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**EIGHTY-THIRD (SPECIAL) SESSION**

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

Geneva

5 June 2002

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

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Council convened for its Eighty-third (Special) Session on Wednesday, 5 June 2002, at 10.20 a.m. in the Palais des Nations, under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. M. P. Kariyawasam (Sri Lanka). One meeting was held. 1/

**ATTENDANCE 2/**

2. The following Member States were represented:

Albania	Democratic	Italy	Senegal
Algeria	Republic of the	Japan	Slovakia
Angola	Congo	Jordan	Slovenia
Argentina	Denmark	Kenya	South Africa
Armenia	Dominican	Kyrgyzstan	Sri Lanka
Australia	Republic	Latvia	Sudan
Austria	Ecuador	Lithuania	Sweden
Azerbaijan	Egypt	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Bangladesh	El Salvador	Madagascar	Thailand
Belgium	Finland	Mexico <u>3/</u>	Tunisia
Benin	France	Morocco	Ukraine
Bulgaria	Georgia	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Canada	Germany	Nicaragua	of Great Britain
Cape Verde	Greece	Norway	and Northern
Chile	Guatemala	Pakistan	Ireland
Congo	Guinea	Panama	United States
Costa Rica	Haiti	Paraguay	of America
Côte d'Ivoire	Honduras	Peru	Uruguay
Croatia	Hungary	Philippines	Venezuela
Cyprus	Iran (Islamic	Poland	Yemen
Czech Republic	Republic of)	Portugal	Yugoslavia
	Ireland <u>3/</u>	Republic of Korea	Zambia
	Israel	Romania	

1/ The discussions are reported in detail in the summary record of the meeting (MC/C/SR/440).

2/ See List of Participants (MC/2069).

3/ See paragraph 11.

3. Belarus, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Cuba, Estonia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Holy See, Kazakhstan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya <sup>4/</sup>, Malta, Mauritania <sup>4/</sup>, Nepal, New Zealand, San Marino, Spain, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Viet Nam were represented by observers.

4. The United Nations, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, World Health Organization, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, the *Union du Maghreb Arabe* and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) – Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime <sup>4/</sup> were represented by observers.

5. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the following international non-governmental organizations were represented by observers: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, International Catholic Migration Commission, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Islamic Relief Organization and the *Assistance pédagogique internationale* (API).

#### **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/2061/Rev.2.

#### **OPENING REMARKS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL**

8. The Director General referred delegates to his report on developments from November 2001 to June 2002 (MICEM/4/2002) and said that the purpose of the Council meeting was to admit new Members and observers. In response to a longstanding request by Member States, there would also be a presentation on IOM's emergency and post-conflict work, which constituted an important element of the Organization's overall activities.

9. After closure of the Council session, a Round Table on inter-State cooperation in managing migration at the regional level would be held and would constitute a useful preparation for the relevant discussions at the Council session in December 2002.

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<sup>4/</sup> See paragraph 12.

10. A publication on the Eighty-second Session of the Council entitled “International Dialogue on Migration” had been distributed in English and French; the Spanish version would be available shortly.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

(a) Application by Mexico for membership in the Organization

(b) Application by Ireland for membership in the Organization

11. The Council adopted Resolutions Nos. 1061 and 1062 (LXXXIII) admitting Mexico and Ireland as Members of IOM.

## **OBSERVERSHIP**

(a) Application by the Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for representation by an observer

(b) Application by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for representation by an observer

(c) Application by the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) – Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime for representation by an observer

12. The Council adopted Resolutions Nos. 1063, 1064 and 1065 (LXXXIII) granting the Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) – Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime observer status at its meetings.

13. The representative of Mexico said that his country’s admission to IOM was of particular significance given its long history of emigration and immigration, both within and outside the region. Vast numbers of crossings were made every year of Mexico’s border with the United States of America and, in view of the scope of migratory flows, it was essential for his country to participate more actively in IOM’s work. In the Government’s view, the problem of undocumented migrants entailed shared responsibility between countries of origin, transit and destination and a successful high-level dialogue on the issue had been held recently between his country and the United States. Furthermore, the Mexican Government was prepared to defend the human rights of migrants at the highest level. Historically, Mexican society had been enriched by the cultural contributions of various nationalities and the Government’s migration policy was in line with his country’s humanist tradition. In that regard, he emphasized the importance for IOM of managing migratory flows in order to prevent the emergence of xenophobic and racist attitudes. Finally, his Government was committed to active participation in the Organization’s efforts to achieve its objectives.

