).

11. The Administration reported that the Administrative Part of the Budget had increased from CHF 50,726,923 to CHF 50,728,318 due to the contributions of three new Member States that had become Members of the Organization in June 2018. The Administration proposed to use those additional funds for staff development and learning, as had been the case for the contributions of States that had joined IOM in the latter half of 2017.

12. The Operational Part of the Budget had increased from USD 1.491 billion to USD 1.806 billion, while the level of Operational Support Income (OSI) remained unchanged. This was because the OSI budget presented in the Programme and Budget projected the operational activities required to generate the anticipated income. The geographical breakdown of the Operational Part of the Budget showed increases in the budget level in all regions and for all projects and services, reflecting the requests made by Member States and donors.

13. One representative commended the efforts of IOM in the health sector and noted the comprehensive approach taken to humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons, which had contributed to social cohesion and should be extended in future years. Cash-based interventions were an efficient means of protecting human dignity, but should be adapted to local pricing.

14. The Administration, noting the comments made, said that IOM would continue to provide support as needed.

15. The Standing Committee recommended that the Council take note of the Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2018 (document C/109/9).

### **IV. Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights**

16. The Administration introduced the document entitled Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights (as at 30 September 2018) (C/109/5/Rev.2). Assessed contributions were calculated based on the assessment scale used by the United Nations, to which an equation factor was applied to reflect the smaller membership of IOM. The number of Member States subject to Article 4, as at 30 September 2018, had fallen by one since 22 June 2017, and payments had been received from a number of Members with arrears. Since the document had been prepared, payments towards the assessed contributions for 2018 had been received from Serbia, Slovakia, Sri Lanka and the United States of America. In order to facilitate the settling of arrears, payment plans could be negotiated with IOM. Members should make every effort to pay assessed contributions, since delayed payments affected the Organization's cash flow.

17. The Standing Committee took note of the contents of document C/109/5/Rev.2 and recommended that the Council endorse them.

## **V. Programme and Budget for 2019**

18. The Administration highlighted the key points set out in the document entitled Programme and Budget for 2019 (C/109/6). The Administrative Part of the Budget amounted to CHF 52,229,662, which included CHF 1,500,000 for the increase to the cost-sharing arrangement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group in line with General Assembly resolution 72/279 of 31 May 2018. The Operational Part of the Budget was based on confirmed funding and was currently estimated at USD 1,011.7 million, which was higher than in the Programme and Budget for 2018 (C/108/6). The level of OSI budgeted – USD 96 million – had been calculated based on previous years' results and current and expected trends.

19. One delegate welcomed the proposed Programme and Budget for 2019 but said that more attention should be given to the issue of remittances in countries affected by conflict or natural disasters; the high cost of sending remittances to such countries and the limitations of their banking systems were two key challenges that needed to be addressed. Another representative expressed support for the development of a new organizational strategy.

20. Two Member States expressed concern at the required increase in contributions under the cost-sharing arrangement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and requested further information on how the figure had been calculated, given that only a small proportion of the Organization's work was development-related. One Member State also observed that General Assembly resolution 72/279 called for different sources of funding for the new resident coordinator system, including voluntary contributions; as such, the IOM contribution to the cost-sharing arrangement should come partly from the Administrative Part of the Budget and partly from OSI.

21. One Member State, although welcoming the proposed additional posts in the Department of Operations and Emergencies, expressed disappointment that the core funding appeared to include funding for posts that were not part of the core structure of the Organization, while other core areas – including the investigative capacity of the Office of the Inspector General – remained under-resourced. The same Member State said that funding for the core structure, including for IT infrastructure and the development of appropriate oversight and management functions, should be prioritized, and he therefore urged the Administration to revise the Programme and Budget for 2019 accordingly.

22. Other delegates welcomed the proposed strengthening of the core structure, including the increased capacity of the Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships in response to the new role of IOM resulting from the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the establishment of the United Nations Network on Migration, with one also asking whether the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse was included in the core functions. One speaker underscored the importance of maintaining the Organization's essential characteristics, while at the same time developing its policy development and knowledge generation capacity, both of which would require funding and structural changes. It was important that the Organization received all the funding it needed; securing access to predictable, flexible and needs-based funding was essential in that respect. In addition, unearmarked or softly earmarked contributions greatly contributed to the effectiveness of an organization.

23. One Member State drew attention to some factual errors about her country in the services section of the document and requested that they be corrected in subsequent revisions of the Programme and Budget.



24. The Administration explained that the changes to the cost-sharing arrangement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group were beyond the control of IOM; the contributions of all participating organizations had doubled as a result of the ongoing United Nations reform process. The distribution of the costs was calculated based on a formula that took into account the number of staff and the level of development-related expenses. IOM's contribution amounted to 4 per cent of the total figure. The cost of the repositioning of the resident coordinator system was significantly higher than Member States' assessed contributions and comprised: a coordination levy of 1 per cent on tightly earmarked third-party non-core contributions to United Nations development-related activities; the doubling of the current United Nations Sustainable Development Group cost-sharing arrangement among United Nations development system entities; and voluntary, predictable, multi-year contributions to a dedicated trust fund. It reminded the Standing Committee that through Council Resolution No. 1318 of 30 June 2016 on the cost implications of a strengthened relationship between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration, Member States had agreed to pay the costs associated with IOM's joining the United Nations system through the Administrative Part of the Budget. The Administration therefore proposed to cover the increased costs in the same manner.

