

EIGHTIETH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 29 November 2000, at 10.20 a.m.

Chairman: H.E. Mr. J. E. VEGA (Chile)

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Agenda item 7GENERAL DEBATE (continued)(b) Statements by delegations (continued)

1. Mr. BORISOVAS (Lithuania) said that the visit of the Director General to Lithuania in April 2000 and the ratification of the amendments to the IOM Constitution by the Lithuanian Parliament had clearly confirmed the importance of relations between his country and IOM. The law on the status of refugees, prepared in accordance with international legal instruments and the recommendations of international experts, had entered into force in September 2000. The Government had also adopted a national plan of action on asylum to ensure timely implementation of the norms of the main legal acts of the European Union relating to asylum. It was also hoped to conclude readmission agreements with the Russian Federation and Belarus in due course. The increase in Lithuania's migration management capacities, particularly regarding voluntary returns, had been largely due to timely and effective support from IOM, the Nordic countries, the European Commission and the United States of America.

2. Lithuania had participated in two IOM projects implemented recently in the Baltic States: institutional strengthening of migration management, and a regional project for the development of increased technical cooperation among the migration departments of those countries. A programme of administrative enhancement of migration structures in the Baltic States was included in the Programme and Budget for 2001. Two further projects were under consideration. The first was on prevention of trafficking in women and children in the Baltic States; the second on integration through training and employment or self-employment for the immigrant community of Visaginas, Lithuania, the aim of which was to prevent migration movements among the population from that area to other countries as a result of the forthcoming closure of the Ignalina nuclear plant.

3. He expressed support for the proposed 5 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001, but was in favour of maintaining the principle of zero nominal growth in future.

4. Mr. KIHOMANO (United Republic of Tanzania) said that, over the past year, IOM's resolve to facilitate orderly migration had been severely challenged by the escalation of tensions between various countries and an increase in natural disasters and epidemics such as HIV/AIDS. The problems had been particularly acute in Africa, especially in the Great Lakes region, resulting in a dramatic increase in refugees and asylum seekers. Despite the efforts of the international community to facilitate peace negotiations in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, little had been done to restore confidence in the uprooted people who had fled their homes for safety abroad. Nevertheless he commended IOM's response under its policy framework for sub-Saharan Africa and in cooperation with other United Nations bodies, and Tanzania was grateful for IOM's efforts in resettling about 200 refugees in Canada from camps in Tanzania during the year.

5. The ultimate answer to the wars that currently afflicted the world was the promotion of mutual understanding, bilaterally and multilaterally. He was therefore encouraged by the move made by the South African Development Community (SADC) to achieve integration in Eastern and Southern Africa. In November 1999, the Treaty establishing the East African Community had been signed

between Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Community had a special committee dealing with immigration, labour and refugee matters and looked forward to cooperation with IOM and other relevant organizations to help it realize its objectives.

6. He supported the Programme and Budget for the year 2001 and endorsed the allocation of USD 1 million from Discretionary Income for the development of migration projects in favour of developing Member States and Member States in transition, on the basis of equitable regional distribution.

7. Mr. KARKLINS (Latvia) expressed support for the proposed 5 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001, which should enable IOM to remain active, effective and flexible in dealing with the current migration situation. It was important to evaluate the lessons learned from the lengthy budget discussions and take them into account when seeking solutions to the remaining problem areas in budgeting, for example, the use of Discretionary Income for programmes in developing countries and countries in transition. While the latter proposal had merit, it would need careful consideration; Latvia stood ready to contribute to the discussion.

8. In the area of assisted returns services, Latvia had a successful ongoing project to assist non-citizens of Russian origin to return voluntarily to Russia, which involved cooperation with the Russian Federal Migration Service and several non-governmental organizations. He thanked the Government of Sweden for its recent contribution to the project. A further project, prepared by the IOM Office in Latvia, was planned to assist repatriated Latvians and recent immigrants. He was sure that, given IOM expertise and experience in a similar project in Estonia, the proposed initiative would be a success. The integration of non-nationals in society was vital for the stability and well-being of any country.

9. Regarding counter-trafficking and public information campaigns, his country considered that those two services were most effective when implemented jointly. Attention to trafficking prevention was of particular importance and he therefore looked forward to the planned counter-trafficking and prostitution prevention project which had now received adequate funding.

10. In the area of technical cooperation on migration, IOM had played an important role in coordinating and organizing seminars related to common problems in the Baltic States and in harmonizing national legislation on migration-related matters with that of the European Union.

11. IOM's main asset was its ability to respond in a timely manner to the rapidly growing challenges of international migration. That ability was evident in the programmes he had mentioned and in IOM's cooperation with other international organizations. In that regard he welcomed the deepening of the Organization's relationship with ILO and the newly-signed agreement with UNHCR on transportation services.

12. Mr. AL-SHARJABI (Yemen) said that his country had a large number of immigrants from all over the world and it therefore hoped that the planned visit of the Deputy Director General in January 2001 would open up new horizons for cooperation and possibly the conclusion of a bilateral agreement between Yemen and IOM. He expressed the hope that the less-developed countries, of

which Yemen was one, might be exempted from the increases in assessed contributions that would result from the proposed 5 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001, in order to avoid any further obstacle to their development.

13. He also proposed that Arabic, one of the United Nations' official languages, be used in future meetings of the Council.

14. Mr. BUSIEGA (Kenya) welcomed IOM's migration policy framework for sub-Saharan Africa and the agreement concluded between IOM and UNHCR on transportation. The Dakar Declaration and the OAU meeting in Addis Ababa bore testimony to the efforts made by the Director General and the Deputy Director General. He supported the Deputy Director General's steadfast stand on gender-sensitive issues both inside and outside the Organization.

