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THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Mr. Brunson McKinley

to the Eighty-second Session of the Council

27-29 November 2001

Geneva

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MICEM/7/2001
Page 1

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1. This year, IOM's Council meeting is different. Different because it is IOM's 50th anniversary. Different also because this gathering is the launch of what I believe will be a very fruitful dialogue on migration policy issues and challenges.
2. The outline of the Council session, which was already sent to you, lists the topics which are to be addressed by the keynote speakers and the panellists on the first day, before the start of the General Debate. These topics highlight important elements of the broad spectrum of migration challenges and are intended to establish the platform for a rich exchange of ideas and perspectives.
3. In order not to delay the start of this important discussion, I shall not be reading this report, which would normally be a statement, at the opening of the Council meeting. Nonetheless, I wanted to provide an overview of developments in IOM over the past year. These developments, along with the migration policies and ideas discussed on the first day of the Council, will form the backdrop for the General Debate, beginning on the second day, which promises to be both informative to other participants and give broad guidance to IOM on its future paths.
4. The events of September 11 have had a profound effect on the world, both broadly on migration issues, and specifically in Afghanistan, where IOM has been working since the early summer to help people displaced by conflict and drought in the north and west of the country.
5. Afghanistan: Since the evacuation of international staff in September, IOM's local staff, of which there are some 150, have continued working tirelessly to help deliver the essential winterization supplies to the displaced, the stranded and other vulnerable groups. We have international staff stationed in the countries surrounding Afghanistan to provide support and guidance, procure and dispatch the supplies, oversee the operation and prepare for return as soon as conditions permit. I was pleased to see, during my recent visit to Herat, that our colleagues there have made excellent progress in the winterization of the two large IDP camps for which we are responsible. I have no doubt that the hundreds of thousands of drought victims there will survive to return home next spring.

6. With the support of donors and excellent cooperation with sister agencies, such as WFP and UNICEF, and NGO partners, we have managed to achieve a great deal, but winter is already arriving and we need to continue getting supplies in, even while the political and military landscapes are evolving.

7. We are planning for a quick start-up of post-conflict activities the moment we have the access and the means for effective implementation. These activities include many of the types of programmes in which we have gained broad experience, most recently in places like Kosovo and Timor. We are also preparing for a programme to register and assist in the return of qualified Afghan nationals to try to ensure that the necessary human resources are quickly in place to get reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts off to a flying start.

8. On the broader migration front post-September 11, much has changed and yet much has remained the same. The inequalities in wealth, development and opportunities which motivate people to move in search of a better life, the ease of communication with diasporas, and the demographic trends which will create the need for the import of labour in most of the developed world, as well as a labour supply that exceeds the capacity of economies in many developing countries to absorb; all these remain unchanged.

9. Other things have changed post-September 11 which affect migration policy. Migration movements will henceforth doubtless be the object of increased scrutiny and security measures. Efforts to combat irregular migration, particularly smuggling and trafficking, are receiving new attention and urgency. The slowdown of the world economy will have an impact both on countries of origin - increasing the migratory pressures - and on countries of destination, by reducing their levels of tolerance and absorptive capacity, at least in the short term.

10. But the events of September 11 have also created new opportunities. The need to address migration challenges in a comprehensive and systematic manner is now receiving the attention it deserves at all levels. This should translate also into renewed attention to implementing measures to ensure successful integration of migrants, and to create or strengthen legal channels of migration alongside efforts to curtail illegal migration, smuggling and trafficking. Cooperation and properly functioning partnerships between countries of origin, transit and destination will increase as countries realize the necessity of bilateral, regional, and indeed global cooperation. Efforts in this regard, such as the Berne Initiative, to identify common elements or principles establishing a framework for migration management, warrant our focused attention and support. Renewed attention should also be given to solving conflicts and situations giving rise to population destabilization.

11. Now turning to developments in IOM during 2001. This anniversary year has brought much progress, as is entirely appropriate to an organization – and a policy issue - reaching new levels of maturity.

12. New Members and observers. At this Council session, the application by five new Members will be considered: the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Cape Verde, the Republic of Madagascar, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ukraine. These, together with the seven Members admitted at the June session of the Council, will bring the total number of IOM Members to 91. We are aware of other States engaged in making the necessary arrangements

formally to apply for membership. We also have important new observers joining this year: the Kingdom of Nepal, the Maghreb Arab Union and the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office. IOM's membership, relevance, presence and programmes are now truly global.

13. Migration Policy and Research Programme (MPRP). As a direct result of the discussions at the Council in 2000, IOM launched the Migration Policy and Research Programme in January 2001. The programme has started well and this Council session initiating policy discussion on migration at the global level is a very concrete outcome of the work of the MPRP team. In this connection, under the leadership of MPRP, IOM's second World Migration Report, due out in 2002, is intended to offer a stronger policy analysis angle. IOM's research and analysis capacity has already been increasingly recognized and in demand in recent years. The core research team has increased the number and depth of IOM publications significantly. The work of the research team is now being complemented by that of the MPRP team, with which a number of collaborative submissions and presentations have been made to a range of institutions, conferences and gatherings. I expect the pace and outreach of research, analysis and synthesis to accelerate and broaden as the MPRP team settles in.