14. The representative of Ireland noted that his country, after a long history of emigration, was now experiencing immigration and welcomed IOM's expertise in the matter. An IOM office had been opened in Ireland recently and a national pilot voluntary return programme launched. IOM had also collaborated in bringing Kosovar refugees to Ireland, which was supporting the Organization's counter-trafficking work in the Balkans. Ireland Aid had also been a strong supporter of IOM's activities in many difficult regions and situations and had given financial assistance to the Organization's activities in a number of countries. The Irish Government was committed to strengthening its relationship with IOM and looked forward to playing an active role in the Organization.

15. The representative of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya said that her Government looked forward to a closer relationship with IOM. As a rich country with a small population, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was a country of destination and also of transit for migrants seeking to improve their economic conditions; it would welcome IOM's expertise in handling its unique situation and wished to ensure that migrants' human rights and fundamental freedoms were protected. It was her country's belief that current restrictions concerning migration and legislation on citizenship had led to an increase in irregular migration and trafficking networks, and her Government hoped that enhanced international solidarity would help to safeguard the rights of migrants and allow them to be perceived as an asset to the communities they were joining.

16. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania expressed appreciation for the role played by IOM in international relations which had been enhanced as a result of political changes in the past decade and the increasing gap between developed and developing countries. Migration was deeply rooted in history, but States now had clearly defined frontiers which they wished to control and it was therefore important for the international community to create a framework for the discussion of migration policies and solutions to current challenges. IOM sought to restore migration to its former respectable image so that it became a constructive force in economic and social development. Socio-economic inequality was a driving force behind migratory flows and he considered that IOM was undoubtedly in a position to participate in the search for solutions to the challenges of globalization. His country wished to participate in that dialogue and was ready to meet its obligations fully in working towards the fulfilment of IOM's objectives.

17. The representative of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) – Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime said that, for the first time in history 12 countries in South-Eastern Europe had established a joint centre for combating transborder crime. SECI enjoyed strong support from the United States and Western countries and had established a number of task forces and a cooperation network to combat terrorism. The Center's regulations, organization and exchange of information rules were based on a European Union model and he looked forward to successful cooperation with IOM.

18. The Director General welcomed the new Members and observers and pledged them IOM's full support and assistance. The admissions brought the number of Members to 93. Mexico had always been a country of origin, transit and destination and was the instigator of the regional migration process for North and Central America. Ireland was traditionally a country of emigration but in recent years had experienced massive immigration. Like Mexico, it could play a key role in IOM, enriching the global migration debate.

19. The number of IOM observer States remained at 37 as two former observers had become full members, while the number of other observers was now 63. The admission of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania as observers would considerably strengthen migration dialogue in the Western Mediterranean while SECI's mission linked with IOM's work on counter-trafficking in the region.

20. All delegates who took the floor welcomed the new Members and observers. It was emphasized that the steady rise in membership led to increased dynamism, gave greater universality and reflected the high level of IOM's responsibility in migration matters. The spokesperson for a group of countries stressed the need for countries of the region to accede to the Organization because of the acute state of migration on their continent which required information and technical assistance to ensure orderly movements and combat irregular migration.

21. Other delegates pointed to the complexity of present-day migration and the consequent need for increased cooperation and synergy between governments and international organizations leading to effective migration management; they considered that greater attention should be paid to the examination of motives for migration and that new approaches to the issue should be developed; they further stressed the need for greater coordination in migration management and opined that increased migration was partly due to globalization.

22. A substantial number of speakers agreed on the need for migration management, especially at regional level, and advocated that IOM should play fully its constitutional role as a forum for dialogue on migration policy, with the Council pursuing a global reflection on the matter. Some delegates considered that such dialogue should take place at regular sessions of the Council, while others welcomed the Council's role as a forum but were undecided on the number and frequency of such sessions, believing that the objectives of the dialogue should be discussed and the results of the Migration Policy and Research Programme (MPRP) evaluated first.

23. One speaker referred to the increasing involvement of IOM in recent years in urgent humanitarian assistance, due to the growing need for it, and raised the question of whether that action constituted part of the core mandate of the Organization and what were IOM's comparative advantages in that field.

24. A number of delegates expressed their appreciation for IOM's work in the context of returns, including repatriation, particularly after emergencies and crisis situations. One speaker expressed concern that the lack of adequate financial resources had stopped transportation of returnees to Afghanistan and appealed to Members, particularly donor countries, to provide further funding. Another speaker favoured a move away from the principle of zero nominal growth, provided that IOM applied rigorous budgetary controls, complied with the Financial Regulations and confined its activities to the Organization's core mandate.

25. The acceptance of the SECI Regional Center as an observer to IOM was seen as very important as a means of improved regional cooperation on migration policies by one delegate who said that, although the vast majority of migratory movements were for legitimate reasons, security-related aspects also had to be taken into account. Another delegate said that his country was currently aligning national legislation with international standards and would apply for IOM membership on completion, he hoped by December 2002.