15. IOM should strengthen its programme for the Return and Reintegration of Qualified African Nationals in order to stem the brain drain and preserve the human and social capital that was required for sustained development. That support should be extended by providing technical assistance to African institutions involved in migration work. He urged IOM to pursue its operations in the African region in a way that reinforced the national and regional efforts of the respective governments.

16. He supported the proposed allocation of USD 1 million from Discretionary Income for the development of migration projects in favour of developing Member States and Member States in transition, on the basis of equitable regional distribution and without prejudice to funds already allocated for that purpose. He also supported the proposed 5 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001.

17. Mr. MADI (Jordan) said that IOM had become an essential element in migration management, providing vital migration services in areas such as migration health, capacity building, assisted returns and counter-trafficking, and responding to emergency situations. Jordan had enjoyed positive cooperation with IOM over the years, first as an observer and since 1999 as a Member. An agreement had been signed in 1994 regarding the opening of an IOM office in Amman. During the Gulf crisis of 1990-1991, IOM, in cooperation with United Nations organizations, had played a pivotal role, assisting the Jordanian authorities in receiving hundreds of thousands of returnees, refugees and immigrants. IOM had helped the country to overcome the resulting emergency situation.

18. Migration and population movements had no boundaries and involved all States throughout the world. The economic, social, demographic and human implications of migration affected countries of origin and destination, as well as the migrants themselves. Greater international efforts and cooperation were needed to help receiving countries in particular to shoulder the burden of migration.

19. In view of IOM's increased activities, he supported the proposed 5 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001 and the proposal to allocate an additional USD 1 million from Discretionary Income in favour of developing Member States.

20. On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, he called on the international community to assist the Palestinian people in the face of the continued violation of their human rights by Israel in disregard of international humanitarian law, human rights norms and principles and the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. The escalation in problems had come at a crucial time in the history of those people who were struggling for their right to self-determination and the establishment of their own State, on their own soil.

21. He reiterated Jordan's commitment to uphold and implement the goals of IOM within the framework of its Constitution and to increase its cooperation with IOM and other Member States.

22. Mr. LUGRIS (Uruguay) expressed his country's support for IOM activities at national, regional and global levels. With respect to bilateral relations it was important to strengthen the project implementation activities of the IOM Office in Montevideo, and it should be noted that, at subregional level, MERCOSUR had included a migration component in its dynamic integration process. Within that process, Uruguay had increasing need of IOM's experience and expertise in areas such as: the modernization and technical upgrading of the national migration authority, the updating of migration norms and legislation, the implementation of programmes for Uruguayan citizens living abroad, the combating of new forms of international crime such as trafficking in persons and achieving satisfactory regional integration arrangements.

23. Uruguay fully endorsed the statement made by the delegate of Colombia on behalf of GRULAC and assured the Council of its full support for IOM's work in the coming year.

24. Mr. MAURELIA (Chile) called for the initiation of a renewed debate on the challenges facing the Organization at the start of the new millennium and the implications of emerging issues such as globalization. Administrative matters remained of great importance, however, and Chile had therefore set great store by the recent meeting of ambassadors of the GRULAC countries and the Director General of IOM. A new commitment to hold regular regional meetings would enable the countries of the region to increase their cooperation to deal more effectively with the specific needs of the region, such as measures to combat irregular migration combined with migrant trafficking, and to improve data collection on migration in that area. He welcomed the efforts made by several governments in the region to pay their assessed contributions to IOM and urged the remaining countries to do likewise.

25. Mr. PENROD (Costa Rica) thanked the Director General for his participation in the recent symposium on international migration in the Americas organized by IOM and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). IOM activities and services were expanding in nature and scope and it was encouraging to see regional commitments such as the Manila Process, the Bangkok Declaration and the Puebla Process. He welcomed the recent discussions between the ambassadors of GRULAC countries and the Director General of IOM, which would provide a basis for cooperation during the coming year. He also stressed the importance of formulating a global strategy for gender issues in migration, as the increasing feminization of migration had considerable social ramifications, in particular as regards the well-being of families. Costa Rica was making great efforts to take into account in its policies the needs of its immigrants, who represented 10 per cent of the population and whose situation had been

regularized after the tragedy of hurricane Mitch. The socio-economic consequences were, however, considerable, especially as immigrants enjoyed the same rights to health care, education and employment as the local population. Future activities would also include a project to improve living conditions and job creation for migrants. Costa Rica had the political will to tackle those problems but its resources were limited and he appealed for international support through IOM.

26. Mr. GANEGAMA-ARACHCHI (Sri Lanka) welcomed IOM's emphasis on regional migration initiatives which he suggested should receive further strengthening and financial support, on an equitable regional basis, in particular in the areas of capacity building, technical cooperation and measures to prevent irregular migration. He also welcomed the increasing number of bilateral cooperation agreements between IOM and Member States, which should complement regional initiatives. Sri Lanka was currently finalizing its own cooperation agreement with IOM and thanked the Deputy Director General for her recent visit to the country in that regard.

27. IOM's budget should be consistent with its mandate, and some flexibility in the Administrative Part of the Budget was essential if the Organization was to provide adequate responses to growing and complex migration needs, especially in developing countries. He therefore joined the emerging consensus in favour of the proposed 5 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001 and the proposed allocation of USD 1 million from Discretionary Income for migration projects in favour of developing Member States.

