

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Evan P. Garcia
Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations
And other International Organizations in Geneva

101st session of the International Organization for Migration
27-30 November 2012

On behalf of the Philippine Government, I wish to express my profound appreciation for the wonderful work that IOM has done in the past four years under the stewardship of Director General William Lacy Swing.

Migrants in Crisis Situations

The Philippines recognizes IOM's continued crucial contributions to the effective management of migrant crises situations around the world, most recently in the Middle East and North Africa region. In particular, my country is grateful for the invaluable assistance that IOM has extended to Filipinos during such crises. In 2012 alone, IOM also assisted the Philippines in the repatriation of 936 Filipinos caught in dire circumstances.

The rapid deterioration of many crisis situations constantly reminds us of the enduring vulnerabilities of migrants in emergency situations. Such vulnerabilities are exacerbated when, for whatever the reasons, assistance is unable to reach them or when they cannot move to safety. Migrants caught in crisis situations, irrespective of their status, are more likely to be unable to obtain immediate assistance.

The Philippines is pleased that IOM recognizes the need to strengthen its institutional and operational responses to migration consequences of complex crises. Despite resource constraints, IOM is taking this challenge head-on.

My country also welcomes and strongly supports the adoption of IOM's Migration Crisis Operational Framework. We believe that this Framework is a living document, which is adaptable to meet many requirements. For us, the Framework, coupled with the Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism, are very useful tools in providing comprehensive and sustainable responses to migrants' needs in crisis situations.

Migrants as agents of development

Migrants should not be seen as inanimate resources. They are human beings whose rights it is our collective duty to protect when they are caught in a major international humanitarian problem.

We must show greater solidarity and deepen our cooperation wherever possible on their behalf. Since migration for work and other purposes is a growing phenomenon, as IOM has fully recognized, we must work more closely together to manage it. The challenge is how to maximize the migration diaspora's ability to enhance development in their home and host nations. It is in this context that my country supports IOM's implementation of projects designed to mobilize diaspora communities to support development gains.

Migration at the Heart of HLD 2013

The Philippines is encouraged by IOM's inputs to the agenda and the modalities of the UN High Level Dialogue scheduled to be convened in New York in October next year. The Philippines is hopeful that IOM's active participation in the HLD will help ensure that that migration will be part of the post 2015 MDGs.

Thank you.