



I T A L Y

Statement by H.E. Maurizio Enrico SERRA,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative,
at the 103rd Session of IOM Council
(Geneva, 26-29 November 2013)

Mr. Chairperson, Director-General, Deputy Director-General, distinguished Delegates,

Italy aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

At the outset, let me express to Ambassador Hannan our sincere appreciation for his chairmanship during the past year and welcome Ambassador Chavez Basagoitia as incoming Council Chair. You can count on Italy's support. A warm welcome also to Turkmenistan, Iceland, Fiji, the Marshall Islands and the five observers to the IOM family.

I cannot begin my intervention today without recalling the images of horror after the tragedy that took place on 3rd October off the shores of my own Country, in the waters surrounding the island of Lampedusa. The shivering figures of that sacrifice of human lives - unfortunately just the tip of the iceberg - should serve as a stark reminder to us all of what should be the centre of our concerns and discussions. These figures call for common efforts and common approaches of the

international community at the global and regional level. This represents not only a matter of humanitarian concern, but also of democratic accountability to the entire public opinion. We consider that IOM's Office in Rome is an invaluable asset not only for Italy but also for the whole European region. Hence we encourage its strengthening with a view to helping us handle more effectively the complex migration issues we are currently facing.

Italy welcomes the outcome of the HLD in New York and its final declaration adopted by consensus by the participating representatives of States and Governments participating and commends Mexico for its leadership in this regard. We note with satisfaction that the declaration includes a positive recognition of many areas of great importance for Italy, namely: the recognition of the particular vulnerabilities of children on the move and of the need to protect women migrant workers, including those involved in domestic work; the recognition of the need to promote conditions for cheaper transfer of remittances; the recognition of the need to improve public perceptions of migrants; a renewed commitment to the protection of the human rights of all migrants; the encouragement to cooperate on mobility programmes that facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration. We are proud to have actively contributed to the inclusion of specific references to these aspects during the negotiations.

On the institutional arrangements, Italy has appreciated the positive recognition of the contribution of the GFMD to build a climate of trust among States in this delicate field. The Membership also expressed an encouragement to further enhance the functioning of the Global Migration Group (GMG) and the cooperation among its member agencies and organizations. We have appreciated the leadership by IOM in the GMG in this crucial year leading to the HLD and we

expect from ILO as the incoming GMG Chair a greater interaction with Member States.

We consider migration as an enabler of inclusive and sustainable growth and we strongly support the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 agenda.

International mobility has always been an issue of key concern to Italy: today, non Italians legally residing in our territory are nearly 4.5 million, accounting for 7.5% of the population.

The community of foreign origin is a decisive factor of social and cultural enrichment. A paradigm of such an osmotic contribution to the Italian society is offered by our Minister of Integration, of foreign origin herself, whose work in favour of an active inclusion of migrants has already proved to be the best evidence that the political discourse towards migration is changing.

But international mobility is also a multiplier and a booster for economic growth. Today, the foreign community residing in Italy produce a remarkable 40 billion euros in revenues. According to some studies, budgetary receipts referring to migrants' activities in 2012 could have been as many as 13.3 billion euros while public expenditure in their favor could have been 11.9, leaving a surplus of 1.4 billion. The idea that migrants drain resources from our public welfare is an evident misperception.

Deeply convinced that the economic benefits related to migration should be further enhanced, Italy launched an international initiative to reduce the costs of transfer of migrant remittances from 10% to 5% over a five-year period, the so-called "5 by 5" objective, adopted at the G8 Summit held in L'Aquila in 2009 and extended to the G20 countries in 2011. We invite all countries to join in this effort.

Mr. Chairperson,

IOM is a key partner for Italy. IOM, together with UNHCR, Caritas and Save the Children, is participating to the Praesidium Project in Lampedusa and other places in Sicily and Southern Italy, helping our authorities in the first operations of receiving and identifying arriving migrants. We deeply appreciate IOM's operational expertise, efficiency, effectiveness. IOM has proven with concrete facts to be the leading agency in the field of migration.

This is why - despite that Italy has not yet fully recovered from the financial crisis and despite our ZNG policy - Italy has from the outset supported the adoption of the resolution to strengthen the core structure of the organization. We wish to thank wholeheartedly Ambassador De Combrugghe for his remarkable leadership and tireless efforts in steering the work of the Working group on budgetary reform.

Thank you.