

**MC/2033**

**Original: English  
29 June 2001**

**EIGHTY-FIRST (SPECIAL) SESSION**

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**DRAFT REPORT ON THE  
EIGHTY-FIRST (SPECIAL) SESSION OF THE COUNCIL**

Geneva

7 June 2001

Rapporteur: Mr. E. Borisovas (Lithuania)

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**DRAFT REPORT ON THE  
EIGHTY-FIRST (SPECIAL) SESSION OF THE COUNCIL**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Council convened for its Eighty-first (Special) Session on Thursday, 7 June 2001, at 3.20 p.m., in the Palais des Nations, under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. J. E. Vega (Chile). One meeting was held. 1/

**ATTENDANCE 2/**

2. The following Member States were represented:

Albania	Democratic	Italy	Sierra Leone <u>3/</u>
Algeria	Republic of the	Japan	Slovakia
Angola	Congo <u>3/</u>	Jordan	Slovenia
Argentina	Denmark	Kenya	South Africa
Australia	Dominican	Latvia	Sri Lanka
Austria	Republic	Lithuania	Sweden
Azerbaijan <u>3/</u>	Ecuador	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Bangladesh	Egypt	Morocco	Thailand
Belgium	El Salvador	Netherlands	Tunisia
Bulgaria	Finland	Nicaragua	United Kingdom
Canada	France	Norway	of Great Britain
Chile	Gambia <u>3/</u>	Panama	and Northern
Colombia	Georgia <u>3/</u>	Paraguay	Ireland <u>3/</u>
Congo <u>3/</u>	Germany	Peru	United States
Costa Rica	Greece	Philippines	of America
Croatia	Guatemala	Poland	Uruguay
Cyprus	Honduras	Portugal	Venezuela
Czech Republic	Hungary	Republic of Korea	Yemen
	Israel	Senegal	Zambia

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina, China 3/, Estonia, Holy See, Kazakhstan, Malta, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and Yugoslavia were represented by observers.

4. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the *Organisation internationale de la francophonie* were represented by observers.

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1/ The discussions are reported in detail in the summary record of the meeting (MC/C/SR/433).

2/ See List of Participants (MC/2035).

3/ See paragraphs 8 and 9.

5. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the following international non-governmental organizations were represented by observers: *Assistance pédagogique internationale* (API) 3/ and the International Islamic Relief Organisation.

#### **CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES AND OBSERVERS**

6. The Council took note that the Director General had examined the credentials of the representatives of the Member States listed in paragraph 2 and found them to be in order, and that he had been advised of the names of the observers for the non-member States and the governmental and non-governmental organizations listed in paragraphs 3 to 5.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

7. The Council adopted the agenda set out in document MC/2023/Rev.1.

#### **MEMBERSHIP:**

- (a) Application by the Republic of the Congo for membership in the Organization
- (b) Application by the Republic of Azerbaijan for membership in the Organization
- (c) Application by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for membership in the Organization
- (d) Application by the Democratic Republic of the Congo for membership in the Organization
- (e) Application by the Republic of Sierra Leone for membership in the Organization
- (f) Application by the Republic of the Gambia for membership in the Organization
- (g) Application by Georgia for membership in the Organization

8. At its 433rd meeting, the Council adopted Resolutions Nos. 1038, 1039, 1040, 1041, 1042, 1043 and 1044 (LXXXI) admitting the Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Republic of the Gambia, and Georgia as Members of IOM.

**OBSERVERSHIP:**

- (a) Application by the People's Republic of China for representation by an observer
- (b) Application by Assistance pédagogique internationale (API) for representation by an observer

9. Also at its 433rd meeting, the Council adopted Resolutions Nos. 1045 and 1046 (LXXXI) granting the People's Republic of China and *Assistance pédagogique internationale* (API) observer status at its meetings.

10. Representatives of new Members and observers were then given the floor. Their statements are reflected in summary record MC/C/SR/433.

11. They expressed their appreciation for being admitted to the Council as Members and observers of the Organization and looked forward to increased cooperation with IOM.

12. The representative of the Republic of the Congo said that a close and cordial relationship had already been established between his country and IOM. His Government was grateful for the assistance it had received in the disarming of militia, the collection of weapons and the reintegration of former militia members into civil life, thereby contributing to the consolidation of the peace process. Such cooperation would need to be stepped up, in view of the Republic of the Congo's geographical position as a country of transit in the heart of Central Africa and consequently as a country predestined to migratory flows by its history. That situation had been further aggravated by the precariousness of its economy, by political conflicts and crises and by natural catastrophes. He was convinced that the concept of globalization without a coherent migratory policy based on concerted action and collective responsibility would inevitably jeopardize long-term strategies and world development policies. By attempting to tackle migration problems at global level, IOM made a major contribution to development. His Government fully supported the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme.

13. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan said that in view of the current social and economic situation, it was essential to find new methods of migration management based on international cooperation. The action taken by his country in that connection had created the necessary conditions for its admission to the Council of Europe. However, despite its achievements, there were a number of major problems still to be solved in Azerbaijan, one of the most substantial being migration. There were various factors which seriously aggravated the current migration situation. A number of laws had been passed to create a legislative basis for migration management and bilateral agreements had been concluded in that connection. A special State programme on forced migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons had also been adopted. Intensified cooperation between the Azerbaijani Government and IOM had focused in particular on capacity-building in migration management and, through the cluster approach, information campaigns for irregular migration prevention, assistance for migrants' voluntary return, programmes on micro-credits and employment and border control improvement.

14. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland noted that his country had been absent from IOM membership for 32 years and was delighted to be back. His national authorities looked forward to building on the solid links which had already been established through a close and long-standing relationship with the Organization. In 2000 his country had provided financial support for IOM's work on counter-trafficking in the Balkans, capacity-building, the shelter programme for migrant workers in Gujarat (India) and emergency preparedness and response. Positive discussions had also been held on such important issues as irregular migration and cross-border movement of skilled labour.

15. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo said that his presence was clear proof of the interest his Government took in IOM. While the situation in his country had already been disturbing during the 1970s and 1980s as a result of brain drain, after which various programmes had been set up to counteract the crisis, the war affecting the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the past three years had provoked massive displacement of its population. Now, thanks to the tireless activity of his Government, his compatriots were confident about the country's future, particularly with the support of bilateral and multilateral partners. In that context, admission to IOM was of particular significance. Access to its facilities and programmes, such as the Migration for Development in Africa programme, offered possibilities for solving the problems of reinsertion and migration.

16. The representative of the Republic of Sierra Leone acknowledged the services already rendered to his country by IOM. Sierra Leone was just emerging from a ten-year war that had created a great deal of suffering, degradation, poverty and disease, and had produced large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. His Government hoped that Sierra Leone would benefit from return migration and refugee programmes, as well as from the transfer of qualified human resources.

17. The representative of the Republic of the Gambia stressed that as a country of transit and migration, owing to its geographical location, the Gambia had great need of the Organization's services. Since the recent adoption of a plan of action, an institutional framework for migration management had been established in the Gambia. The country had subsequently enjoyed a new level of collaboration with IOM in developing national migration programmes, including a technical cooperation programme to establish a governmental commission for migration management and border control services. A national strategy on migration policy was to be considered for 2001 and special emphasis had been laid on the active involvement of relevant non-governmental organizations. Because of the current situation in the southern part of Senegal, IOM's services were particularly needed.

18. The representative of Georgia said that his Government attached enormous importance to migration issues since Georgia had been severely affected by the movement of displaced persons within and across its borders. At present, there were nearly 300,000 internally displaced persons throughout Georgia giving rise to serious social and economic problems which were difficult to handle. Due to its geopolitical situation, his country was also used as a transit area for illegal migration and human trafficking and therefore needed additional measures to protect its borders. His Government was particularly interested in the new IOM cluster proposal and was optimistic that it would help countries to achieve their multilateral and regional goals in migration management.

19. The representative of the People's Republic of China said that the Chinese Government considered that regular movement of persons and migration would be beneficial to promoting mutual understanding and cooperation among States in the economic, social and cultural fields. At the same time, the Chinese Government was resolutely opposed to illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, against which a number of measures had been taken. States should strengthen cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect and make joint efforts to combat transnational criminal acts connected with migration. IOM, as an important international body, had made substantial efforts in promoting international cooperation on migration issues.

20. The representative of *Assistance pédagogique internationale* (API) said that API provided technical advice and consultancy services in civil protection and training relating to first-aid, fire-protection and natural and industrial hazards. It also established prevention and early warning programmes for the protection of people, goods and the environment. His organization's activities contributed indirectly to assisting people to return to normal life and to developing civic awareness. API already had experience of cooperation with IOM, especially in Kosovo where it had been engaged in the restructuring of protection services and the setting-up of tactical strategies for first-aid and rescue operations, based on special training courses.

