

PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA

GENEVA

103rd International Organization for Migration

(26-29 November, 2013)

Statement by India- General Debate

Mr. Chair,

We express our warm felicitations to you (Peru) on your election as the Distinguished Chairperson of the IOM Council and assure you of our full cooperation. We also express our deepest gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Hannan for his valuable and experienced support, counsel and guidance in the institutional mechanisms of IOM. We felicitate the election of Ethiopia, Belgium and Australia as first, second Vice Chairs and Rapporteur respectively to the bureau of the IOM Council. We wish to take the opportunity to welcome the newest members Turkmenistan, Iceland, Marshall Islands and Fiji to the IOM Council.

2. We wish to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to the Director General, Ambassador Swing for his unstinting dedication in provision of IOM's services. His re-election by acclamation is a testament to his hard work throughout his first term and to the trust and confidence that the Member States had in him and his vision for IOM. He has steered the organization successfully through a number of reform measures making IOM one of the most dynamic, flexible and responsive international organizations. As the Director General's report mentions, the organization provided assistance to nearly 12.4 million beneficiaries. We also wish to laud the work done by IOM field staff and those at Headquarters.

Mr. Chair,

3. Since we last met, the world of migration has seen both highs and lows. While on one hand we had the Second High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, we also witnessed the tragic loss of lives of migrants off the shore of Lampedusa in Italy. As the World Migration report 2013 mentions, those who

willingly choose to migrate are largely driven by the desire for greater happiness, prosperity and well-being and migration is clearly a megatrend of the 21st century. Therefore, the High Level Dialogue and the Diaspora conference could not have taken place at a more appropriate time. At this juncture, we also need to acknowledge the contribution of migrants is significant through remittances, trade, investment, and knowledge sharing. Migrants' contribution can be further enhanced by lowering the costs of migration, ensuring their rights and equal treatment with nationals concerning their working conditions, wages, safety and health protection and portability of pensions.

Mr. Chair,

4. We thank the Director General for the comprehensive report detailing the activities of IOM. As the DG observed in an earlier report, "never before have so many people lived outside their country of origin", we feel nothing can be closer to truth. As issues on migration around the globe broaden in dimension and complexity, IOM's engagement and the need to develop responses and services to address them also grows. While we cannot predict or prevent emerging situations, we need to be prudent in our use of existing resources without deviating from the primary goal of IOM. In this context we would like to reiterate the need to focus on the core mandate which is "to facilitate the orderly and humane management of migration" and not deviate into areas that do not have elements of migration in it. Therefore, any response needs to be calibrated in the backdrop of:-

- a) An already overstretched core administrative budget structure.
- b) Focussing on implementation of IOM's core mandate.

We are confident that IOM will continue to work for constructive dialogue and cooperation on migration and address the challenges that international migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination.

5. We would also like to highlight that there are a number of important issues that need urgent attention, including inadequate oversight, undetected fraud, misused donor funds and lost opportunities. This calls for more efficient management of the strained resources and a re-examination of the deployment of the organisation's resources, mindful of financial resource constraints.

6. While we appreciate IOM's prompt compliance to IPSAS, we urge IOM to devise suitable internal procedures to take into account recommendations of the External Auditor. In this context, we commend the Director General for accepting the External Auditor's recommendations and also for initiating steps to appoint an Audit Advisory Committee.

Mr. Chair,

7. It would also be useful to reflect on the distribution of expenditure incurred on key categories during the last three years. For example, we notice a disproportionately low spending on Migration and Development, with the operational expenditure reducing from US\$ 257.5 million in 2010 to US\$ 56 million in 2012; on the other hand, expenditure incurred on 'Movement, Emergency and Post Crisis Management' accounted for over 51% of the overall expenditure during the last three years. This coupled with IOM evolving as a truly field-oriented organisation – definitely a laudable achievement, seems to have infused imbalances, often manifesting in overstretching of existing human resources for activities in the field, and perhaps in the neglect of headquarters. We would therefore urge IOM to strengthen its dialogue with donor States, in favour of implementation of more projects on Migration and Development.

8. We are confident that IOM will continue to work for constructive dialogue and cooperation on migration and address the challenges that international migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination. We also believe that IOM's vast experience and expertise have potential to contribute to international migration management. A clear recognition that international migration is a win-win opportunity in an increasingly interconnected world must underpin our approaches to deal with it. We look forward to participating in our ongoing discussion on this issue in the future. As a major country of origin, destination and transit of migrants, with a long history of attracting and sending people to other lands, we wish to reiterate our commitment to IOM in its efforts towards humane and orderly management of international migration.
