

Statement by

the Netherlands

IOM Council: Session 103

**Geneva
26-29 November 2013**

103rd IOM Council

General Debate, 26-29 November 2013

Mr Chairman, Director-General, Ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

In last year's statement, the Netherlands looked ahead at the year 2013 and expressed the expectation that it would be an eventful year. It was a challenging one indeed. The ongoing crisis in Syria, the tragedy at the shores of Lampedusa and the recent typhoon in the Philippines left migrants in need of assistance. The Netherlands wishes to compliment the International Organization for Migration for responding to these and other humanitarian emergencies in an adequate manner. We also would like to welcome the new members of the IOM, Turkmenistan, the Republic of Iceland and the Republic of Fiji, as well as the new observers.

Luckily, 2013 can not only be defined by its nadirs. The Director General already referred to the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development as one of this year's 'highs'. As current chair of the Global Migration Group and leading organisation in migration, IOM played a crucial role in the preparation and the success of the HLD. In this context, the Netherlands is pleased with the request of the Secretary-General to the Special Representative on Migration and Development to meet with the GFMD leadership and the GMG on a regular basis to discuss shared priorities.

Mr Chairman,

The Netherlands aligns itself with the EU Statement and would like to add the following.

Over the past few years, the IOM and the Netherlands have already closely and satisfactorily collaborated on the voluntary and temporary return of migrants and their families, return and reintegration, as well as on several other projects. We attach great importance to the organisation's professionalism and well-functioning and look forward to continuing this partnership. I would like to highlight three areas in which we are especially interested.

First, irregular migration demonstrates the necessity to inform migrants beforehand about their chances in the countries of destination and the dangers they face in their attempt to reach Europe. During the HLD, Ambassador Swing expressed his doubts about the effect of these information campaigns and capacity building projects. However, we would like to urge IOM to proceed with these activities as well as to seek cooperation with countries of origin and transit as part of migration management to combat human smuggling and trafficking and to continue the protection of victims.

Second, the Netherlands highly values the diaspora as a development actor and believes diaspora and migration organisations can contribute to the development of both countries of origin and destination. We therefore gladly supported this year's Diaspora Ministerial Forum and congratulate IOM with this successful event, that brought together numerous participants and offered the possibility to discuss diaspora engagement. The Netherlands looks forward to take this debate to the next level.

Lastly, since a lot of focus is often on dialogue, institutions and procedures, we welcome IOM's recent practical and concrete IRIS initiative. The goal of the International Recruitment Integrity System is to increase the transparency of the international recruitment industry by accrediting and monitoring international labour recruiters. It is likely that migrant workers will greatly benefit from this system, because exploitation will be made visible. For that matter, the Netherlands has expressed its interest for IRIS pilot projects and is identifying possible sectors in close consultation with the IOM.

Mr Chairman,

I would like to conclude by congratulating you with your appointment and thanking you for your able handling of the proceedings so far.

Thank you Mr Chairman