



Mission permanente d'Israël  
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies  
et des Organisations Internationales à Genève

משלחת ישראל  
ליד משרד האומות המאוחדות  
והארגונים הבינלאומיים בג'נבה

**IOM 88<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council  
30 November – 3 December 2004**

**Statement by Ambassador Itzhak Levanon  
Permanent Representative of Israel**

Mr. Chairman,

May I begin by warmly congratulating you on your election as Chairperson of this session of the Council and expressing to you, and to the Members of the Bureau, my best wishes of success in your work in the coming year. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Ambassador Janis Karklins for the constructive and sustained efforts he put into his role as Chairperson of the previous session of the Council.

Mr. Chairman,

Migration challenges touch upon key issues that are shaping our world today: the right to development, trafficking in human beings, the effects of labour migration, health issues such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, just to name a few. As a country made up of migrants from the four corners of the globe, one million having immigrated in the past decade alone, Israel has experienced not only the enriching aspects of migration, but also the more problematic aspects. As a result, Israel highly values the work carried out by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to provide a human response to migration challenges. Israel's policy regarding migration is clear – we have a positive approach to absorbing and integrating migrants into the society that has met with success, and we are ready and willing to share with IOM and all its members, its experience in that field.

In this spirit, over the past years we have increased our partnership with IOM on these important topics. Most recently, IOM's Deputy Director General, Ms. Ndiaye, visited Israel to discuss possibilities for future cooperation on migration issues of mutual interest. Israel's Center for International Cooperation, known by the acronym MASHAV, has been a pioneer in organising seminars and courses on development cooperation. One such course, entitled "Migration and Integration for Development: from Policy to Practice", took place only last month with Ms. Ndiaye as a guest lecturer.

Israel envisages organizing more seminars, including courses linking gender, migration, and development, which we believe will serve as excellent fora for Israel and IOM, as well as its Member States, to combine their expertise and experience. This cooperation will, we believe, improve the situation of migrants, both in their countries of origin and of destination.

Thank you.