28. Public information campaigns, counter-trafficking and voluntary return programmes were essential to ensure orderly migration flows on a sustainable basis. However, such efforts were hampered by criminal and terrorist groups that engaged in human smuggling. Their successes would lead to further cycles of forced migration, and IOM must consider preventive and deterrent measures, formulate counter-trafficking strategies, launch further public information campaigns, and strengthen the administrative and screening capabilities of Member States, for example through appropriate training programmes for immigration officials and the promotion of information-sharing arrangements between Member States. He supported the policy objectives outlined by the Director General and the Deputy Director General designed to make IOM more responsive and better equipped to deal with emerging migration issues.

29. Mr. BENDO (Albania) emphasized his country's commitment to its cooperation with IOM and welcomed the substantial programmes for Albania proposed in the Programme and Budget for 2001 in fields such as migration health, technical cooperation and counter-trafficking. He recognized the considerable management challenges facing IOM and was therefore in favour of a substantial increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001. The excellent ongoing cooperation between IOM and Albania included the Albania Transition Initiative, which aimed at improving community development. IOM had played an important role during the Kosovo crisis and was also making a valuable contribution through other activities in the Balkans.

30. He welcomed the decision to grant observer status to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and hoped that that country would implement moves towards the attainment of democratic standards. The new Serbian authorities should respond to calls from not only Albania but the entire international community for its unreserved cooperation with the International Tribunal for War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia. Albania also called for the immediate and unconditional release of all Albanian political prisoners still being held in Serbia and for information on the thousands of missing Albanians.

31. Mr. DEMIDOV (Observer for the Russian Federation) said that the statements presented by the Director General and the Deputy Director General provided encouraging prospects for enhanced

cooperation at global and regional levels between countries in the field of migration. Russia greatly appreciated the experience and practical approach of IOM and supported its strategies, in particular in relation to the serious situation of migration in the territory of the former Soviet Union. It was important to continue persistent and purposeful work in the follow-up to the programme of action adopted by the 1996 CIS Conference, for which IOM had been designated as lead agency, on the basis of solidarity and the realization of responsibility by each country involved in the process: that would guarantee the strengthening of stability and security in the CIS region and beyond. The Geneva process must not become merely a forum for debate; it should maintain a structured character under the guidance of IOM, UNHCR and OSCE, organizations that had accumulated unique experience in coordinating the activities of all Members. He therefore supported the draft resolution on IOM involvement in the follow-up of the CIS Conference and hoped that efficient cooperation would be developed.

32. He recognized that Russia itself would bear the main responsibility for the solution of migratory problems in the territory of the Russian Federation, but without adequate international support in the face of serious migratory pressure and economic and financial difficulties, the situation could become critical, with extremely negative consequences. From the point of view of international stability, it would be unwise to underestimate such prospects. As the borders between the Russian Federation and the CIS countries remained permeable, Russia was affected by a growing influx of immigrants from South East Asia, Africa and the Middle East, most of whom used Russia as the transit station for further migration to Western Europe, United States of America and Canada. There were currently estimated to be more than 700,000 immigrants in an irregular situation in the country, who included criminals involved in drug and weapon trafficking and smuggling of migrant workers. The current scope of IOM's assistance to the Russian Federation was rather limited. In that connection he once again invited the international community to cooperate in a spirit of solidarity and share the regional burden in relation to reception of migrants. He realized the difficulties of mobilizing international support for national efforts made by Russia in the current climate, in which the complex processes of voluntary, forced and illegal migration were added to the acute social and economic problems in Russia, other CIS and adjacent countries. In such circumstances, sceptics might wish to cut down cooperation with Russia, being guided by considerations that were far from humanistic. Fortunately, he did not equate such scepticism with IOM's position. The IOM Council was an appropriate forum at which to confirm once again his country's esteem for the IOM Constitution and its adherence to the agreement between his Government and the Organization, with a view to increasing cooperation to meet current and new migration challenges, to which the Russian Government was allocating about 7 billion roubles annually. Thanks to timely measures taken by Russia itself, a migratory explosion, fraught with danger for the stability and security of the region, had been averted, but the situation remained serious, and he hoped that IOM would assist in minimizing the consequences of forced and illegal migration in Russia.

33. Mr. JENNY (Observer for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UNITAR and Director of the International Migration Policy Programme, IMP) welcomed the opportunity to address the Council because of the essential role that IOM had been assuming in IMP since the launching in 1998 of the inter-agency programme, which was co-sponsored by UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), ILO, UNITAR and IOM and implemented with the cooperation of UNHCR and other relevant institutions.

34. The movement of people, voluntary or forced, had many implications for States and the development of appropriate policy and management responses to address that challenge had become a fundamental issue affecting inter-State relations more than ever before. During the two previous decades, industrialized countries and higher- and middle-income countries in the South had witnessed record numbers of migrants. In more recent years, growing proportions of those people had moved irregularly, while others had moved by taking advantage of asylum systems, without fulfilling the conditions for being recognized as refugees or otherwise protected persons. Growing links between irregular migration and international crime added a further complex dimension to the picture.

35. Population growth in developing countries, combined with increasing labour shortages in those countries, ongoing conflict situations, easier communications and access to transport were among the factors that would continue to cause rising levels of migration, much of it irregular. At the same time, many industrialized countries had come to realize that their own demographic developments were bound to result in the need for more foreign labour, not least because of changing needs with regard to skills and the obvious economic and longer-term social security implications. Many of those countries also recognized that irregular migration could not be managed solely by measures of exclusion and control.