21. Following the statements by the representatives of the new Members and observers, the Chairman said that the free movement of people, with the concomitant implications for human rights and human dignity and the need for States to achieve effective migration control, was becoming one of the salient characteristics of the twenty-first century, and that IOM provided an important forum for exchange of views on such issues. He then gave the floor to delegates to welcome the new Members and observers.

22. Those delegates who took the floor welcomed IOM's growing membership, which reflected increasing world interest in migration matters and enhanced IOM's status within the community of international organizations. One delegate particularly welcomed the increasing number within IOM of African countries which were important centres of migrant populations and faced significant problems of displaced persons and precarious situations calling for international solidarity. He also expressed appreciation of IOM's humanitarian mission, providing vital protection to migrant workers and contributing to counter-trafficking measures.

23. Another speaker said that new migration challenges were emerging as economic globalization and the rapid progress of science and technology broke down the barriers of isolation and engendered a massive mix of peoples and cultures. Regrettably, social, ecological and human disasters, conflicts and poverty in several regions of the world had had deep negative consequences which called for greater solidarity. He emphasized the importance of the links between migration and human rights and between migration and development, and expressed particular appreciation of IOM's programmes for migrants from the least developed countries and its return programmes.

24. It was also stressed by other speakers that, as IOM gradually achieved greater universality, reflecting the growing importance attached to migration in the twenty-first century, the Organization's functionality, flexibility and capability for rapid response to the migration problems arising in a changing world should be maintained and further developed. Furthermore, the universality and efficiency of IOM's international action for migration was essential at the present times of globalization and increasing population movements. It was important to

humanize globalization, to eliminate as far as possible its concomitant risks and disadvantages and to maximize its advantages, especially the aspects of population displacement and migration which could increase the welfare of humanity.

25. The Deputy Director General welcomed the new Members and observers. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had always encouraged regular migration and was a country where human rights were respected. At the same time, it was currently experiencing increasing migration problems for which IOM was ready to help find solutions. Georgia and the Republic of Azerbaijan had a considerable need for training and technical cooperation in the field of management of population flows. The Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Sierra Leone were countries that had great need of post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction and the return of qualified nationals to stimulate their national economies – an area in which IOM's Migration for Development in Africa programme could provide valuable assistance. IOM also stood ready to help the Republic of the Gambia which played a key role in West Africa, receiving migrants from Senegal, Mauritius and Guinea-Bissau. It was impossible to consider migration on the global scale without taking into account the participation of the People's Republic of China which she hoped would soon move to member status. Commending *Assistance pédagogique internationale* (API) for its valuable work in Kosovo, she expressed the hope that API would accompany IOM in its programmes in Timor, the Congo and the Great Lakes region in Africa. She said that as migration increased, the need for IOM's intervention and cooperation was also growing, in order to manage new migration flows and new development challenges. In that area, the Migration for Development in Africa programme could provide assistance by encouraging the return of qualified nationals whose skills could be instrumental in furthering the economic development of their countries.

26. The Director General then welcomed the new Members and observers to the Organization, highlighting a number of points raised in their statements to the Council. Regarding the Republic of the Congo, he noted the importance of the programme for the reinsertion of ex-combatants. The delegate of the Republic of Azerbaijan had mentioned the cluster approach establishing dialogue between the three South Caucasus countries – a successful experiment which could well be applied in other regions in future. He also noted the mention of the Nagorno Karabakh problem to which IOM was ready to provide assistance. He expressed gratitude to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland which had been a generous and faithful supporter of IOM's activities over the years. The delegate of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had underlined the importance of the return of qualified workers, for which the new Migration for Development in Africa programme could provide much-needed assistance. In Sierra Leone and neighbouring Guinea, IOM was currently engaged in a major operation with UNHCR for the return of refugees and displaced persons. The delegate of the Gambia had drawn attention to the role which IOM could play in assisting countries to build their own capacity in migration management in preparation for the new challenges facing them. Regarding Georgia, he noted the reference to the problem in Meskethi region – an area in which IOM could assist in cooperation with the Russian Federation and other countries in which the deported Meskethi populations had settled. He welcomed the People's Republic of China as an observer. IOM's cooperation with China had already begun and included a jointly organized workshop to be held the following week in Beijing. He hoped that China would subsequently become a full Member



of IOM. He expressed thanks to *Assistance pédagogique internationale* (API), the other new observer, for its valuable assistance to IOM in carrying out one of the most difficult tasks in Kosovo.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

27. There was no further business.

#### **CLOSURE OF THE SESSION**

28. The Chairman thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the Eighty-first (Special) Session of the Council.

29. The Eighty-first (Special) Session of the Council closed on Thursday, 7 June 2001, at 5 p.m.