25. In terms of the core structure, the Administration explained that since the completion of the budget-strengthening plan, IOM, in collaboration with Member States, had begun to review the funding of the core structure through the Working Group on Budget Reform, which had developed indicators to demonstrate areas of stress on the Organization's budget. That work had been temporarily paused during the transition from one Director General to another in order to enable the new Director General to assess the needs of the Organization and identify areas that could be streamlined; proposals for discussion would be presented to the Working Group on Budget Reform in due course. It reminded the Standing Committee that the Programme and Budget was developed through a bottom-up approach: all Country Offices and units at Headquarters submitted requests for funding, which were subsequently reviewed at the regional and Headquarters levels. Recommendations were then made to the Director General by senior management and the Regional Directors for decision. The Programme and Budget therefore responded to needs identified during that process, but that did not discount other needs, such as the need to increase the investigative capacity of the Office of the Inspector General. In terms of the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, one of the proposed positions in the Department of Operations and Emergencies was related to that function.

26. The Deputy Director General added that a thorough review of the internal governance system had been started and would continue in the coming months; that process included consideration of existing frameworks and strategies and the interlinkages between them, and the level of controls in place and how effective they were. As mentioned by the Director General in his opening statement, the Programme and Budget for 2019 should be viewed as a transitional budget. However, the Administration had noted the comments of Member States and they would be taken into account during the yearly budgetary process.

27. The Standing Committee took note of the Programme and Budget for 2019, as set out in document C/109/6, and recommended that the Council approve CHF 52,229,662 for the Administrative Part of the Budget and USD 1,011.7 million for the Operational Part of the Budget.

28. One Member State expressed reservations regarding the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2019 as the document did not fully respond to the Organization's oversight requirements, particularly in relation to investigative capacity. In response, the Director General assured the Member State in question that the Administration would work to address the concerns raised before the next meeting of the Council.

## **VI. Progress report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations**

29. The Administration introduced the document entitled Report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations (S/23/7), highlighting the key points of the document. Drawing attention to the three types of audit undertaken by the External Auditor – certification, performance and compliance – and the activity areas and Regional and Country Offices that had been audited since 2013, it explained that 41 recommendations had been closed during 2017 and 52 recommendations remained outstanding. The relatively high number of outstanding recommendations was due to diverse audit approaches between different audit teams, the increase in the size and complexity of the Organization and the number of high-level, strategic recommendations, which required time and resources to implement. The Administration intended to implement 23 of the outstanding recommendations by the end of 2018, 26 by the end of 2019 and the remaining 3 by the end of 2020. Those planned for 2020 were related to large, organization-wide issues, such as the implementation of the centralized financial coordination platform.

30. One delegate, commending the Administration for the user-friendliness of the annex to the document, and the progress made in implementing the External Auditor's recommendations, asked whether the Administration had considered producing a consolidated list of recommendations from the different control bodies, as there was often overlap between the recommendations. Another speaker welcomed IOM's intentions to develop a long-term organizational strategy and looked forward to reviewing the fraud prevention and financial management manuals. In addition, he hoped that appropriate guidelines on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse would be included in the charter on ethics and conduct. The same speaker asked whether there had been any discussion of prioritization in the implementation of the outstanding recommendations and whether any resources had been identified to support implementation.

31. The representative of one Member State reiterated his concern that the Programme and Budget for 2019 did not sufficiently respond to the findings of the External Auditor regarding the need to increase the investigative capacity of the Office of the Inspector General.

32. The Administration said that the Organization looked at the applicability of recommendations across all areas of the Organization's work and endeavoured to harmonize its responses in order to avoid the duplication of efforts. Prioritization of the recommendations did occur to a certain extent, but all recommendations were considered to be of great importance; prioritization was mainly governed by the time frames needed to address the recommendations. It acknowledged the concern expressed regarding the investigative capacity of the Office of the Inspector General and assured the Standing Committee that those comments would be taken into consideration in future revisions of the Programme and Budget.

33. The Deputy Director General acknowledged that more investigative capacity was needed. However, that issue was not limited to IOM; the United Nations system as a whole had insufficient capacity for investigations. In the case of IOM, adding one or two more posts would not be sufficient; consideration also needed to be given to the efficiency of existing controls and the possibility of automatizing some of those controls. A review of the internal governance structure had been started, but more time was needed for that review to be completed.

34. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/7 entitled Report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations.

