

**101<sup>st</sup> Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration**

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**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF IRELAND**

**Ambassador Gerard Corr**

Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geneva

Mr. Chairman,

Ireland associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. My delegation joins in welcoming the new members of the organisation and congratulates Ambassador Hannan on his election as chair of the Council.

I want to first thank the Director General for his strong and effective leadership of IOM. Ireland thanks him also for his report, which looks in a comprehensive way at the state of the Organisation and the current realities of international migration in this era of unprecedented human mobility. It provided a very useful analysis of the complex challenges ahead that IOM must work to address, and the shifting landscape in which it must operate – with rapid population growth, ageing populations in industrialised countries, and an ever-greater proportion of the world's population living in cities. As the Director General said in his remarks, migration is now three things: inevitable, necessary and desirable. This is the fundamental point from which our policy response to the challenges ahead must be developed.

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation again commends the tireless work of IOM to facilitate the orderly and humane management of migration and to uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants. We note in particular the strong role IOM has played in policy discussions in the area of migration and development, with considerable input into the Global Forum on Migration and Development. The session of the Global Forum which took place in Mauritius last week provided a strong basis for international progress, progress that we must make, on its central theme: Enhancing the Human Development of Migrants and their Contribution to the Development of Communities and States.

All too often, narrow and ill-informed comments about migration and migrants have become part of the discourse relating to globalisation. Of course there are challenges resulting from migration, but this does not excuse an absence of objectivity in assessing how to handle these challenges. And, of course, there are sometimes difficulties and tensions in host societies, but this does not excuse treating migrants with other than absolute respect for their full political, economic and social rights: their full human rights in short. It is important to note that the IOM has a special advocacy role to

play in defence of these rights and also in telling the truth about the enormous contributions of migrants to their new communities and in outlining the fundamental economic facts that now make migration an important – and inevitable – part of the international economic landscape.

There has been a good beginning in preparations for the 2013 UN General Assembly High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, particularly through the substantive work undertaken by the IOM Friends of the Chair group, as well as IOM's work with UNFPA in co-chairing the working group preparing policy recommendations for submission to the High Level Committee on Programmes. Recognising the level of global migration expertise which exists within the Organisation here in Geneva, it is of great importance that there be substantial input by IOM to the preparatory process. Ireland considers that the High-Level Dialogue should recognise the IOM's leadership role in policy discussions on international migration and its key position as the leading international migration agency. It should do this not merely in words, but in clear recognition that the IOM has a critical responsibility in this area and must have the necessary institutional weight in the wider multilateral system to meet that responsibility.

The IOM will face increasing challenges in the coming years. Migration emergencies, in particular those arising from situations of conflict, require IOM's engagement in leading an international response. From consideration of the protection gaps which emerged during the crisis in Libya last year, it became clear that new ways needed to be found to ensure that the needs of migrants in crises could be addressed, and their human rights protected. At a policy level, IOM has responded decisively to this need through the development of the Migration Crisis Operational Framework.

The IOM has also, of course, achieved a great deal in practical terms in providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, and in responding to the migration aspects of humanitarian emergencies. Recognising the importance of IOM's relationship with the United Nations, Ireland encourages IOM's continued engagement in the efforts led by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and OCHA to further enhance the effectiveness of the humanitarian system by improving leadership, coordination and accountability through the IASC Transformative Agenda. We welcome the increasing coordination between IOM and UN agencies, in particular IOM's continued cooperation with UNHCR.

At a broader level, we support the further deepening of IOM's strategic partnerships with the wider UN system, particularly the strong leadership role IOM has taken in the UN's Global Migration Group; indeed we would like to see this role further strengthened.

In the coming years, many of the factors driving migration can be expected to intensify, leading to profound social, economic and cultural impacts globally. Securing a place for migration in the United Nations post-2015 development agenda is one key way of ensuring that migration challenges are effectively addressed by the collective efforts of the international community. Ireland will give our full support to the IOM for its continued work to ensure that migration is managed in an orderly and coherent way, a way that recognises that migration is now a critical part of the international economic landscape, and that recognises also that the human rights of migrants must be fully protected and respected. This role will be more important than ever before in the context of today's increasingly complex migration challenges.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.