36. Key conditions for such analysis and enhanced cooperation among States included a better understanding of the complex migration phenomenon itself and sustained international activity to support the capacity of States to address migration. In many international fora, including the IOM Council, insistent calls had been made for the provision of training, information and capacity building to enable governments to manage migration capably at home and to collaborate effectively with other governments in the search for durable responses. It was in that context that IMP worked, with the support of its many partner agencies, in particular IOM.

37. In the past two years, IMP had organized six seminars, training courses and conferences involving over 300 middle or senior government migration managers and policy-makers from 65 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, the Pacific and Southern Africa. A key feature of that effort was the IMP inter-agency framework, under which all relevant institutions offered their input and expertise in an approach that had enabled the programme to provide governments with a comprehensive picture of the interrelated and complex migration challenges at hand and to offer guidance on best practices in migration policy. The inter-agency approach taken by IMP had also demonstrated, in practice, the imperative for sustained cooperation among concerned agencies and the need to work with governments, with a holistic approach to migration and population displacement issues.

38. He stressed the outstanding support the programme had received from IOM, a support that had enriched IMP's programme activities not least under the recent seminar in the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which IMP had organized jointly with IOM in support of the newly-established migration cooperation process led by IOM in that region. IOM would also be a key partner in the joint IMP/ILO labour migration seminar for Central and Eastern Europe planned for December 2000. More such joint ventures were planned for the coming year, and IMP looked forward to continued and fruitful collaboration with IOM.

39. Mr. MATEU (Observer for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR) said that IOM had successfully complemented UNHCR's response to increasingly complex situations during the past year and had cooperated in Indonesia to facilitate the safe return of East Timorese refugees from West Timor, working in harrowing conditions to extract some 170,000 refugees from camps and helping them to return to their homes in the face of harassment, intimidation and violence. The situation had unfortunately deteriorated and had culminated in the murder of three UNHCR workers in Indonesia, soon followed by the killing and kidnapping of some of their colleagues in Guinea. It must be stressed that humanitarian workers could help refugees and others in need in difficult areas only if they could have safe access to them. UNHCR was grateful to IOM for helping with the evacuation of United Nations staff from West Timor and for joining them in the United Nations Protest March in September, urging States to take determined measures to protect humanitarian workers and thus demonstrating their solidarity. It was essential to continue pressing for a more serious international response to security threats facing humanitarian workers in many parts of the world and IOM, being associated with the United Nations security management mechanism, had a role to play in that regard. It was also essential to stress the urgent need to bring the perpetrators of crimes against humanitarian staff and refugees to justice. After the murder of the three humanitarian workers, some 100,000 refugees had remained in West Timor and since the UNHCR operation had been suspended, only *ad hoc* measures to help those refugees had been possible.

40. UNHCR and IOM had recently collaborated in the Joint Programme for Repatriation of Afghan Refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan, begun by UNHCR together with the Iranian Government and IOM in order to ensure the organized voluntary return of some 120,000 persons to Afghanistan in safety and dignity.

41. In June 2000, the Steering Group on the follow-up to the CIS Conference had met for the last time in its current format to review the achievements of the Conference, to identify areas requiring further attention and to take decisions on future activities. UNHCR and IOM, together with OSCE and the Council of Europe, had worked jointly in that process which had brought together States of the region, non-governmental organizations and regional and international organizations. The aim had been to address existing problems of displacement and to prevent the emergence of causes of further population movements. On the basis of the joint IOM-UNHCR "Assessment Report on the Conference Process, Evaluating Achievements and Highlighting the Areas for Further Actions", the Steering Group had determined the focus of future activities and had decided to start the follow-up process which would continue for five years after 2000. UNHCR and IOM intended to reinforce the noteworthy operational partnerships which they had developed within the framework of the CIS Conference.

42. The Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants which had met during the current month encompassed the entire Asia-Pacific region and provided an informal forum for countries to discuss population movements and to undertake joint analyses of trends, exchange of information and contingency planning in the event of emergency situations involving mass outflows. Since the establishment of the initial consultation in 1996, UNHCR and IOM had been working together within that framework.

43. Another area of mutual collaboration with IOM was a new initiative called PROFILE, concerning the development of a global registration, identification and population information management system. PROFILE was designed to strengthen information management capacity and to identify individuals and families for protection, assistance and durable solutions.

44. IOM and UNHCR had been closely associated in helping refugees on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 1997. Early in 2000 their cooperation in the area of transportation had been reaffirmed by the issue of the "Guidance Note on IOM-UNHCR Cooperation in the Transportation Sector", which simplified coordination and thus facilitated the speedy delivery of assistance and the mobilization of resources. The results might already be seen in the increased effectiveness and timely delivery of assistance to the beneficiaries. As a number of practical problems at the field level had been identified, a joint assessment might be carried out in due course, to help both organizations to build realistically on the existing strengths in their collaborative endeavours.

45. Through complementary and coordinated approaches, UNHCR together with its partners, such as IOM, could bring a valuable humanitarian perspective to the planning and implementation of peace operations. In times of increasingly complex emergencies and migratory flows, it was essential to discuss the implications of such peace operations in humanitarian fora, particularly the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

46. Ms. FRANCA (Observer for the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, CPSC) said that the member States of CPSC, although geographically dispersed, all had considerable migratory movements. The African member countries were confronted with problems calling for special attention, such as wars, rapid population increases, ecological deterioration, desertification, poverty and low per capita incomes which represented determining factors in the dynamics of migration in those countries.

