

NOTE CONCERNING DOCUMENT MC/2169

At its Ninethieth Session the Council, by Resolution No. 1126 (XC), approved the Report on its Eighty-ninth (Special) Session without amendment.

To save the cost of reprinting the whole report, it is requested that the attached cover page be added to the original document MC/2169 dated 24 June 2005.

NINETIETH SESSION

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

Geneva

9 June 2005

Rapporteur: Mr. F. Verheyden (Belgium)

MC/2169

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EIGHTY-NINTH (SPECIAL) SESSION

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

INTRODUCTION

1. The Council convened for its Eighty-ninth (Special) Session on Thursday, 9 June 2005, at 10.20 a.m. in the Palais des Nations. One meeting was held, chaired by Mr. L. A. de Alba (Mexico).

ATTENDANCE¹

2. The following Member States were represented:

Afghanistan	Czech Republic	Jordan	Senegal
Albania	Democratic	Kazakhstan	Serbia and
Algeria	Republic of the	Kenya	Montenegro
Argentina	Congo	Latvia	Slovakia
Armenia	Denmark	Liberia	Slovenia
Australia	Dominican	Libyan Arab	South Africa
Austria	Republic	Jamahiriya	Sri Lanka
Azerbaijan	Egypt	Lithuania	Sudan
Bahamas	El Salvador	Madagascar	Switzerland
Bangladesh	Estonia	Malta	Thailand
Belgium	Finland	Mauritania	Tunisia
Belize	France	Mexico	Turkey
Benin	Gabon ²	Morocco	Ukraine
Bosnia and Herzegovina ²	Germany	Nigeria	United Republic of Tanzania
Brazil	Greece	Norway	United States of America
Burkina Faso	Guatemala	Pakistan	Uruguay
Cambodia	Guinea	Panama	Venezuela
Chile	Honduras	Peru	(Bolivarian Republic of)
Colombia	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Philippines	Yemen
Congo	Ireland	Poland	Zambia
Costa Rica	Israel	Portugal	
Côte d'Ivoire	Italy	Republic of Korea	
Croatia	Jamaica ²	Republic of Moldova	
Cyprus	Japan	Romania	

¹ See List of Participants (MC/2168).

² See paragraph 13.

3. Belarus, China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Holy See, Nepal, Russian Federation, Spain, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Viet Nam were represented by observers.

4. The United Nations, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Union, African Union, *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*, League of Arab States, Organization of the Islamic Conference and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group)³ were represented by observers.

5. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the following international non-governmental organizations were represented by observers: World Confederation of Labour, International Islamic Relief Organization and the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC).³

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.

ELECTION OF A FIRST VICE-CHAIRPERSON

7. Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan) was elected First Vice-Chairperson on the proposal of the delegate of Guatemala, seconded by the delegate of the Congo.

8. Mr. Khan said that he looked forward to cooperating closely with the Chairperson, the Member States and the Administration on all migration issues. In the past seven years, IOM had adapted to changing patterns of migration and demonstrated that it was able to accomplish non-traditional tasks at the request of the Member States. It had also intensified and diversified its cooperation with Pakistan. In October 2004, for example, the Government of Pakistan and IOM had successfully arranged for Afghan refugees in Pakistan to participate in Afghanistan's first ever presidential election, making a valuable contribution to peace and stability in the region. In addition, the *Migration Initiatives Appeal 2005* listed a number of projects for Pakistan, which looked forward to their implementation.

9. Migration had emerged as an important issue because of the growing number of people moving across borders and the impact this had on countries of both destination and origin. The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) had discussed poverty as one of the main causes of migration and, indeed, Pakistan believed that migration was a powerful tool for alleviating that scourge, in particular through migrant remittances. In that context, his country welcomed IOM's cooperation with the World Bank on the next edition of the *Global Economic Prospects* report and suggested that the report examine the unstable nature of remittances and

³ See paragraph 14.

their reliability for sustainable development. In Pakistan's experience, remittances were helpful in relieving poverty to some extent, but their overall impact on development remained to be ascertained. Remittances should therefore continue to supplement, not supplant, development assistance. In order to give a balanced view, the report should also contain data about migrants' contributions to the economies of developed countries. Studies undertaken in destination countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand had shown that migrants had made net positive contributions to those countries' economies.

10. Irregular migration was a problem for all concerned and had to be tackled through appropriate measures. In this regard, a protective approach predicated on constructing barriers around affluent areas would be short-sighted and counter-productive as the barriers would not withstand the pressure generated by rising deprivation. The answer was to enhance opportunities through regular migration, for instance by accepting labour from countries that could meet the demands of the international labour market. Another and closely related issue was trafficking in persons. Pakistan supported the efforts being made at all levels to curb trafficking, but felt that a two-pronged approach combining a clamp-down on traffickers with a search for solutions to the economic problems of people vulnerable to trafficking would significantly reduce the number trafficked every year. In the long term, it would probably be less expensive and more effective to set up income-generating projects that would enable the potential victims to resist the offers made by traffickers.