## **VII. Update on risk management**

35. The Administration, in presenting the document entitled Risk management update (S/23/11), underlined that risk management, while a fairly new concept in IOM, had become part of the culture through the introduction of a mandatory risk management framework and its subsequent integration into project management, decision-making and business processes. The work of aligning the risk management framework with guidance from the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission had highlighted the importance of ensuring that staff understood the reasons behind changes in organizational culture and the need to take responsibility for the risk associated with their areas of work. A clear strategy and objectives were needed, alongside an understanding of how organizational context affected the risk profile. The aim was to move away from complete risk avoidance to better management of and responses to risk through the establishment of a culture of risk awareness.

36. In response to a request for clarification from the floor, the Deputy Director General said that the report had been presented to the Committee in the interests of transparency. While the Committee had welcomed the presentation of information on risk management in the past, that practice could be amended if Member States preferred.

37. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/11.

## **VIII. Update on plans for the IOM Headquarters building**

38. The Administration delivered a slide presentation supplementing the information contained in document S/23/8, entitled Update on proposed plans for the IOM Headquarters building, to respond to comments made by delegations at informal consultations prior to the present Standing Committee Session and to explain some of the reasons for the increased cost. Within the construction industry, the detailed project costs tended to be around 25 per cent higher than the initial assessment of costs. There was no ceiling on the total mortgage amount that could be requested from the Government of Switzerland, as each application was considered based on the merits of the case presented. A comparable project carried out by an organization of a similar size to IOM had cost CHF 59 million. In addition, consultations with other international organizations currently carrying out building projects had shown the value of including an audit and risk management function from the start of the project. Additional information was provided on the number of staff members housed at IOM Headquarters over the previous ten years, which showed that staffing levels had increased by 36 per cent since 2008. The figure specified in document S/23/8 – 600 staff members – would not be reached overnight, but would ensure that the Organization had the capacity to accommodate additional staff over time.

39. Member States expressed appreciation for the additional information provided since the Twenty-second Session of the Standing Committee and acknowledged the urgent need for improved and increased office space at Headquarters. One delegate observed that it would have been useful to have received more detailed information on all of the five building options for Member States to have made an informed decision on the matter. The same delegate stressed that the office relocation process should not affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization. A number of Member States urged the Administration to continue to consult with other international organizations in Geneva that were currently in the middle of construction and/or renovation projects in order to draw upon the lessons learned and best practices employed by those organizations, with one expressing concern that the current estimated costs seemed low in comparison to other such projects. Two representatives asked whether accessibility would be a consideration in the design of the building, as that issue was not referenced in document S/23/8. One Member State requested the Administration to provide a detailed project timeline, including proposed deadlines and milestones.

40. In terms of the proposed governance structure, a number of speakers suggested that, rather than establishing a new body, it would be preferable to use one of the existing working groups for Member State oversight of the project. The Working Group on Budget Reform was the most logical forum in that respect, as its terms of reference included a provision on reviewing and addressing other specific budgetary challenges faced by the Organization. One delegate expressed concern that the proposed steering committee, which would include representatives of Member States, would be, in effect, under the authority of the Director General. Member States did not necessarily have the technical and operational expertise to be involved in the work of such a committee and should not be included in such a structure. If Member States wished to nominate a small number of States to monitor the project more closely, that could be done through the establishment of a working or advisory group or the use of an existing structure, without that group being integrated into the project management structure itself. Such a group should appear on the left-hand side of the organigramme contained in document S/23/8. Another delegate suggested that, if the governance structure proposed in the document were to be used, further consideration should be given to the number of Member States included in the steering committee. A further representative underscored the importance of balancing the need for transparency with that for expediency when designing the governance structure.

41. One speaker observed that it was important to move to the next phase of the project, namely the detailed analysis of the requirements of the Organization, in order to update the projected costs, which should incorporate estimates of all costs, including rental and moving costs during the building phase, and the costs of, inter alia, conference room and cafeteria infrastructure and equipment. Many delegates stressed that a more detailed plan of the project costs would be needed before a final decision could be taken and requested more information on the mortgage application process, with one observing that the costs should be included in the Programme and Budget as soon as possible. Another delegate, noting the proposal to cover unforeseen costs through drawdowns from the OSI reserve mechanism, said that, given the importance of the migration agenda, the levels of that mechanism should be maintained; all of the costs for the Headquarters building project should be included in the total amount of the mortgage application. IOM should hire a construction specialist to manage the next stages of the project and establish a project management team, the budget for which should be partially integrated into the Administrative Part of the Budget.

42. The Administration stressed that transparency would be a key part of the project; Member States would be updated during every step of the project and their input at all stages would be greatly welcomed.

43. The Deputy Director General acknowledged the need to include all of the expected costs of the project in the information provided to Member States and explained that, in order to undertake a detailed study of IOM's requirements and the expected costs, funding would be needed. Such funding could be obtained as part of the mortgage application to the Government of Switzerland. Unless the application process was started, it would not be possible to begin the study. Once that study was completed, the detailed cost estimates would be presented to Member States for final approval. She welcomed Member States' comments on the proposed governance structure and assured them that they would be taken into consideration. Responding to a question from the floor, she clarified that, the mortgage application would be submitted to the Government of Switzerland, and the Government would send it to the Swiss parliament for consideration as part of the approval process.