47. Accordingly, the Heads of State and Government had adopted as one of the objectives set forth in the Constituent Declaration of CPSC the duty to promote measures for the solution of problems encountered by communities immigrating into member States, as well as the coordination and strengthening of cooperation in the area of immigration policies. Within that framework, a Cooperation Agreement between CPSC and IOM had been signed on 5 December 1997, with the encouragement of the seven member States of CPSC, particularly since they had been able to see the results of IOM projects for assisting the international community to face the operational challenges of migration, to promote agreement on migration questions, to encourage social and human development through migration and to support the dignity and well-being of migrants.

48. The Executive Secretary of CPSC had been able to meet the Deputy Director General of IOM during her official visit to Portugal and had concluded that it was essential to give new impetus to cooperation between CPSC and IOM with a view to attaining the objectives defined in the agreement of cooperation between the two organizations. In that context, discussions were under way for a joint initiative entitled "Integrated Programme on Migrations" (PICMI) designed to promote measures for the solution of problems faced by immigrant communities in the member States of CPSC, coordination and strengthening of cooperation in the area of immigration policies and the adoption of policies to facilitate the circulation of nationals of member States in the CPSC area. It was to be hoped that that initiative would promote the development of innovative actions of cooperation in the area of migration, and would help strengthen IOM's work in the CPSC member countries.

49. Mr. TARAN (Observer for Migrants' Rights International, MRI) said that MRI wished to express its views on "migration as if people mattered". There had indeed been a number of indications during the past year of a shift towards an explicit international recognition of the fact that protection of migrants' human rights and dignity was an essential component of orderly international migration.

50. The MRI was particularly pleased by the designation by the General Assembly of the United Nations of 18 December as International Migrants Day, which MRI believed would create an internationally recognized annual opportunity to recognize the tremendous material and cultural contributions which the more than 100 million migrants throughout the world made to their host countries and their home countries.

51. It was encouraging to learn that the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families would at last enter into force in the near future. The Global Campaign for Entry into Force of the International Convention on Migrants' Rights had contributed to that progress, since the number of accessions had doubled and that of the signatories tripled since the Campaign had been begun over two years previously. MRI noted that IOM was one of the international organizations contributing to that effort and appreciated the special reference to the protection of migrants' rights in the IOM programme of action being developed for the African region.

52. Another sign of growing concern for the treatment of migrants was the extensive attention being paid to migration and xenophobia in the preparations for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to be held in South Africa in 2001. It was particularly gratifying that that concern had been acknowledged as one of the three key areas at the recent European regional preparatory conference held in Strasbourg in October 2000 with participation at the ministerial level of all the 41 member States of the Council of Europe and several other countries as well.

53. The MRI welcomed the increased attention being given to the dimension of gender in migration. IOM's initiatives in that respect were more than timely as more than half of all migrants were women. Experience had shown that for such a strategy to be implemented effectively, the leadership and resources of the Organization must remain fully committed to it.

54. The regional courses and conferences organized by the International Migration Policy Programme (IMP), a joint effort of UNITAR, UNFPA, IOM and ILO, demonstrated the value and effectiveness of an inter-agency, inter-disciplinary approach to developing a comprehensive and coordinated strategy among governments in different regions.

55. With regard to international cooperation, MRI was pleased to be contributing to several emerging initiatives towards a coherent global approach to understanding and managing international migration “as if people mattered”. It was clear that the several international agencies whose concerns intersected with migratory factors had to cooperate, for no one organization could do the work alone, just as no one discipline could offer a comprehensive analysis. MRI noted that there was still neither an adequate multilateral forum nor a coherent global process for refining and implementing the kind of global programme of action on international migration that had been agreed at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994. It would encourage further efforts by IOM in cooperation with other key international agencies to give greater visibility and especially coordination of a holistic approach to migration in the international system.

56. Mr. ABELLA (Observer for the International Labour Organization) said that, in the area of promoting more orderly and more organized forms of international labour migration, ILO and IOM had on many occasions and in different parts of the world joined efforts to provide Member States, particularly those in the process of transition, with policy models and advice on their relevance to specific country situations. Over the past three years alone, the organizations had worked together in Kenya, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Costa Rica and in Central and Eastern Europe and Southern Africa. That collaboration had been further strengthened in recent years by such structures as the International Migration Policy Programme which had succeeded in pooling the different technical resources to respond to global training requirements.

57. Sound migration policy and management now faced the challenge of significant changes in labour markets as a result of new technologies, new forms of work, slowing rate of growth of labour forces in the industrialized world and intensifying global competition. Labour migration had become much less sensitive to levels of unemployment in countries of destination where rapid technology changes had made some skills obsolete and had rendered large groups of workers, particularly older ones, less employable. There was thus a considerable demand for foreign labour even in countries such as Germany, where a few million national workers had remained unemployed for many years and were unlikely to become employed in the future. New forms of work organization had emerged with the growth of the so-called “knowledge industries” and of the traditional services sectors, as consumption in affluent societies increasingly took the form of leisure. The rapid expansion of those sectors in many countries had been accompanied by the increasing flexibility of labour and by labour contracting arrangements less subject to the standards that had been established by labour institutions. The marked growth of the informal economy in the industrialized world was a phenomenon that had been associated with rising levels of labour migration.

58. By the end of the current decade, the impact of fertility decline, especially in Europe and in the more developed countries of Asia, would start to be felt and would no doubt change attitudes towards immigration. The growth of illegal migration as economies picked up was already symptomatic of growing deficits in the workforces of many economies. Pressures were also created by intensifying global competition as distance was eliminated by virtual communication and the rapidly declining cost of transport and as countries adopted more liberal trade policies.