11. The Chairperson said that he had many of the same concerns, in particular relating to remittances and irregular migration. IOM had worked hard to analyse the issues, but more could probably be done to bring them into sharper focus and identify the best means of dealing with them.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

12. The Council adopted the agenda set out in document MC/2155/Rev.2.

NEW MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

(a) Applications by Jamaica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Gabonese Republic for membership of the Organization

13. The Council adopted Resolutions Nos. 1114, 1115, 1116 (LXXXIX) admitting Jamaica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Gabonese Republic as Members of IOM.

(b) Applications by the Republic of Guyana, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) and the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) for observership

14. The Republic of Guyana, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) and the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) were granted observer status at meetings of the Council, in accordance with the terms of Resolutions Nos. 1117, 1118, 1119 and 1120 (LXXXIX).

15. The representative of Jamaica expressed deep appreciation to the Council for approving his country's application for membership of the Organization. Although Jamaica had just become a full member, it had had a long and fruitful relationship with IOM. Between 1993 and 1997, IOM, in cooperation with the European Union, had instituted a programme to encourage the return of skilled Jamaican nationals, some of whom now held prominent positions in the Jamaican public sector. Later, in 2001, Jamaica had hosted a very successful seminar on international migration policy for the Caribbean subregion in cooperation with IOM. Subsequently, IOM had led a technical assessment mission to Jamaica in 2002 and proposed a programme of activities to build the country's migration management capacity. Under the programme, Jamaica was cooperating with IOM to enhance migration management systems, primarily by strengthening institutional capacity and enacting legislation and regulations. Since 2003, IOM had undertaken numerous programmes and activities in Jamaica, including training of immigration officers and other officials in counter-trafficking and in the detection of illegal migrants. IOM had also helped to facilitate the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers and to implement a system to manage migration flows in and out of Jamaica.

16. Globalization had deepened and widened the links between countries, with migration emerging as one of the major policy issues of the twenty-first century as a result. Growing awareness of the socio-economic impact of migration had been accompanied by increased recognition that migration should be better managed through international cooperation and policy responses, so as to minimize its negative consequences and enhance its contribution to development. Such cooperation must encompass destination, transit and origin countries.

17. Migrants helped to maintain social and economic ties between developed and developing countries and could thus contribute to the alleviation of poverty. In this regard, remittances were of signal importance; in Jamaica, as in many developing countries, the flow of remittances had become a primary source of income and, globally, remittances were a much larger source of income for developing countries than was overseas development aid. Jamaica looked forward to strengthening its cooperation with IOM in order to harness the full potential of the Jamaican diaspora in support of national development objectives.

18. Jamaica was pleased to become a Member of IOM, not only to strengthen cooperation in the areas of technical assistance and capacity-building but also to further international efforts to ensure that migration fulfilled its potential to promote the welfare of countries of origin and destination and to contribute to development.

19. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina thanked the Council for admitting her country to membership of the Organization. Bosnia and Herzegovina had enjoyed observer status with IOM since the early 1990s. During the period when peace was being established, IOM, in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international humanitarian organizations, had successfully helped carry out programmes for the repatriation of refugees, and in particular had organized minority returns under the cross-border return programme of the IOM Office in Sarajevo. Her country was grateful for the humanitarian aid and financial support provided by IOM and donor countries during that period to implement humanitarian projects, including the provision of training and equipment for demobilized soldiers and of technical assistance to upgrade national policies, legal frameworks and management capacities in the field of migration policy, legislation and administration.

20. Historically, Bosnia and Herzegovina had been a crossroads for people migrating to Central and Western Europe from Africa and Asia. The unprecedented scale of migrant flows through the region in recent years had brought about a concomitant increase in the trafficking and smuggling of human beings. Working with Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ministry of Security, State Border Service and Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, and with the Interior Ministries of the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the IOM Office in Sarajevo had implemented a voluntary return programme to assist the growing number of illegal migrants stranded in Bosnia and Herzegovina to return home and to help women victims of trafficking to recover while they awaited repatriation. These activities had encouraged regional cooperation between the migration authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its neighbours.

21. IOM was also working to encourage regional cooperation between migration authorities in South-Eastern European countries under the auspices of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), in particular in respect of organized crime and corruption. Faster social and economic development was critical for the introduction of reform and long-term stability in the region. Bosnia and Herzegovina had spared no effort to accelerate the process of adopting European standards. One of the country's strategic priorities was to start negotiations on the European Union Stabilization and Association process as soon as possible. It was counting on IOM to provide continued support to that end.