44. In response to amendments proposed by two Member States to the draft resolution contained in Annex II of document S/23/8, the Deputy Director General explained that, following further consultations with Member States, the original paragraph 2 had been changed to paragraph 1, and now included a specific amount. In addition, a new paragraph 3 had been added, which requested the Director General to submit the final estimated cost to the Council for approval following a detailed

analysis of costs and requirements. Lastly, a reference to accessibility would be included in the preambular paragraph referring to new construction technologies.

45. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/8 and recommended that the Council adopt the proposed draft resolution, as amended.

**IX. Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration**  
**(a) IOM preparations to support implementation**  
**(b) Update on the new United Nations Network on Migration**

46. The Director General gave an overview of the current status of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the progress made on the establishment of the new United Nations Network on Migration, highlighting that the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was due to be held in Marrakech, Morocco, in December 2018. In terms of the Network – which had been established by the United Nations Secretary-General and endorsed in the Global Compact – on 15 and 16 October 2018, IOM had attended the framing meeting of United Nations entities chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, who had been tasked with overseeing the elaboration of the details of the Network. IOM had been named coordinator and secretariat of the Network, which included those United Nations agencies with mandates related to migration, and would have an executive committee – formerly referred to as the core group – to provide overall guidance and priority-setting. The terms of reference of Network and the membership of the executive committee were being finalized and would be made public very soon. A workplan was being developed, and decisions on establishing working groups would be taken shortly. Further details on those aspects would become available in due course. The Global Compact provided for a capacity-building mechanism composed of a global knowledge platform, a connection hub for capacity-building requests, and a start-up fund.

47. Two delegates requested further information on the time frame within which IOM would mainstream the Global Compact across its own activities and formalize its role as coordinator and head of the secretariat of the new United Nations Network on Migration. Additional information on the financial implications of that work would also be welcome.

48. Another delegate asked whether Member States would have the opportunity to review and comment on the draft terms of reference of the Network before the Intergovernmental Conference.

49. Recalling the non-binding nature of both initiatives, a further delegate stressed that all IOM activities related to the Global Compact, including the coordination unit in the IOM Office to the United Nations in New York and other Compact-related policy measures, should be funded through voluntary rather than assessed contributions to the Organization.

50. A number of representatives reiterated the importance of IOM assuming a lead coordinating role in the implementation of the Global Compact and serving as the secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration. Further information on the measures taken by IOM to assess its capacities and ensure that it had the necessary resources to meet its obligations under the Global Compact would be welcome. Action must also be taken to ensure that the Network established clear channels of communication with external partners, such as the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. In addition, the Network should advocate a coherent system-wide approach to migration, while retaining the flexibility required to respond effectively to Member States' needs. The Working Group on IOM–UN Relations and Related Issues should discuss that matter and the general arrangements under the Global Compact in more detail.

51. The Director General said that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General had been tasked by the Secretary-General with finalizing the detailed arrangements of the Network, including the terms of reference. IOM was working closely with her in that respect. The Administration had briefed members of the Bureau of the Council prior to the October framing meeting; Member States would be briefed once decisions and documents were finalized. The Administration had been making preparations to assume its coordination and secretariat role in the process and had approached other United Nations agencies and Member States in order to obtain the human resources necessary for the effective functioning of the Network. The picture of the exact arrangements should be clearer by the start of the Intergovernmental Conference.

52. The Global Compact remained a voluntary, non-binding instrument. Efforts to strengthen the IOM Office to the United Nations and other areas of the Organization formed part of the ongoing reform of the United Nations development system and were not solely linked to the adoption of the Global Compact. The Organization, as the leading United Nations agency on migration, was required to maintain its relationships across the United Nations system as a whole. It therefore remained committed to harnessing synergies on migration-related issues and avoiding any duplication of effort between the United Nations Network on Migration and the various other international migration coordination mechanisms.

53. The Standing Committee took note of the presentation made by the Director General and of the comments made by the Member States.

#### **X. Report on the IOM Development Fund**

54. The Administration introduced document S/23/10 (IOM Development Fund – Status report: 1 January to 30 September 2018) and delivered a slide presentation to summarize initial key findings from ex-post evaluations carried out in 2018. In 2018, the IOM Development Fund had benefited from voluntary contributions to OSI made by Belgium and the United States. A further contribution of USD 345,938 made by the United States of America in 2018 had been carried over to 2019. In addition, Austria, Sweden and the United States had made earmarked contributions of USD 39,600, USD 574,713 and USD 57,566, respectively, to the Fund. Moreover, Japan had supported a part-time Junior Professional Officer position in the IOM Development Fund Unit.

55. The IOM Development Fund Unit strove to maintain an appropriate regional balance in the allocation of funding and to prioritize new Member States. During the year, it had evaluated a number of projects under a specific thematic area or covering a specific region. The Fund had also committed to undertaking ex-post evaluations of all funded projects. The reports of all evaluations would be made available on the Fund website.

