



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

Re-election acceptance remarks

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CONTINUITY, COHERENCE AND CHANGE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The action you have just taken is humbling to me, and I hasten to express my profound gratitude to each and every one of you and to your respective governments. Thank you for the confidence you have manifested in me by re-electing me to a second term as your Director General. You have my pledge that I will continue to work tirelessly for you to ensure that I and the Administration, at all times, work in a manner that will always merit the trust and support of you and migrants alike.

2. It is only fair that I should share with you today some preliminary thoughts on the coming five years: how – in the light of global migration trends – I see our priorities. These initial, embryonic reflections will be developed further in the course of the next five months, in consultation with you and my colleagues. Then, at the end of this thought process, I will present our findings and conclusions on the way forward in my report to you at our Council meeting in November.

3. I can tell you already, however, that, for the coming mandate over the next five years, I plan to lead us forward under the banner of “Continuity, coherence and change”. Within this overarching theme, my priorities will be: first, to ensure the active pursuit of those priorities that have worked well during my initial mandate from 2008 until the present; second, to continue working with the United Nations and other partners to achieve maximum policy coherence in the areas of IOM’s mandate; and third, to innovate and bring convergence in those areas in which change is called for.

II. CONTINUITY

The three “Ps”: Proprietorship, partnership and professionalism

4. Proprietorship: Each of you, representing one of our 151 Member States, is in the best position, of course, to judge the extent to which the Administration has succeeded in giving you a sense of “ownership” of the Organization. For my part, I have been pleased to observe you becoming much more active and engaged in the governing bodies (Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance (SCPF), Council, etc.) and in important initiatives such as the Working Group on Budget Reform, the Friends of the Chair, among others.

5. Partnership: Under my leadership, IOM has concluded numerous new memorandums of understanding with United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations and humanitarian organizations. Many of these have become observers of IOM and actively participate in the Council. Jointly, IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees evacuated 229,000 migrant workers from Libya to some 54 countries. Together, at the request of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, IOM and the United Nations Population Fund compiled the views, perspectives and activities on migration of some 27 United Nations and other agencies which will serve as basic background for the United Nations second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, to take place on 3 and 4 October 2013.

6. Professionalism: Although there is less progress to show in areas such as staff development and training, primarily owing to limited funding, I am pleased that we have been able to have greater interchange between Headquarters and the Field through the first Global Chiefs of Mission Meeting to take place in more than 15 years and the ongoing implementation of staff rotation policy. We have also achieved some progress in the implementation of a policy of gender and geographic equity.

7. I believe that these initial priorities have stood the Organization in sufficiently good stead for them to merit being continued in the period of the second mandate.

The three “As”: Accession, arrears and amendments

8. Accession: The number of IOM Member States has increased from 125 at the outset of my initial mandate to the present 151. In other words, there are 26 more Member States than in 2008, or an average of five new Member States per year since I assumed office. I expect an additional six or seven new Member States to be admitted to the Organization at our November Council session, as we continue to pursue a policy of universal membership. The reasons for so doing are very straightforward: (a) to bring as many governments as possible into the overall dialogue on migration, which will enrich the dialogue; (b) to ensure that IOM remains the global lead organization on migration; and (c) to position IOM as a much stronger organization in relation to the ongoing debate on globalization of the migration phenomenon.

9. Arrears: While progress in this area has not been as good as I had hoped, in fairness to other Member States whose assessed contributions are paid regularly, and in order to maintain sound financial management, in the new mandate we must continue to seek to obtain the payment of all arrears.

10. Amendments: Considerable progress has been made in achieving sufficient ratifications of the constitutional amendments for these to enter into effect in the near future. Our goal is to have the amendments approved this year. If that is not possible, the issue will continue to receive highest priority for next year.