14. Migration diplomacy. Throughout the year there have been a number of important international fora covering key aspects of migration to which IOM has contributed. For example:

- The Second South American Conference on Migration in Santiago, Chile in April which made concrete steps towards the establishment of a permanent regional forum on migration;
- The Conference on Least Developed Countries in Brussels in May focusing on migration and development;
- The Berne Symposium in June examining the feasibility of establishing an international framework for migration management, for which IOM has been asked to provide support to the follow-up;
- The UNHCR Global Consultation on the nexus between asylum and migration for which IOM and UNHCR presented a joint paper, and which has led to the creation of a joint working group on these issues;
- The Asian African Legal Consultative Organization's ministerial meeting in New Delhi in June, at which the rights of migrants were a key focus;
- The OAU Council of Ministers in Lusaka in July discussed and adopted an important decision on migration for the first time;
- The Durban World Conference against Racism, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in August, at which the one subject of consensus was migration and a number of important articles on the subject of migrants' rights were adopted in the final document;
- The EU Migration Conference in Brussels in October, on efforts to achieve common migration policies;

- The International Conference in Rome at which different experiences of labour and social integration practices were discussed;
- The Fifth European Conference in Helsinki, aiming to promote a concerted approach to integration in Europe;
- The Round Table Discussion, organized on 26 November 2001, in collaboration with the Geneva authorities, as part of the preparations for the Council, with labour migration specialists and representatives of governments, the business community and civil society.

15. The Deputy Director General, at these and other events, has been tireless in her efforts to gain support for migration and development initiatives, in particular the Migration for Development in Africa Programme (MIDA), which explores new ways of fostering development by strengthening the role and participation of the diaspora.

16. All these initiatives have enriched the level of knowledge and understanding of migration challenges and the measures to address them.

17. IOM services. The demand for our existing services has reached new levels in 2001, both in volume and geographical scope. We have also seen a significant increase in demand for additional services, such as the management of organized labour migration, and we have added this new service area in our programme for 2002. Integration of migrants and combating discrimination and xenophobia in host countries are areas where IOM is working more systematically with a range of countries. Migrant processing is also a service increasingly in demand, and we have had important discussions with a number of governments seeking our help with a wide range of activities related to this. I expect to have much more to say on the subject of migrant processing next year.

18. Cluster. The success story of 2001 in facilitating and cultivating partnerships between groups of countries of origin, transit and destination has been the so-called "Cluster" discussions between certain west European countries and the three countries of the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Real progress in cooperation has been made on a range of issues, with some collaboration being implemented through IOM programmes, and other activities being arranged bilaterally through the nurturing of direct communication channels.

19. Looking now at IOM's activities and achievements by region:

Western Mediterranean: During 2001, IOM has made substantial progress in this region. We have established an IOM Office in Tunisia and programmatic activities have been launched in Morocco and Algeria. In addition, we have initiated and encouraged the development of a framework for a regional cooperation process on common migration issues in the Western Mediterranean. A first ministerial conference related to this regional process is planned for next year in Tunis.

Latin America: This is a region of long-standing technical cooperation between IOM and the governments. We have strengthened our support to such important regional entities as

the Puebla Process; and sought to open new areas of cooperation on counter-trafficking, labour migration, migrant health and border management, for example, in the Caribbean.

Africa: Emergency and post-conflict activities continue to be a significant part of IOM's activities in Africa. Another major activity has been the nurturing of dialogue among countries sharing similar problems, or for which the exchange of migration experience is of direct benefit. I am thinking here particularly of the progress made with both the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) - the regional dialogue mechanism for the countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and with the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which adopted the Dakar Declaration. Another significant development in 2001 was the launching of the Migration for Development in Africa Programme (MIDA) which I have already mentioned.

Asia: In addition to consolidating and expanding on our existing programmes, we have notable events and developments to report on, such as the workshop on illegal migration and trafficking in Beijing, new operations in India to stabilize and assist migrant populations affected by the Gujarat earthquake, the beginning of a dialogue with Myanmar, and a significant increase in our activities to assist smuggled and stranded migrants in the region around Indonesia and Australia.

20. Resolution 1035 facility. In all the regions of developing and transition countries, the funds allocated for project development and support under Council Resolution No. 1035 in 2000 have proven an important tool, strengthening our capacity to foster and develop projects in Member States. Fifty Member States will benefit from the allocations made this year. Clearly the experience during the first year of managing this fund and implementing the projects it supports has taught important lessons which will feed into the management of the fund in 2002. One direct and immediate benefit of the facility has been the increased dialogue between our Missions and Member countries' authorities on priority areas for future activities. We will be reporting on these developments in more detail at a meeting which we will arrange to follow up the discussions held at the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance in October 2001.

21. Regional processes. Progress in the various regional processes has continued in 2001. As the publication on regional processes which IOM issued in 2001 points out, the different regional mechanisms, having been formed in different ways and in response to different challenges, have developed and are evolving in different ways. But one benefit which is common to all is the very existence of a regional forum or mechanism which provides a framework for consultation and networking outside the formal activities or gatherings of the dialogue or mechanism.

22. Conclusion. A fiftieth anniversary is an important time to look back and reflect, but it is also an important time to be looking forward. I am confident that this Council will provide both inspiration and guidance to IOM to face the future, confident that it has a crucial role to play, and ready to find its proper place in the global and globalized system, to continue its work to help governments and migrants seek and find the benefits of properly managed migration.