56. The Fund had last been evaluated in 2010, with a performance audit conducted in 2012. An evaluation of the Fund by the Office of the Inspector General was planned for 2019 to review the Fund's criteria, impact and sustainability. The Fund had also updated its Strategic Plan for the period 2019–2021, which would be made available to Member States upon request.

57. The Standing Committee viewed a short video on the Maldives migration profile project funded by the IOM Development Fund.

58. The Administration delivered a slide presentation explaining the process of producing a migration profile and the role such profiles could also play in the achievement of the priorities outlined in the Global Compact. Since 2007, IOM had published 74 migration profiles covering 59 countries, many of which had been funded by the IOM Development Fund. While migration profiles had initially been conceived as snapshot overviews of the most recent migratory trends, they had subsequently

been expanded to include impact analysis and descriptions of migration-related regulations, policies and institutional arrangements. Migration profiles differed from other migration trend reports owing to the structured and comprehensive nature of the information they contained. The IOM guidance document, *Migration Profiles: Making the Most of the Process*, provided a template for migration profiles which allowed for country specificities to be adequately reflected in the final report.

59. Migration profiles represented the output of a process. In the initial planning phase, technical working groups, including focal points from relevant government entities, must be established, which enhanced collaboration between State departments responsible for migration data and national statistics offices. In the implementation stage, the technical working group was required to identify various data sources and gaps, take steps to improve existing data systems and pilot new data for analysis. IOM provided training sessions and workshops to support that process.

60. Sustainability of migration profiles through government ownership, however, remained a common challenge in many countries. Nevertheless, many governments did update their respective migration profiles regularly and used them for policymaking. The establishment of a migration profile often signalled the beginning of evidence-based policymaking. It could also simultaneously contribute to the achievement of the priorities outlined in the Global Compact, specifically objective 1 on collecting and utilizing accurate and disaggregated data. The migration profile for Maldives, which contained in-depth data on labour migration, served as a good example in that regard.

61. The representative of Maldives thanked IOM and donor countries to the Fund for their support in the development of the country's migration profile.

62. The Administration thanked Member States for their support for the IOM Development Fund. The Fund remained committed to building synergies with other United Nations agencies and external partners, and to providing guidance on managing a fund, as recently requested. Responding to a question from the floor, it explained that the Fund had been actively involved in the discussions on the establishment of a capacity-building mechanism to support implementation of the Global Compact. It also intended to work closely with the new United Nations Network on Migration to facilitate complementarity in operations.

63. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/10.

## **XI. Exchange of views on items proposed by the membership**

### **(a) A framework for assisted voluntary return and reintegration and indicators for measuring sustainable reintegration**

64. The document entitled A framework for assisted voluntary return and reintegration and indicators for measuring sustainable reintegration (S/23/6) was introduced by the Administration in a slide presentation.

65. Given the lack of a single overarching guidance document on assisted voluntary return and reintegration, IOM had developed a framework to guide its work in that area. In terms of reintegration, the framework provided a holistic, needs-based approach that took into consideration economic, social and psychosocial factors. A working definition of sustainable reintegration had been established, namely that reintegration was considered sustainable when returnees had reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities and psychosocial well-being that allowed them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees were able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than a necessity. Indicators had also been developed to facilitate monitoring and evaluation activities and were already being

employed in IOM projects. It was hoped that the uniform use of the indicators would make data comparison easier and that the framework would be a useful tool for all practitioners and policymakers in the field of assisted voluntary return and reintegration.

66. One delegate underscored the importance of adopting a multi-stakeholder approach to assisted voluntary return which recognized the needs of returning migrants and promoted and supported a sustainable and dignified reintegration process. Action must also be taken to establish a mechanism which offered States the opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices related to reintegration and social cohesion. The introduction of a comprehensive needs assessment procedure and a robust monitoring and evaluation system would similarly be vital for the effective implementation of the framework.

67. Another delegate welcomed the framework's focus on putting the needs of people rather than processes at the heart of public policy and promoting collaboration among relevant stakeholders at all levels. The use of indicators to measure the impact and effectiveness of reintegration under the framework would generate data and statistics that would greatly assist Member States in their migration-related policymaking efforts. Further information regarding the manner in which IOM would implement the instrument at the regional level and in situations involving mixed migration flows would be welcome. It would be particularly interesting to know how the framework would operate alongside the voluntary return of refugees undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

68. A third delegate said that IOM should be commended for its work to return migrants voluntarily to their countries of origin and to strengthen the capacity of countries to establish sustainable reintegration approaches. Expressing appreciation for IOM's publication of an external document on assisted voluntary return and reintegration, the same speaker pointed out that all Member States, however, retain their sovereign right to determine who should remain on their territory, consistent with their international legal obligations.

69. The representative of one regional group stressed the obligation, under international law, of all Member States to accept the return of their nationals who did not qualify to reside on another country's territory and called on States to cooperate towards that end. Expressing full support for the framework, the representative drew attention to the efforts made by his regional group to achieve a more humane, effective and coherent return policy.

