



SWEDEN

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STATEMENT

BY

SWEDEN

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Thank you Mme. Chairperson

Sweden would like to join other delegations in thanking the outgoing chairperson and bureau as well as in welcoming the newly elected chairperson and bureau. We would also like to thank the Director General and the deputy Director General of IOM for their comprehensive statements. Sweden, furthermore, aligns itself with the EU-statement.

The issue of international migration is growing and has come to occupy an important place on the international agenda. Needless to say, IOM is a central actor in this field and Sweden appreciates the organization's willingness and flexibility in responding to the increasing challenges of international migration. Partly as a consequence of this flexibility, IOM's activities have expanded substantially during the past years. The organization's membership, as well as its budget and the number of programs it carries out, have all increased. This expansion in size and scope has, however, taken place without a continuous strategic dialogue with IOM's member states and other stakeholders. Sweden therefore very much welcomes the renewed efforts to discuss and agree on such a strategic framework. Discussions on a new strategy for IOM have now been going on for many years, and we believe that this work needs to be completed as soon as possible, preferably in the first couple of months of 2007.

One important aspect of a strategy for IOM concerns governing issues. Sweden agrees, as suggested in the so-called Mexican strategy paper, that one of the key priorities of the strategy work should be to strengthen the governing structures of IOM. Strengthened governance structures will hopefully lead to improved dialogue between the Administration and the member states as well as among member states. This will also make it easier for us to agree on shared priorities with regard to IOM's operational activities. Consultations between the Administration and the member states on all important operational, budgetary and financial matters remain key. This is not least the case when it comes to over-arching policy-issues, such as IOM's relation to the wider UN-system.

Consultation is important, and so is coordination. Again, IOM's very strength lies to a great extent in its flexibility and ability to quickly undertake new tasks. In this regard, Sweden would like to underline the importance of IOM closely coordinating its activities both with the UN-system, member states and with other relevant actors. Improved coordination will ultimately be of great benefit to our target group: those migrants who are in need of IOM's services. Sweden also hopes that the Global Migration group will become an operationally relevant mechanism for such coordination.

Mme Chairperson,

Sweden has for quite some time accepted zero real growth in IOM's administrative budget. The policy of zero nominal growth together with the almost chronic and very disturbing problem with outstanding assessed contributions obviously have negative ramifications for the administrative budget. These ramifications are made more acute by the rapid expansion of member states and activities, which – again – calls for a more strategic dialogue, including on budgetary and financial matters.

Sweden highly appreciates the work done by IOM within the field of resettlement of persons in need of international protection, return of persons who are not in need of such protection, anti-trafficking, capacity building and coordinated humanitarian assistance to migrants, including in post-conflict situations. These are all activities that clearly lie within the mandate of the organization. Sweden also welcomes IOM's work in the field of migration-related research. Sweden does not, however, see normative work, or policy-making, as forming part of IOM's mandate and role.

Finally, Mme. Chairperson, I would like to reaffirm Sweden's strong commitment to working closely with IOM on issues of international migration. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank IOM's staff for their dedicated work in helping migrants all over the world. Maximising the benefits of international migration as well as minimising its negative effects requires a coordinated international response and here IOM and its staff have an important role to play.

Thank you, Mme. Chairperson