

Check against delivery

**Remarks by Ambassador Takashi OKADA,
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva
At the 103rd IOM Council Meeting
General Debate**

27 November 2013

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, I would like to welcome new Member States and observers and also congratulate the new Bureau Members on their election.

Japan greatly appreciates the leadership of Amb. Swing in carrying out the organizational reforms of IOM and guiding swift responses to various humanitarian crises. Japan also pays tribute to IOM staff who are working tirelessly to fulfill their missions around the world under challenging conditions. We also would like to express our heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of life of their dedicated staff members of Afghan office and of Angola office.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Japan's accession to the IOM. Since our accession, the relationship has steadily grown and today the IOM is an essential partner for Japan in its Overseas Assistance as well as in our efforts to meet the challenges in our own country associated with the movements of people. With the expansion of our partnership, our financial contribution has also grown and this year's single-year contribution of 50 million USD was the largest in 20 years. With Amb. Swing's re-appointment as Director General, we expect a further strengthening of the partnership with the IOM in the coming years.

The DG's report

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to touch upon the DG's report first. As stated in the report, international migration is ever on increase and occurs in many different forms. There is migration of voluntary nature, but there are those caused by conflicts or natural disasters. It is important therefore that we take into account the reasons behind each individual migrant's journey when we seek ways to maximize the benefit for countries of origin and destination. In this context, the "high-road policy" pointed out by the DG provides an important perspective. The UN High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development underlined the crucially important role played by the IOM and Japan expects the IOM's active engagement in the follow up of the outcome of the dialogue.

Human Security

Mr. Chairman,

Now I would like to make a couple of points on which Japan places importance in relation to the activities of the IOM, namely, promotion of human security, protection of women and children, and the situation in Africa.

"Human security" is an essential pillar of Japan's diplomacy, and the IOM has been an important partner. "Human security" asks us to protect and empower each individual, so that they can be free from fear and poverty, and they can stand on their own feet and live with dignity. In our view, in its efforts to manage the international migration, the IOM has been pursuing exactly that approach. By placing priority on the needs of the people on the ground and meeting those needs by employing integrated approach, the IOM tries not only to protect but empower the people on the move. The IOM has been a major partner in the implementation of numerous projects through the UN Human Security Trust Fund. We hope that the IOM will continue to be an important partner in the pursuit of the human security.

Protection of Women and Children

Mr. Chairman,

When discussing migration, it is particularly important to pay attention to the most vulnerable segments of the society, such as women, children and disabled. Japan welcomes that the IOM is strengthening the assistance for vulnerable groups through the Migration Crisis Operation Framework adopted at the last year's Council Meeting. Strong case made by Amb. Swing yesterday was very encouraging statement.

Prime Minister Abe announced at the recent UN General Assembly that Japan will expand its efforts for the prevention of violence against women in times of conflicts and for the protection of women in natural disasters. Japan is supporting IOM projects to prevent violence against women and we will continue to pursue cooperation with the IOM in this regard.

TICAD

Mr. Chairman,

Africa is a continent of hope and potential. To support African efforts to fulfill its potential, the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development was held in Yokohama last June. I would like to thank Amb. Swing for his valuable contribution to the discussion on the importance of peace and security as bases for development. Assisting the migration of refugees and IDPs is an indispensable step towards regional stability and the IOM plays a crucial role in that respect. In fact, two-thirds of Japan's contribution to the IOM go to assistance in Africa. Japan intends to continue to work with the IOM as partners for Africa for their development.

IOM Budgetary Reform

Mr. Chairman,

Japan welcomes the consensus reached yesterday on the resolution on the funding of Core Structure. I would like to commend the work of Amb. Hannan and Amb. Crombrugghe, for bringing the consensus solution to this difficult question.

The strengthening of the core structure is urgent and indispensable for the IOM to continue to adapt to ever changing environment. We strongly hope that this important decision will prompt the Administration's efforts to further advance various efficiency and reform measures, including better balanced gender and geographical representation in the administration.

As I stressed in the beginning, the IOM is an indispensable partner for Japan and I would like to reiterate Japan's commitment to continued support for the IOM, which is the leading agency on migration.

Thank you for your attention.

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