70. Another representative said that the principle of voluntariness should be interpreted in a broader manner so as to guarantee access to reintegration support to any returned migrants. The same speaker also called for more flexibility in IOM's approach to return-related medical assistance.

71. Responding to questions raised by Member States, the Administration said that it would promote efforts to increase cooperation on assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities at the national and regional levels and would adopt a more comprehensive and harmonized approach to the issue across the Organization's programmes. It emphasized that the language used in the framework recognized the principle of State sovereignty. IOM would continue to work closely with Member States to support their respective national return and reintegration policies.

**(b) Assisting migrants in crisis contexts: Implementation of the Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster**

72. The Administration introduced the document entitled Assisting migrants in crisis contexts: Implementation of the Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster (S/23/5) in a slide presentation. The Guidelines contained a set of principles,



recommendations and practices to help respond to the needs of migrants in crisis situations. Although not legally binding, the Guidelines provided a practical blueprint for the design and implementation of migrant-inclusive preparedness, response and recovery activities and their implementation would directly contribute to the achievement of objectives 2 and 7 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

73. With the support of the Government of the United States of America, IOM had developed a comprehensive training package and had organized activities to improve awareness of the Guidelines to promote their use, build the capacities of relevant actors to reduce migrants' vulnerability in crisis situations, and encourage the sharing of experiences and practices among key stakeholders. Those activities had included the development of an e-learning course for consular staff, the design of a training curriculum for local emergency responders, the development of a training package on disaster preparedness for foreign residents, and the organization of workshops to raise awareness and preparedness among migrant communities. The tools had been made available to all IOM partners and the Organization had used them in over 40 countries across all regions.

74. Although much had already been achieved, more needed to be done by institutions in countries of origin, transit and destination to ensure that migrants' specific conditions of vulnerability in crisis situations were addressed. Greater and longer-lasting commitment was needed from all stakeholders and IOM stood ready to support Member States and other partners as appropriate.

75. The representatives of several Member States and one regional group commended IOM for its efforts to protect migrants in crisis situations and expressed appreciation for the support they had received in that respect. The representative of the same regional group highlighted the importance of ensuring access to education during crisis situations and drew attention to its efforts in that and other related areas. One delegate highlighted work ongoing in her region to develop a framework for coordination between countries affected by crisis situations and those hosting migrants fleeing such situations. The same delegate drew attention to her country's efforts, in collaboration with IOM, to support migrants from another country in the region arriving on its territory. Two speakers welcomed the development of the Guidelines, which would be instrumental in supporting the international community to achieve objective 7 of the Global Compact. One Member State highlighted the key role played by civil society, local governments and destination communities and underscored the importance of maintaining coordination and communication channels with those stakeholders during crisis situations. The same speaker asked how IOM would continue its efforts to support migrants in situations of crisis in the context of implementation of the Global Compact.

76. The Administration explained that many activities to implement the Guidelines already took place in a stand-alone manner, with different stakeholders using different approaches. In the light of the forthcoming adoption and subsequent implementation of the Global Compact, it would be important to ensure consistency among the different work streams. It stressed that all initiatives to reduce the vulnerability of migrants in non-crisis times would also reduce their vulnerability in times of crisis, and vice versa, meaning that migrant-inclusive crisis preparedness and response could also empower migrants in their day-to-day life.

77. The Standing Committee took note of documents S/23/6 (A framework for assisted voluntary return and reintegration and indicators for measuring sustainable reintegration) and S/23/5 (Assisting migrants in crisis contexts: Implementation of the Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster), and of the comments made by Member States.

## **XII. Report on the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States**

78. The Legal Counsel introduced the document entitled Fifth annual report of the Director General on improvements in the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States (S/23/9), which covered the period from 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018. Where provisions were not granted in line with the criteria contained in Council Resolution No. 1266 of 26 November 2013 on improving the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States, gaps in legal protection affected staff employment conditions, and the lack of tax exemptions had an impact on the Organization's costs. It was to be hoped that the entry of IOM into the United Nations system would encourage States to accord the appropriate privileges and immunities, and the Organization had pursued negotiations with a number of States to that end. Following the agreement on arrangements for the use of the United Nations laissez-passer by IOM officials, formalities were pending to ensure recognition of that agreement by States, including those that already granted the Organization full privileges and immunities. Three options offered a way forward on privileges and immunities: developing a standard bilateral template for all States, developing a multilateral instrument for ratification by States, or inserting a provision on privileges and immunities into the Constitution. The standard bilateral template was the proposal favoured by the Administration, although a lack of resources had prevented it from pursuing that approach in the previous year. Efforts to engage with Member States on the issue would be strengthened if the Council remained seized of the matter and renewed its call for Member States to grant the appropriate privileges and immunities.