## **IOM'S ROLE IN EMERGENCY AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS**

26. A presentation on IOM's emergency and post-conflict response, accompanied by video films, was given by the Director of the Programme Support Department. As reflected in information document MC/INF/249, IOM's role in emergency and post-conflict operations had expanded considerably since 1990, now representing 34 per cent of IOM's total operations. Over 8.2 million people had benefited from those operations which had received USD 483.3 million in funding provided through specific emergency appeals to donors whose number had risen from nine in 1991 to 36 in 2001. The 29 major emergency and post-conflict programmes during the past decade had enhanced IOM's reputation for efficient, practical migration programmes. IOM's activities consisted mainly of transport, return and reintegration programmes, capacity-building for emergency management and community assistance programmes. Diaspora outreach services, medical assistance, psychosocial programmes and registration, survey and processing programmes were also important. Such operations had brought IOM into much closer cooperation with, for example, UNHCR, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the United Nations Consolidated Appeal Process.

27. A video film was shown, illustrating the practical aspects of some of IOM's emergency and post-conflict activities, including the return of displaced persons and refugees in Sierra Leone, East Timor and Afghanistan and the building of temporary housing for people displaced as a result of natural disasters in Honduras and India. In Afghanistan 250,000 internally displaced persons had returned to their homes but IOM had had to suspend its country-wide transport network on account of lack of funding.

28. IOM's activities in East Timor, which were also illustrated by a video film, had consisted of a major relief programme undertaken between October 1999 and November 2001, assisting 140,000 people to return, by land and sea, to their homes in East Timor and providing registration, medical checks and assistance for reintegration into their communities. Through the Community Assistance for Population Stabilization Programme, numerous community projects and reintegration and training programmes for the large numbers of demobilized combatants had been provided.

29. Many of those who took the floor after the presentation welcomed the debate on IOM's role in emergency and post-conflict situations and thanked the Administration for the information paper (MC/INF/249) and the presentation on the topic and several of them stressed the importance of continued and expanded coordination with the organizations and governments involved. The need for further debate regarding IOM's comparative advantages and the limits to its capacity and competence were stressed, while its contribution in emergency and post-conflict situations was commended.

30. Concern regarding the sustainability of such action in terms of funding was expressed by several delegates and further debate on the matter in the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance before consideration by the Council was advocated. A number of speakers considered that IOM should concentrate on its core mandate and attached great importance to the Consolidated Appeals Process.



31. The Council heard a statement by a representative of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) relating the origin of that body and its endeavours to strengthen United Nations response to complex emergencies and natural disasters and to improve the overall effectiveness of coordination of humanitarian operations in the field, largely through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

32. The Director of the Programme Support Department, responding to the debate, expressed his appreciation for the frank criticisms made. Although IOM had been involved in emergency and post-conflict work since its foundation over 50 years ago, it was the first time that a governing body had addressed the issue systematically, and he looked forward to further discussion.

33. With regard to the question of sustainability, he pointed out that the issue was not unique to IOM: funding difficulties in Afghanistan were endemic to all international organizations operating in that country. IOM's requirement for Afghanistan had been USD 74.8 million, of which it had received USD 39 million, the fifth highest level of assistance given to any international organization. As well as the problem of sustainability, there was a more important systemic issue at stake. IOM's emergency and post-conflict activities did not form part of an overall plan or theory, but emerged as a response to crisis situations, in close consultation with other agencies involved - successful projects received funding and were sustained, while others fell by the wayside.

34. On the avoidance of overlapping, he explained that IOM worked closely in Afghanistan with the coordination structure provided by organizations within the United Nations system. Perhaps the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) should be more strategic in its approach but, generally, the emergency programmes constituted a practical response to specific problems.

35. The Director General said that he welcomed the discussion as a model for further debate within the Council and the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance regarding IOM's role in the spectrum of agencies, as well as on ways of securing more reliable funding. He was convinced that IOM had an important role to play in emergencies, because of its comparative advantage in terms of flexibility and speed of response. Many, though not all, of IOM's useful services in crisis situations had been highlighted in the video. Ultimately, it was up to Member States to stipulate IOM's spheres of activity.

36. He hoped that in future it would be possible to address other appropriate topics, such as the growing labour migration demands placed on the Organization.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

37. One speaker voiced the concern of his Government over the frequency with which special sessions of the Council had been held in recent years and hoped that the present one would be the last for some time, unless a specific decision was made by Members or a genuine emergency arose. His Government did not consider that the admission of new Members justified mid-year Council sessions; the holding of an annual session ensured adequate and broad-ranging representation of Member States.

### **CLOSURE OF THE SESSION**

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

39. The Eighty-third (Special) Session of the Council of the International Organization for Migration closed on Wednesday, 5 June 2002, at 12:50.