22. The representative of Gabon said that it was an honour for his country to become a Member of IOM, the outcome of a process that had started with a technical workshop on migration for development in Africa held in Libreville in April 2001. His delegation would be unstinting in its efforts to help IOM and its Member States fulfil their common objectives.

23. The world was undergoing a period of profound change, comparable to the industrial revolution. The globalization of the economy, information and communication were strengthening interdependence between countries. His country was no stranger to the phenomenon, which had led to flows of irregular migration and new challenges such as insecurity and child labour, and was counting on IOM's expertise to tackle those problems. Gabon's membership of the Organization would strengthen the ties between IOM and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

24. The representative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP), after expressing appreciation to the Council for admitting ACP to observer status, said that the decision would enhance collaboration between the ACP Secretariat and IOM. He recalled that in December 2004 the ACP Council of Ministers had granted IOM observer status. A significant number of the ACP Group's 79 members were already IOM Members and, with the pressing imperative to address the various development issues, including migration, that confronted ACP member States, it was time to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations.

25. Article 13 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between ACP and the European Union committed the partners to dealing with migration in depth and as a critical development area and the parties to the Agreement considered that strategies aimed at reducing poverty, improving living and working conditions for migrants, creating employment and developing training contributed in the long term to the normalization of migratory flows.

26. The ACP Secretariat was willing to work closely with IOM to identify areas where a strategic partnership could be forged – ACP's acceptance as an IOM observer was a positive step in the right direction.

27. The representative of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), after thanking the IOM Council for accepting its application for observer status, said that the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva, which would be the principal vehicle for the relationship between FWCC and IOM, undertook activities in relation to three main programme areas: human rights and refugees, global economic issues, and disarmament and peace. The FWCC had applied to IOM for observer status because it felt there were dimensions of its work where such a relationship could be mutually helpful. Quakers had long been concerned about the plight of refugees, a major focus of their work in Geneva over the years, but their human rights work also extended to the needs of internally displaced persons and the range of issues related to human migration. They had noted particularly the growing emphasis of IOM on human trafficking issues and the focus on the reintegration of former combatants, including child soldiers, in post-conflict settings, which overlapped with work on which Quakers were currently engaged.

28. The Quaker Global Economic Issues Programme on Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which dealt with managing the movement and temporary stay of labour migrants, was specially important. The Quakers worked closely with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and could facilitate discussion among the various parties involved with Mode 4, which the speaker knew was an emerging concern within IOM.

29. The Quaker United Nations Office, with its permanent presence in Geneva and in New York, was involved effectively with a wide number of Geneva bodies in serious programme work. FWCC's application for observer status with IOM was made in that context and it looked forward to closer relations with the Organization.

30. Two regional groups welcomed the new Members and observers to the Organization. The Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) was particularly pleased that one more country from the region, Jamaica, had been admitted to membership and another, Guyana, as an observer. This was further evidence of the importance every country in the region attached to migratory matters. The African Group, for its part, expressed satisfaction at the large number of African countries that were currently Members of the Organization. Africa, in view of its large migrant population, wished to draw greater benefit from its exchanges with IOM. The African Group believed that migration issues had to be tackled from the point of view of human rights, the principle of free circulation of people and migration's contribution to development. IOM policy reflected those aims, which was why it had the support of the African Group.

31. The representative of the Bahamas extended her congratulations to the new IOM Members and observers, which included the Caribbean nations of Jamaica and Guyana, and said that her country recognized IOM as a shining example of an international entity that had performed invaluable work for its Members and earned great international respect. The Government of the Bahamas applauded the myriad of IOM programmes in the fields of emergency and post-conflict activities in a number of countries, especially the pivotal work being conducted in Haiti, and looked forward to further work in that subregion. It also appreciated the increase in projects dealing with technical cooperation on migration and applauded the paradigm shift towards

greater emphasis on the economic aspects of migration. She reiterated the unstinting commitment of the Bahamas to exploring further with IOM the very timely theme of migration and development.

32. The representative of the Dominican Republic welcomed the new Members and observers and said that the accession of Jamaica, like that of the Bahamas in 2004, would encourage cooperation on migration among countries of the region. In particular, she expressed appreciation for the granting of observer status to the ACP Group, of which her country was a member.

33. The representative of Croatia welcomed the new Members and observers to IOM, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose membership of the Organization would not only enhance the existing bilateral cooperation with her country but would further regional cooperation on the increasing problems posed by trafficking in persons and illegal immigration. She was convinced that such cooperation would also strengthen stability in the whole region of South-Eastern Europe.