79. One representative suggested that IOM should pursue the development of a standard bilateral template, while continuing negotiations with States that provided no or inadequate privileges and immunities. In addition, it would be useful to know what obstacles stood in the way of developing a template and holding broader consultations on the issue, and whether a standard template would apply to all States or only those that had not yet reached an agreement with IOM. Another representative suggested that, with a view to facilitating consensus on the matter, the Director General should present a draft multilateral agreement to the Council. The introduction of a constitutional provision on privileges and immunities was considered most appropriate by a different representative, since that would establish a uniform system for all. One Member State expressed scepticism at the suggestion that a multilateral agreement on privileges and immunities for IOM could be negotiated in the modern political climate. His Government would prefer to engage in bilateral negotiations, although it did not accept that IOM should be accorded the privileges and immunities set out in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies (1947).

80. The Legal Counsel said that he welcomed the general support expressed for proper privileges and immunities for IOM. The biggest obstacle to establishing the appropriate privileges and immunities was shifting sentiment since the 1940s, as expressed by one representative. The standard bilateral template envisaged would accord IOM similar privileges and immunities to those set forth in the 1947 Convention and would likely be applied to States that did not already do so. Any multilateral agreement reached should mirror the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946) and the 1947 Convention; anything less than the latter convention would represent a backwards step in terms of existing agreements with a number of States. While amending the Constitution of IOM offered a fail-safe approach, it would also be time-consuming, and the subsequent ratification of amendments could prove difficult. The Administration would pursue the multilateral and bilateral approaches in parallel.

81. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/9 (Fifth annual report of the Director General on improvements in the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States), and recommended that the Council remain seized of the matter and reiterate its call to all Member States to grant the Organization privileges and immunities substantially similar to those of the United Nations specialized agencies.

### **XIII. Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General**

82. The Inspector General, introducing the document entitled Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General (S/23/4), said that the mandate of the Office was to prevent waste, fraud and abuse through independent evaluation, inspection, investigation and internal auditing. Highlighting the importance of the operational independence of the Office, he stressed that the Office should not be required to request resources from departments that it reviewed, as it had in the previous year. Recruitment for the investigation function had proven difficult and consultant investigators had been recruited to help with the expanding caseload. A cost-benefit analysis of the Office would be performed by the Inspector General and would consider which location – Geneva, Manila or Panama – would guarantee the optimal functioning of the Office.

83. Contributions from Sweden and the United Kingdom had transformed the central evaluation function, enabling the expansion of the monitoring and evaluation network. The aim was to take a two-tiered approach comprising central and decentralized evaluation. With respect to internal auditing, audit management software had been introduced, subject matter experts recruited, and auditors trained. To support the correction of IT controls following the 2016 internal audit of IT network vulnerability, a guest auditor had been recruited to test IT systems in the field.

84. The current public focus on exposing sexual harassment and abuse had led to the reporting of allegations that should be addressed through due process. That work had been delayed, however, due to the insufficient number of investigators. Alongside personnel needs, the capital, process and system needs of the investigation function would be revised, and a case management system was being sought. Unfortunately, additional resources requested for that purpose had not been included in the Programme and Budget for 2019. During 2018, a request had been made for budgetary resources to hire paid Junior Professional Officers with a view to passing on the Office's existing expertise, and he looked forward to Member States' support in that regard.

85. Noting the importance of the Office's work and highlighting its need for adequate resources, one Member State emphasized the need for sufficient capacity and funding to perform high quality investigations. A further speaker asked how IOM defined adequate resources for the Office and whether the United Nations system could provide a standard definition. Two representatives drew attention to the significant number of open internal audit recommendations classified as very high and high risk, with one urging timely implementation of all recommendations. The same speaker said that the information presented in the report was too general and that it lacked a transparent matrix showing the follow-up and management response to recommendations; he asked whether that information would be provided in detail on the Office's website. Further details should also be provided regarding the 29 cases referred by the Office to the Human Resources Legal Issues Division.

86. One participant emphasized the importance of oversight mechanisms and commended the work of the Office, welcoming the review of internal justice mechanisms initiated by the Director General. In the view of a second participant, further efforts were needed to address gender equality and sexual exploitation and abuse, including regular reporting to Member States and, where possible, the allocation of more resources.

87. The Deputy Director General said that the forthcoming review of the internal governance system would be held in full consultation with the Office of the Inspector General, and identified gaps addressed as soon as possible, including by issuing a statement on internal controls, if needed. The outcome of the cost-benefit analysis would indicate whether it would be cost-effective and efficient to delocalize Office functions. It was important to find the right solution; the Office's budget could be increased if necessary. The resource challenges faced by the Office were, however, not unique; all the support services were under-resourced and the Administrative Part of the Budget was small given the

size of the Organization. Efforts were being made to increase the number of investigators, the budgetary impact of which could be clarified after the Director General's review of the system. The budget development process, including which staff played a role in it, would also be reviewed.