59. All those developments combined to ensure that the forthcoming decade would see much greater pressures to widening the opening for the entry of foreign labour. The extent to which those pressures would lead to large migration movements would depend, *inter alia*, on the success of States in managing contemporary migration in a way that minimized social conflict and avoided dislocation of the more vulnerable groups and also on how successfully the world economy could adjust to transfer capital and production to where the labour was situated.

60. In establishing standards for the protection of workers employed in countries other than their own, ILO was seeking an international consensus on how to adjust its standards to the requirements of the future of work. Two years previously ILO had undertaken a general survey to assess the continued relevance of the migrants' conventions and only a few weeks previously the ILO Governing Body had considered the need to place migration on the agenda of a forthcoming ILO General Conference. With regard to labour migration policy, there was a continued need for models and principles to guide sound national decision-making. Regarding the admittance of temporary foreign labour, ILO had been reviewing the experience of its member States, notably in the use of immigration quotas, tax levies and skill preference schemes. The use of amnesties, regularization schemes and employers' sanctions had also been reviewed in connection with controlling the employment of undocumented foreign labour.

61. Where workers were admitted as settlers, the problem of integration was a major concern and in some countries the failure of integration reflected in high unemployment levels among some immigrant groups had contributed to negative views on immigration. An empirical study of the causes of high unemployment over a number of years had shown that immigrant workers, even of the second generation, faced 30 to 40 per cent more chance of being rejected for jobs simply on the basis of their ethnic background, and ILO was now working with authorities and non-governmental organizations in a number of countries to establish more effective measures to combat discrimination and to ensure equal treatment of immigrant workers.

62. While commercialization of recruitment had positive elements in terms of facilitating job search, it had also been associated with trafficking and forced labour. ILO saw a natural link with IOM's activities in that area, as its field structure became increasingly engaged at local levels in the work of preventing the exploitation of women workers and child labour.

63. The enormous challenge facing the international community in combating HIV/AIDS had aspects related to internal and cross-border labour migration in which ILO saw considerable advantages in linking its programmes with those of IOM. Collaboration between the two organizations in post-conflict management and in the promotion of employment and gainful activities in communities ravaged by war were also matters of urgency.

64. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that all the speakers in the debate were to be thanked for their substantive, detailed and interesting statements, which testified to the increasing importance of migration and the growing interest of governments and international organizations in migration management. Time constraints obliged him to concentrate his remarks on a few aspects that had been stressed during the debate.

65. He wished to assure the many delegations which had referred to IOM's core mandate that the services provided by IOM would continue to be the main focus of the Organization, although part of its work related to emergencies and covered activities carried out in cooperation with other international organizations in emergency and post-conflict situations.

66. Another multifaceted subject raised in many statements had been the conceptual aspect of migration policy and strategy and the role IOM should play in enhancing the intellectual debate that was becoming increasingly important in connection with migration and migration management. Its experience of field operations and services and its direct contacts with the existing problems and some of their solutions enabled IOM to help its Member States to deal with the conceptual side of migration management, notably with regard to research: thus, the World Migration Report was an example of the research and accumulation of statistics and other information that was essential for any intelligent policy debate.

67. With regard to the effects of globalization on migration and the links between global phenomena and regional processes and services, IOM intended to do more strategic thinking and had already begun work along those lines in connection with its migration policy framework for sub-Saharan Africa. The debate had also shown that similar efforts were to be undertaken with the GRULAC countries. The question of finding models and principles for labour migration policies would become increasingly important and existing standards and practices in that area needed to be codified, with respect not only to migrants' rights, but also to government responsibilities at all stages of migration management.

68. He therefore believed that over the next few years IOM would be very interested in working with all its Members to develop the conceptual side of migration. It would of course continue to work closely with UNHCR in global consultations on asylum and migration and also with the States of the European Union in their efforts to develop standards for multidimensional migration management.

69. The CHAIRMAN invited the Council to consider the draft resolution on IOM involvement in the follow-up to the CIS Conference (MC/L/995).

70. The draft resolution on IOM involvement in the follow-up to the CIS Conference (MC/L/995) was adopted.

Agenda item 8

DRAFT REPORTS ON THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH SESSION AND THE SEVENTY-NINTH (SPECIAL) SESSION OF THE COUNCIL

(MC/1989, MC/2000, MC/L/996)

71. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no amendments to the reports had been received, invited the Council to consider the relevant draft resolution in document MC/L/996.

72. The draft resolution on the reports of the Seventy-eighth Session and the Seventy-ninth (Special) Session of the Council (MC/L/996) was adopted.

Agenda item 9

REPORT ON THE NINETY-SEVENTH SESSION
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(MC/2007, MC/2006, MC/2005, MC/2005/Corr.1 (English only), MC/L/997)

73. The CHAIRMAN noted that, although the Executive Committee at its spring session had examined in detail the Report on the work of the Organization for 1999 and the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 1999, those documents still required the formal approval of the Council. In the absence of any comments, he therefore took it that the Council wished to endorse the decisions of the Executive Committee made at its spring session and to take note of the Report on the Ninety-seventh Session of the Executive Committee (MC/2007) and of the Report of the Director General on the work of the Organization for the year 1999 (MC/2006), and to approve the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 1999 (MC/2005) by adopting the relevant draft resolution in document MC/L/997.

74. The draft resolution on the report on the Ninety-seventh Session of the Executive Committee (MC/L/997) was adopted.

Agenda item 10

SUMMARY UPDATE ON THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2000

(MC/2009, MC/1977, MC/2016)

75. The CHAIRMAN invited the Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance to report to the Council on the Subcommittee's discussions and recommendations.

