



**Statement by**

**H. E. Mr. Saviour F. Borg  
Ambassador  
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**at the**

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IOM Council**

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Madam Chairperson,

May I congratulate you on your election to chair this Session of the IOM Council. We are pleased that a distinguished Representative from a neighbouring and friendly country is chairing this important Council session. Our congratulations also go to the other Members of the Bureau on their election. I would also like to welcome the new Members, the Republic of Montenegro and Nepal.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement of the Ambassador of Finland who spoke on behalf of the European Union, and would therefore like to make a few additional points on the work and activities of IOM.

Madam Chairperson,

The agenda of this Council session is enriched with important themes ranging from a most welcome interactive discussion with members of the Global Migration Group, the engagement of business and civil society, the International Migration and Development Initiative (IMDI) and counter-trafficking.

The High Level participation and the quality of the interventions so far augurs well for a healthy and interesting debate on a subject that poses major policy challenges.

This Session of the IOM Council is meeting one week after the historic Ministerial Conference between the European Union and the African Union Member States in Tripoli which examined in detail the link which exists between migration and development. Bringing together Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Ministers responsible for Migration and Ministers responsible for Development, EU Member States, AU and EC Commissioners and other Representatives from regional and international organizations, including IOM, the Conference succeeded in adopting two important documents which commit EU and African States “to a partnership between countries of origin, transit and destination to better manage migration in a comprehensive, holistic and balanced manner, in a spirit of shared responsibility and cooperation.”

Malta, represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and by its Minister of Foreign Affairs, is party to this commitment. Indeed, Malta together with Libya combined their efforts to ensure that the joint initiative of a high level meeting be endorsed by the EU Member States and the African Union Member States.

The two Documents adopted by the Tripoli Conference, namely the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development, and the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children, are a testimony to the intense debate being conducted at the national, regional and international level to address the issue of migration and development in a holistic manner. Malta feels honoured to have hosted the Preparatory Meeting which laid the groundwork for the consensus Declaration at the Tripoli Conference

The inter-regional dimension of the Tripoli Conference echo the words of Mr. McKinley’s address to this Conference, where he described regional partnerships as being crucial to maximize the development impact of migration, while at the same

time minimizing some of the negative aspects such as the brain drain, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, exploitation, xenophobia, racism and discrimination.

Malta commends the participation of IOM in such regional partnerships and notes with satisfaction the reference in the report of the Director General on the Work of the Organization for 2005, to IOM's continued efforts to pursue effective linkages and partnerships. It is important that IOM continues to address the root causes of economically induced migration by enhancing the ability of governments and other key actors to focus development actions more strategically on country of origin migration dynamics thus making migration a matter of choice rather than necessity.

In Malta's view, and as already stated, migration and development must be approached effectively and holistically to cover also the issue of illegal immigration which Malta continues to face with unprecedented difficulties, more than often alone and with scarce support from other countries.

The Tripoli Conclusions gives us hope and we will work together with all our partners to rise to the expectations generated in Tripoli.

Madam Chairperson,

Malta considers the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development as very timely and proved the importance of the subject of migration. In this context, we note with satisfaction the valuable inputs made by the Ad Hoc Group of States on Migration (AGSM) in preparing for the HLD. Malta also looks forward to continue this dialogue at the first meeting of the Global Forum on Migration being organized by Belgium in June/July 2007 the ensuing discussions on the themes identified for this meeting, particularly the link between Migration, Development and Security. The role of the GMG in this regard cannot be minimized.

Madam Chairperson,

Another partnership which is fairing quite well is that between Malta and IOM. Since joining this Organization three years ago Malta and IOM have succeeded in developing a close working relationship. The signing of a Cooperation Agreement in Malta in the coming days is a culmination and a consolidation of this bond between IOM and Malta which should lead to a more coherent and effective strategy to address the challenges posed by migration including illegal immigration.

Malta welcomes with satisfaction IOM's view that assistance to Governments in their efforts to address irregular migration remains a priority for IOM, particularly the implementation of activities that support the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants. We encourage IOM, through the good work of its Technical Cooperation on Migration (TCM), to continue supporting measures to strengthen the capacity of governments to investigate smuggling networks and reduce smuggling, including activities that focus on raising awareness of the Convention and its Protocol, and the protection of the human rights of migrants.

Malta commends IOM for its expansion last year in its advocacy efforts to meet requests for assistance to irregular migrants stranded in transit. In this context, Malta wishes to encourage the Members of the Organization to assist the Organization in its efforts to overcome the challenge posed by the identification of resources to meet the increasing requests to provide such assistance in countries of transit.

Malta notes with interest IOM's proposal for an International Migration and Development Initiative: Labour Mobility for Development (IMDI). IMDI could be a useful tool for the international community to maximise development benefits of international migration and minimize its negative impact. Malta looks forward to the further development of this initiative with the participation of the IOM Membership and of all the GMG agencies.

Finally may I extend our admiration for the way IOM is being managed and for the substantial growth experienced by the Organisation in the past five years in all the four major areas of activity as well as in its budget. These are achievements which are to be commended and encouraged.

Thank you.