“A seat at every table, a voice in every conversation”: IOM visibility and image

11. In terms of IOM’s global lead role in the migration field, it will be important for the Organization – through active participation in discussions relating to migration both within the United Nations system and with other actors – to continue its active engagement at all venues where migration issues are addressed, with one initiative being to change the negative perception of migration through a targeted information campaign on migration.

III. COHERENCE

12. Regional and global dialogues: IOM will continue to play an active role, and in some cases a lead role, in policy deliberations in all of these regional and global structures:

(a) Global Migration Group (GMG): In the second mandate, as in the first, IOM will persist in efforts with other like-minded partners to achieve genuine reforms in the GMG. These include the possibility of IOM hosting the secretariat for GMG; IOM as Permanent Chair or Co-Chair of the GMG; and focus on and work towards achievement of concrete and pragmatic results, including joint publications.

- (b) Regional consultative processes (RCPs): Continue to support the principal 14 RCPs and encourage the establishment of RCPs in regions not currently covered by such arrangements (e.g. the Caribbean).
- (c) Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD): Continue to provide all appropriate support to the Chair and the Support Unit and to take an active role in all GFMD meetings and discussions and policy debates.
- (d) United Nations second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, to be held on 3 and 4 October 2013.
- (e) United Nations post-2015 development agenda.
- (f) International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014.

13. A “high-road scenario”: Continue to take a high-road scenario in the areas of migration management, migration governance, migration advocacy, and migration and protection. In this regard, we will continue to put together the building blocks of coherence in these areas.

IV. CHANGE

14. Inspect, review and adapt: In the course of the next 6 to 12 months – in addition to the second High-level Dialogue – several important assessments will take place, namely:

- (a) An evaluation of the new IOM regional structure to determine how well it is performing and whether any course corrections need to be undertaken.
- (b) A review of relations between IOM and the United Nations at the autumn SCPF, six years after the previous review.
- (c) A review of the 12-point IOM Strategy, which dates from 2007.

15. Core budget: I am encouraged by the efforts of the Working Group on Budget Reform to come to terms with the core budget issue. I am confident that the Working Group, with the support of you all, will be able to attain the goal of increasing the core budget of our expanding Organization in order to respond to critical unmet needs in the immediate to medium term. In this regard, I expect that the Working Group will be able to present to you at the November Council session positive results and recommendations arising from its deliberations.

16. Marketing and branding IOM and migration: Unlike more specific categories – say, children and refugees – migrants are a much more complicated and diverse category to brand and market. This is largely because migrants come in so many forms, represent a cross-cutting issue, and often receive disproportionately negative public and media attention. Therefore, in the period of the High-level Dialogue, or shortly thereafter, IOM will launch a public relations drive to create a more positive image for migrants and a higher profile for IOM. In this regard, we are in touch with a major public relations firm which has already developed a concept shortly to be launched as a pilot project.

17. New initiatives: As we support and work towards various initiatives and structures, such as GFMD, GMG, the High-level Dialogue and the post-2015 development agenda, we must continue, at the same time, to chip away at the numerous obstacles to legitimate human mobility and migration and highlight migrants' historically positive contributions to development. This requires a policy of change and new initiatives:

- (a) Each of our four departments has already undertaken at least one new endeavour over the past year (Department of Operations and Emergencies: the Migration Crisis Operational Framework; Department of Resources Management: the Working Group on Budget Reform; Department of Migration Management: the International Recruitment Integrity System; Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships: the Diaspora Ministerial Conference). I have encouraged the departments to continue to strategize on other possible initiatives such as an international conference on vulnerable groups, for instance stranded migrants or unaccompanied minors.
- (b) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS): Enter into a discussion with the new Director-General of the World Trade Organization when he assumes office in September 2013.

V. CONCLUSION

18. For now, let me conclude by once again expressing my profound gratitude to each of you for this mark of confidence, and I ensure you of my commitment to continue serving you and migrants to the very best of my ability. Together, we can be assured that the International Organization for Migration will retain its rightful place as the global lead organization in the field of migration and human mobility.