76. Ms. CALLANGAN-RUECA (Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance) said that the Subcommittee had proposed no changes to the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2000, which was based on zero nominal growth and amounted to CHF 34,060,000. Estimated expenditure in the Operational Part of the Budget had since increased by some USD 75.9 million, bringing the total to about USD 349.6 million. The increase was mainly due to new and expanded activities related to the Kosovo emergency programmes.

77. The summary update document (MC/2009) had been examined in detail and the Subcommittee had discussed the expansion of operational programmes and its impact on the Administrative Part of the Budget and on Discretionary Income. The question of the impact of programmes undertaken in non-member States on the Administrative Part of the Budget had been raised, as had that of the amount of income from service fees received by IOM in connection with transportation projects in Kosovo and East Timor.

78. The Administration had provided answers to those questions, details of which were given in the Report on the Subcommittee's Eighty-fourth Session (MC/2016). The Deputy Director General had also stated that a short document would be prepared on the rationale for project-related overhead income.

79. The Subcommittee on Budget and Finance had recommended that the Council take note of the Summary Update on the Programme and Budget for 2000 (MC/2009).

80. Mr. THEVENAZ (Switzerland) drew attention to the large differences between the approved and the revised Operational Part of the Budgets for the past four years. Thus, the additional amount over the approved budget in 1997 had been USD 78 million, an increase of 49 per cent; in 1998, the difference had been USD 23 million, or a 13 per cent increase; in 1999, the difference of USD 53 million had shown an increase of 24 per cent; and the difference for the current year amounted to USD 76 million, showing a 28 per cent increase. It would be seen that the average increase over the past four years stood at some 28 per cent, so that the Operational Part of the Budget of USD 303 million approved for 2001 might be expected to be revised to USD 390 million by the Council session in November 2001.

81. While Switzerland understood that it was not easy to forecast the international situation and possible crises when budgeting in advance and did not blame IOM for being taken by surprise by events such as the Kosovo crisis, it wished to point out that Member States also had to plan ahead and were not in a position to ask their parliaments for additional credits of some 30 per cent every year. His delegation therefore requested the Administration to make further efforts to enhance IOM's credibility by avoiding such large budgetary increases.

82. The Council took note of the Summary Update on the Programme and Budget for 2000 (MC/2009).

Agenda item 11

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2001

(MC/2010, MC/2010/Amdt.1, MC/INF/243, MC/2016, MC/L/998, MC/L/998/Amdt.1)

83. The CHAIRMAN invited the Council to examine the Programme and Budget for 2001 (MC/2010) and to take note of document MC/INF/243 "Migration Initiatives 2001" containing project proposals which did not have sufficient funding but were of priority interest to Member States.

84. Ms. CALLANGAN-RUECA (Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance) said that the item had been one of the most important ones on the Subcommittee's agenda and had given rise to lengthy and constructive discussion, as reflected in the Subcommittee's report (MC/2016).

85. In her statement to the Subcommittee, the Deputy Director General had provided background information and described the rationale for an increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001. The Programme and Budget for 2001 (MC/2016) contained an initial proposal for a 9.6 per cent increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001. As no consensus had been reached on the level of that increase at the Eighty-third (Additional) Session of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, held on 20 September 2000, the Administration had also prepared a document illustrating the budgetary adjustments that would have to be made to accommodate increases of 6 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively.

86. The Chairman of the Subcommittee had then pursued informal consultations with delegations and regional groups and had reported that most delegations agreed to an increase, but that no agreement had been reached on its level, although the majority favoured a 5 per cent increase.

87. During the lengthy discussion on the subject, a significant majority of delegations had supported an increase. The delegate of Paraguay, however, had opposed an increase because of serious budgetary restrictions in his country and the delegate of Venezuela considered it wiser to defer the decision until the question of IOM's programmes for Latin America and the Caribbean had been reviewed. Almost all speakers had emphasized that zero nominal growth should be the guiding principle in the preparation of the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2002.

88. The large majority of speakers had finally supported an increase of 5 per cent in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001. A proposal to allocate from Discretionary Income an amount of USD 1 million for projects in developing Member States and Member States in transition had been put forward and widely supported. There had also been a strong call for equitable regional distribution of those additional resources. The Administration had pointed out that an amount of USD 430,000 had already been allocated for that purpose in the Programme and Budget for 2001. Some delegations had stated, however, that the amount of USD 1 million should be additional to the funds already allocated. The Chairman of the Subcommittee had emphasized that the Council was sovereign and could therefore decide, if it so wished, that the USD 1 million should represent an additional amount.

89. With respect to the Operational Part of the Budget, which amounted to some USD 303 million, questions had been raised concerning exchange rates, sources and application of Discretionary Income, the lack of programmes in certain developing countries and certain projects which appeared to fall outside IOM's core mandate. The Administration had provided detailed answers and had suggested that further bilateral meetings could be held to clarify specific issues. The Director of the German Forced Labour Compensation Programme had provided a detailed overview of that project.

90. A draft resolution, to be presented to the Council for adoption, had been discussed in the Subcommittee. Several delegations had provided inputs and had suggested changes, in particular to paragraph 5 concerning the allocation of Discretionary Income for projects in developing Member States and Member States in transition.

91. Finally, having examined document MC/2010 in detail, the Subcommittee had recommended that the Council adopt the Programme and Budget for 2001, on the basis of the draft resolution set out in document MC/L/998.

92. The CHAIRMAN said that the GRULAC countries had submitted an amendment to the draft resolution, consisting of the addition of the phrase "without prejudice to funds already allocated for these purposes" at the end of operative paragraph 5 (see MC/L/998/Amdt.1).

