



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the Office of the United Nations and
to the other International Organizations
Geneva

Statement by Germany

Statement by Ms. Dr. Schmitt-Vockenhausen at the 103rd IOM-Council,

Geneva, 26.11.2013

Mr. Chairperson,

Director-General,

distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the German Federal Government. We congratulate you to the fruitful discussions on this ongoing meeting with a successful outcome.

The reelection as Director General is a new sign of confidence and shows how successfully you have managed to represent the IOM's work in your last term of office. Without any doubt, the constant rise in the importance of IOM is associated with your own personal commitment, which is highly appreciated all over the world.

Migration is a central challenge of this century. The measures taken so far are to linked with the policy areas, in particular human rights, health, education, business, labor, environment and development aid. Thus, they are an important contribution to a global strategy with the aim to improve the rights and living conditions of migrants. The outcome of the very successful High Level Dialogue this year is a significant milestone in the migration policy.

2013 was also a year with demanded challenges for IOM, especially in the fields of civil wars and other humanitarian disaster. IOM did a great job here. Therefore it is necessary that IOM, as the leading migration organisation, should take a proactive role in this regard and foster a closer coordination with the UN system.

Return policy is an effective and tested tool of migration policy. Germany has this year a 70 % increase of asylum seekers over the previous year recorded. As the more humane alternative, voluntary return always takes priority over forced return. For more than 30 years, Germany has supported more than 500,000 persons through the Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum-Seekers in Germany (REAG) and the Government-Assisted Repatriation Programme

(GARP), which cover travel expenses and provide a transport allowance and start-up aid. These programmes are carried out by IOM, a personally extraordinarily good and intensive cooperation with your colleagues in Germany.

The reintegration of returnees in their country of origin is an increasingly important part of return policy. Assisting returnees to become established locally in economic and social terms is intended to help them make a new start at home. Therefore we highly appreciated the cooperation with our project in KRG – Iraq. We will develop our activities in the field of social and job-related reintegration and I am sure, that Germany and IOM have the chance to intensify the brilliant cooperation here too.

We also want to mention another big challenge: IOM is currently supporting our Humanitarian Admission Program in favor of 5.000 Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon.

We wish you, Director General, all your colleagues here in Geneva and all over the world good luck and empathy for your engaged and extremely important worldwide work in the area of migration.