

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

First of all, allow me to commend you, Mr. Director-General, for your able leadership and also to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Strohal, for his appointment as Chair of this Council. I am also happy for having the opportunity to welcome the new Member States to the Organization and express the great satisfaction of the Portuguese government for this enlargement.

Portugal joined IOM in 1975 and the partnership established then proved decisive for the difficult management of return migration from Africa, in a moment of our national History marked by major socio-economic and political changes.

Since then, Portugal's national policies on international migration have evolved considerably, having been recently acknowledged as a good example by the 2010 World Migration Report, the UN Report on Human Development, but also by some independent studies, such as the Migrant Integration Policy Index. Currently, in Portugal, migrants account for 4% of the total population. With the support of IOM, - namely provided through its Office in Lisbon, - Portugal has successfully implemented measures on migration management, in the fields of assisted voluntary return and reintegration, counter-trafficking, labor migration and integration, and also migration and development.

In September 2010, we've adopted a 2nd National Program for the Integration of Migrants for the period 2010-2013. With a wide range of concrete measures in carefully chosen fields, this new Program also aims at achieving progresses in two innovative areas: the promotion of diversity and the improvement of ageing migrants living conditions.

We firmly believe that the migration phenomena should be managed in a constant articulation between entry clearance awarding practices and national/regional integration

policies and measures to prevent social exclusion, always reinforcing equal treatment before the law for migrants and nationals.

But, to be effective, migration management should also entail a global range of measures to prevent illegal migration and mobility. Addressing the downsides of migration will, in our view, require intensified prevention efforts regarding all forms of trafficking, coupled with measures to support the victims, in particular women and children, who remain the most vulnerable ones.

Mr. Chairman,

Development issues must be recognized as an inevitable element of migration policies, in the very same way that international migration needs must become an integral part of our development agenda.

We support IOM for considering a stronger relationship between migration and development as a strategic focus of its work. We firmly believe that, when and if managed effectively, migration can give a positive contribution to the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, whether through the application of migrant's new competencies and skills or through the transfer of savings and remittances.

Under our national cooperation policy, we have encouraged diaspora synergies, considering that development can also be stimulated through the full use of political, economic, social and cultural ties which always link migrants to their countries of origin and, also, of destination.

Mr. Chairman,

2011 must be acknowledged as a most challenging year in the humanitarian field.

Amidst political instability in the MENA region or in the Horn of Africa – or even in displacement situations caused by natural disasters as was the case in Pakistan – IOM

played a crucial role, providing assistance to the evacuation of migrants and bringing refugees and IDPs to safety. Unpredictable as they were, these crises required creativity and dynamism from IOM, forcing the adoption of *ad hoc* solutions to meet unexpected costs. We must be prepared to face similar emergency situations in the future.

This is why we support the enhancement of the response capacity of the Agency, not only through the adoption of the Emergency Migration Funding Mechanism, which we believe constitutes a step forward, but also through an increased access to the CERF by IOM.

Another area that needs urgent and serious consideration is the one referring to the links between migration and climate change. Migrations tend, in fact, to become one of the most significant consequences of environmental degradation and climate change in decades to come. This worrying scenario will be particularly acute and endangering to many African and Small Island Developing States. IOM's excellent work at promoting the debate on this issue, in particular through the Dialogue on International Migration, deserves our support.

Mr. Chairman,

In these times of economic and financial turmoil, both states and international organizations face inevitable budgetary constraints. To tackle it, we need to make a full and adequate use of existing resources, streamlining our activities and promoting a more enhanced articulation with the ones developed by other international organizations.

The increase of the financial contributions for the Administrative Part of the IOM budget is not, for obvious reasons, an option that we could, at this juncture, support.

Funding issues should nevertheless continue high up in the agenda, in order to identify new sources of funding, namely from the private sector.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Increased dialogue on international migration is a crucial issue on our global agenda. Every relevant organisation must play its part and give its contribution to the ongoing debate. The 2013 UNGA High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development will certainly be an important opportunity to boost the debate, and IOM's contribution will be most welcomed.

Concluding, let me just briefly say that IOM has made, since the adoption of the 2007 Strategy, important steps in reinforcing its role, direction and priorities. We, as a Member State, will seek to contribute to ensure a greater efficiency in defining and preparing programmatic, budgetary and financial matters within a broader road map for the IOM's work.

Destiny has it that the 100th Session of this Council coincides with the celebrations of IOM's 60th Anniversary. We would like to congratulate the Organization for its many achievements since its inception and wish it wholeheartedly that the next sixty years will be at least as successful as the last sixty.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.