93. Mr. BARREIRO PERROTA (Paraguay) said that, although Paraguay endorsed the statements made by the Colombian delegation on behalf of GRULAC, it wished to clarify its position regarding the proposed increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2001 and the departure from the principle of zero nominal growth. His country was labouring under severe budgetary constraints due to its extremely difficult and constantly deteriorating economic and financial situation and was therefore unable to play its part in helping IOM to meet the challenges confronting it. Although his delegation did not object in principle to the proposed exceptional increase in the assessed contributions of the majority of Members, it did object to the imposition of the cost of that increase on the poorest countries, such as Paraguay.

94. Mr. PENROD (Costa Rica) said that, although his delegation supported the increase in the Administrative Part of the Budget as an exceptional measure, his country's national budget for 2001, including Costa Rica's assessed contribution at the original rate, had already been approved by the National Legislative Assembly, so that it would be technically difficult to effect the increase that was to be adopted by the Council.

95. Mr. PERRUCHOUD (Legal Adviser), confirmed that the views of the delegate of Paraguay would be duly reflected in the records of the meeting and in the Council's report, and that the concern expressed by the delegate of Costa Rica had been noted by the Administration.

96. The CHAIRMAN invited the Council to adopt the Programme and Budget for 2001, as proposed in documents MC/2010 and MC/2010/Amdt.1, by adopting the draft resolution in document MC/L/998, as amended in document MC/L/998/Amdt.1, and to take note of the amount of USD 102,858,083 of funding requirements contained in document MC/INF/243, "Migration Initiatives 2001".

97. The Council took note of document MC/INF/243 "Migration Initiatives 2001" and adopted the draft resolution on the Programme and Budget for 2001 (MC/L/998), as amended, (MC/L/998/Amdt.1).

98. Mr. THEVENAZ (Switzerland) said that his delegation had deliberately deferred its remarks on the effects of the currency fluctuations until the resolution on the Programme and Budget for 2001 had been adopted, in order to demonstrate its desire to facilitate IOM's task in the implementation of its mandate. The Operational Part of the Budget for 2001 amounted to some USD 303 million and since the beginning of the year 2000, the United States dollar had appreciated by more than 26 per cent against the Swiss franc and by 35 per cent against the euro. IOM's disbursements in the field for the implementation of those programmes would therefore be made in weaker currencies in relation to the United States dollar. The competent Swiss services had attempted to calculate the effect of that difference on the total Operational Part of the Budget and had identified USD 246 million in countries of utilization. Of that amount, the cost price of the projected programmes would be some USD 31 million lower. Those calculations had been communicated to IOM on 14 November 2000 and a reply had been received on 17 November, stating that the expected gains would be much lower. His delegation was grateful for that explanation, but did not think that it quite answered the questions that had been raised, and hoped that the external auditor, when elected, would be able to review that question and report on it at the next meeting of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance.

99. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that the Administration would certainly request the external auditor to examine the question of exchange rates.

100. Mr. REED (Administration) said that, although IOM spent over USD 300 million a year in many different currencies and could experience large exchange gains or losses if proper attention were not paid

to that question, it in fact followed a deliberate policy for limiting such risks. Attempts were made to ensure that for each project the income was in the same or in a similar currency to that of the anticipated expenditure, and that was generally checked before the acceptance of every new project activity. Most IOM projects were therefore appropriately matched with the income and the expenditure in the same currency, and to cover the few cases when such matching was not achievable an accounting system was maintained whereby income and expenditure, including any gains due to currency fluctuations, were retained within the project and were thus at the disposal of the donor who had funded the activity. Although it believed that that system was consistent with the requirement of its financial responsibility and accountability for the funds provided by Member States, IOM nevertheless understood the concern of Member States that exchange rates could represent an area of substantive risk to the Organization and it intended to request the external auditor to take special note of that concern during the forthcoming audit of the accounts for the year 2000, on which they would be reporting to the spring session of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance.

101. Mr. SAHRAOUI (Algeria), noting that the problem of currency exchange rates was not raised in similar debates of the administrative and financial bodies of other international agencies, suggested that it would be advisable simply to request IOM to report on the subject every year and to trust the Organization to make its reports as transparent as possible.

Agenda item 14

APPOINTMENT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR THE PERIOD 2001-2003 (MC/2013, MC/L/999)

102. The CHAIRMAN introduced document MC/2013 containing background information on the appointment of IOM's external auditors. He also drew attention to the summary of the relevant discussions in the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance (in document MC/2016), during which Italy had withdrawn its offer to act as external auditor, after which three offers, from Norway, Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania, remained standing. The three remaining candidates were: The Auditor General of Norway; The Commission on Audit, Republic of the Philippines; The Office of the Controller and the Auditor General of Tanzania. He outlined the relevant procedure which was based on a secret ballot (Rule 45 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council), with a simple majority vote (Article 29 of the Constitution) by the Members present and voting (Rule 38 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council). Further to the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, the three countries concerned had agreed that, as a first step towards selecting a candidate, an indicative ballot would be taken and the candidate obtaining the lowest number of votes would withdraw. A formal ballot would then be taken with only two candidates listed on the ballot papers.

103. He then invited the Council to hold an informal secret ballot with a view to eliminating the candidate with the least number of votes, leaving only two candidates for the final vote, to be held during the following meeting.

104. An informal secret ballot was taken, with Mr. Selim Labib (Egypt) and Mr. Borisovas (Lithuania) acting as tellers, at the invitation of the Chairman.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.