88. The Inspector General explained that some recommendations classified as very high and high risk remained open in countries in volatile situations. In those locations, cost, choice, consequences and context were taken into account to give management adequate time to respond. The security environment made it difficult to visit certain locations and, in some such cases, audits were outsourced. Although the number of open recommendations classified as very high and high risk had fallen significantly since the previous year, the Office would continue to highlight open recommendations for management action. The management response to open audit recommendations would be published online in future. He explained that, of the 20 allegations received during the reporting period regarding sexual exploitation and abuse, 14 had undergone preliminary assessment. To date, three had been investigated: one case had been substantiated and two found to be unsubstantiated.

89. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/4.

#### **XIV. Report of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee**

90. The Vice-Chairperson of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee introduced the Committee's report contained in document S/23/3, outlining its activities between September 2017 and August 2018.

91. One Member State asked whether the IOM Audit and Oversight Committee and the Office of the Inspector General worked closely with the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system.

92. The Administration said that, while the IOM Audit and Oversight Committee and the Office of the Inspector General had not worked directly with the Joint Inspection Unit, they had exchanged information with regard to their respective investigative functions during the 19th Conference of International Investigators held in October 2018. They would continue to share best practices regularly, including during the 2019 iteration of the Conference, to be held in Geneva, which would be organized jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and IOM.

93. The Standing Committee took note of document S/23/3.

#### **XV. Update on the work of the Organization to assist States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**

94. The Administration briefed the Standing Committee on the work of the Organization on the migration–development nexus. The repositioning of the United Nations development system provided an impetus for IOM to incorporate the United Nations multilateral development frameworks as a central pillar of its work, enhance IOM's role as a development actor, better connect IOM's development and humanitarian portfolios and strategically advance the global discussions on migration and development. Views on the relationship between migration and development had undergone considerable changes in recent years. Nowadays it was widely recognized that migration and migrants had an impact on development processes and vice versa. There was a growing understanding that migration was not only the consequence of a lack of sustainable development in one country, but also of development in another country, which could act as a pull factor. Further research into the reasons why people moved and the interplay between those movements and

economic, political, social, demographic, environmental and development processes would enable governments and humanitarian and development stakeholders to design more efficient migration and development policies to ensure safe and regular migration. The challenge was therefore to devise a governance framework that could mitigate the risks of forced and irregular migration while simultaneously identifying proactive strategies to respond to peace and development issues.

95. Building on its long-standing track record in migration and development planning, IOM had embarked on designing a migration and development strategy which, through a whole-of-organization approach, would help IOM support Member States in their efforts to mainstream migration into development and relevant sectoral policymaking – including at the local level, where migration had the greatest impact – and facilitate the more comprehensive integration of development issues into migration interventions and programming within the Organization. It had also prioritized a number of strategic action points for the coming year, including the introduction of a strategy to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in synergy with approaches adopted for the implementation of other related frameworks; the strengthening of IOM's internal capacities by providing field staff with the necessary skills to work with United Nations country teams and ensure that migration was properly reflected in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks; and the forging of coherent and pragmatic partnerships with key players in the United Nations system and beyond.

96. To complement those internal efforts, IOM had also devised policy tools to help national and local governments to better integrate migration issues into their development efforts. At the second session of the International Dialogue on Migration 2018, the Organization had launched Migration and the 2030 Agenda: A Guide for Practitioners, a groundbreaking publication which encouraged policymakers to seize the opportunity presented by the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda. Given the strong grounding of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the 2030 Agenda, the Guide would also be used to assist Member States to implement Compact-related activities. IOM hoped to publish a second part to the Guide in the near future, which would include specific components for the development sector to help countries define their own national priorities and monitoring frameworks.

97. One delegate said that all stakeholders must continue to take into account existing international frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, in order to guarantee the successful implementation of the Global Compact. Migration was closely linked to demographic shifts and went hand in hand with development. It represented one of the main sources of foreign direct investment for some countries, mainly in the form of remittances. A framework was therefore required to support the positive contributions of migration to development and to reduce the vulnerability faced by migrants. Anchored in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Global Compact had the potential to meet that objective. IOM should therefore assist Member States in their efforts to implement objective 2 of the Global Compact and continue to promote sustainable development.

98. Recalling the economic contributions made by migrants to sustainable development in their countries of origin, another delegate asked whether IOM had plans to develop a policy tool to facilitate and reduce the associated costs of remittances.

99. A third delegate welcomed the Organization's efforts to promote the needs of migrants – as one of the most vulnerable groups of society – in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

100. The Administration said that efforts were under way to strengthen strategic partnerships with relevant partners, such as the Universal Postal Union, to facilitate and lower the costs of remittances. While remittances played an important role in driving sustainable development, action should be taken to leverage their impact by combining them with other policy measures.

101. The Standing Committee took note of the presentation made by the Administration and of the comments made by Member States.

**XVI. Other business**

102. The Chairperson drew the Standing Committee's attention to document C/109/INF/1 on the distribution, classification and numbering of governing body documents, which provided an update on current procedures.

**XVII. Closure of the session**

103. The Chairperson declared the Twenty-third Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance closed on Wednesday, 31 October 2018, at 11.45 a.m.