34. The representative of Côte d'Ivoire, after congratulating the new Members and observers, said that IOM, with its expertise in migration and human security and the dynamism of its leadership, had continued to forge its reputation as an essential partner on the international scene. He offered his warm congratulations to the Director General and the Deputy Director General on their work. IOM had sought innovative solutions to the new challenges and needs facing its Members following the profound changes in migration caused by globalization over the past ten years. On that score, his delegation welcomed the IOM-initiated programmes aimed at stemming the brain drain and promoting economic progress in Africa, in addition to those designed to alleviate suffering, especially during the conflicts from which the continent suffered. On behalf of the Ivorian Government, he thanked IOM once again for its efforts to assist people in need, both Ivorians and foreigners, since the crisis that had arisen in Côte d'Ivoire on 19 September 2002. Recent events in the west of his country were a reminder of the urgent need to pursue endeavours to end the suffering of Ivorians and the many migrants who had chosen the country as their second home. He hoped that the forthcoming elections in Côte d'Ivoire would resolve the crisis.

35. With over 28 per cent of the population consisting of foreign residents, Côte d'Ivoire intended to strengthen its cooperation with IOM still further to enable it to meet the challenge of managing migratory flows, particularly in the post-crisis reconstruction programme. In fact, the peace process was well under way now that the belligerents had agreed on the cessation of hostilities and the Ivorian Government intended to take the opportunity to cooperate with IOM on the reintegration of migrants after the crisis, in a desire to maintain peace and to protect the interests of the migrants who had settled in the country.

36. The Director General welcomed the new Members and observers and thanked all the speakers who had expressed the support of their governments and institutions for IOM in its attempt to deal with the major challenge posed by migration in the twenty-first century. The new Member States had clearly spelled out the relationships they already had with the Organization and the great range of activities that existed in an endeavour to help countries all over the world to cope with a very wide variety of migration-related problems. Included were post-conflict activities, humanitarian efforts, the economic dimension, diasporas, remittances,

health, and training and capacity-building. He was gratified to hear that IOM was already hard at work in the new Member countries. Although he had some personal experience of Jamaica and Bosnia and Herzegovina, he had yet to visit Gabon. He commended the excellent initiatives that had been taken by Gabon, in advance of membership, particularly the strong support for the IOM Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme, and welcomed the opportunity to be in contact with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), an important regional organization based in Libreville. The fact that the ACP Group had been granted observer status with IOM emphasized the importance of the regional dimensions referred to by delegates. IOM intended to strengthen that aspect of its relations as much as possible in the future.

37. The role of civil society and of non-governmental organizations in IOM's work was also increasingly essential in both activities and policy issues and he was happy to note that yet another important NGO had been granted observer status with IOM.

38. On the subject of remittances, he had taken careful note of the First Vice-Chairperson's recommendations concerning IOM's work with the World Bank and the *Global Economic Prospects* report. More research was required on the impact of remittances on development and he hoped that IOM would help to make the *Global Economic Prospects* report a useful document that would advance knowledge on the subject and further the Organization's ability to harness those monies better in the interests of the developing countries.

39. Finally, he reiterated his welcome to the new Members and observers and thanked the Council for its work.

OTHER BUSINESS

Recent IOM Publications

40. The Director General drew attention to two recent IOM publications: the latest in the International Dialogue on Migration series, entitled *Health and Migration: Bridging the Gap*, reflecting the growing focus on health in IOM's work; and the *World Migration Report 2005*. He hoped that the World Migration Report would continue to appear every two years and would constitute an interesting compendium of information on migration trends and problems, of value to governments and to society as a whole. The CD version was already available and the printed version would be launched in the near future.

Consultations

41. The Chairperson referred to informal consultations on matters of interest to the Organization that had been held in recent weeks and stated his intention of convening an open meeting to discuss those issues in the near future. The topics were: IOM strategy, the Organization's links with the United Nations system, constraints to the Administrative Part of the Budget, and the lack of flexibility in IOM's governing bodies and the possibilities of effecting reform. His intention was that the consultation would be open to all Member States and that civil society and non-governmental organizations would also be invited to participate.

42. The debate would not be conclusive as certain processes were continuing; in addition the report of the Global Commission on International Migration would probably be available in early October. He hoped that some indications on IOM's future directions would be forthcoming by the Council session in November 2005. Any further topics that delegations wished to discuss would be welcome, in the current context where migration was acquiring growing importance. Finally, he urged that at future IOM meetings time saved on procedural matters should be devoted to substantive discussions.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

43. After thanking the interpreters and the Meetings Secretariat, the Chairperson declared the Eighty-ninth (Special) Session of the Council closed on Thursday, 9 June 2005, at 11.40 a.m.