

Statement by the Republic of Korea
At the 90th session of the IOM Council(1 December 2005, Geneva)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

I would first like to extend my warmest congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election. It is also my pleasure to extend a heartfelt welcome to the new members and observers here.

I further take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Brunson McKinley and his staff for their hard work over the past year.

Mr. Chairman,

This year's report of the Global Commission on the International Migration and next year's UN High Level Dialogue on Migration certainly draw world-wide attention to the international migration. Taking this momentum, we hope that the IOM, will play a central role in enhancing public awareness and facilitating system wide approach on the issues of international migration.

Along with wide range of potentials of migration, we also recognize challenges. Evolving social and political circumstances in both sending and receiving countries certainly affects the dynamics of migration. Continuing problem of human trafficking, human rights violations, integration into receiving countries are just some of the challenges. The need for effective management of migration is becoming more significant as its potential becomes more wide and tangible.

To address such challenges effectively, we believe that there is a need for robust and comprehensive dialogues and consultations among all stakeholders. The IOM, as the leading organization for migration issues should continue to play a central role in this area. At the same time, it should strengthen its abilities to provide data analysis on the implications of migration flows so that it can broaden the common understanding on migration issues and thus facilitate conducive dialogues.

Capacity-building at the national, regional and global level is also a significant element in the effective management of international migration. Proper institutional arrangements are necessary for coherence in policy-making and implementation. In this regard, we commend the IOM's central role, particularly in establishing regional dialogue mechanisms regarding migration issues.

The task of protecting the safety and dignity of migrants from the risk in the process of migration, particularly from human trafficking and human rights violations, is significant. It is imperative that we step up policy coordination and cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination to this end. The ROK Ministry of Gender Equality and Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with the IOM, have hosted a series of Expert Group Meetings on International Trafficking on an annual basis since 2003. This year's meeting, held in Seoul from 14-15 November focused in particular on the prosecution aspects of human trafficking. Experts from around the world engaged in extensive discussions on issues such as the identification of traffickers, treatment of victims and witness protection, and counter-trafficking laws. We hope that the outcome of this meeting will be widely shared through the IOM.

Mr. Chairman,

Given the growing complexity of international migration and the increasing importance of the role of the IOM, we believe that the discussion on the IOM's strategy is timely and the IOM Strategy Document submitted by outgoing chairman of the Council will be a good basis for the discussion.

Finally, increasing migration is a manifestation of the deepening interdependence in our global community. In light of this, it is our shared responsibility to ensure that human rights and dignity are respected in the process of migration and that migration continues to be a positive force for all stake-holders. The Korean government looks forward to working closely with the IOM and member states to that end. Thank you.