



PERMANENT
MISSION
OF AUSTRIA
TO THE UNITED
NATIONS IN GENEVA

105th Session of the IOM Council

Austrian Statement

Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi

Mr. Chairperson,

Austria aligns herself with the statement of the European Union and its Member States. We welcome the Independent State of Samoa as the 157th Member State and the 14 new observers joining this Council session. At the outset, let me express Austria's sincere appreciation for the excellent leadership of the Director General and the Deputy Director General, as well as for the dedicated work of IOM staff in the field and at Headquarters. With **four Level 3 emergencies** in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, 2014 constitutes a particularly challenging year marked by simultaneous, large-scale humanitarian and migration crises. IOM has been extremely active and a key player in the humanitarian response in these most

severe crises; at the same time the organisation continued and initiated its crucial work in other emergencies around the world including in Ukraine and to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

This increased demand for its services has contributed to the steady **expansion of the organisation** and confirms the timeliness of last year's Council decision on budget reform. We are grateful for the progress report on the budget-strengthening plan 2014-2016; the report shows that the additional funds are indeed allocated to those units of the organisation which had become overstretched due to the organisation's growth in recent years.

Austria supports those and other measures with a view to a further strengthening of the organisation; we are pleased that the **Headquarters Agreement between Austria and IOM** on the legal status of the organisation and its regional and country offices in Vienna entered into force on 1st August this year.

During the past year Austria's fruitful bilateral cooperation with IOM has also proven beneficial for the humanitarian admission and resettlement of **Syrian refugees**. In response to the call for international solidarity with Syrian refugees and host countries in the region, Austria has pledged to admit **1.500 Syrian refugees** and to grant them a permanent protection status. So far about 500 refugees have already arrived in

Check against Delivery

Austria and **IOM** has been and continues to be an extremely diligent and key partner for the Austrian authorities in the implementation of the admission process.

Austria appreciates the engagement of IOM as *the* global lead organisation for migration in the wake of the 2013 High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development; we also look forward to IOM's continued contribution to the ongoing discussions in New York on the **post-2015 development agenda**. The Council's high-level segments yesterday afternoon and this morning have highlighted important aspects which need to be taken into account in next year's post-2015 UN development summit as well as during the Climate Change Conference in Paris. These segments have duly exemplified the need for close dialogue between the UN and IOM on substantive issues.

With regard to institutional issues currently at stake, we have welcomed last year's establishment of an **IOM Working Group on UN-IOM relations**. Current deliberations in the UN General Assembly on the draft resolution on migration and development confirm the need to discuss such institutional issues, including their legal, financial and political implications, in an open and frank manner, before opting for a change of status. For Austria it remains crucial that IOM's particular "comparative advantage" – that is its flexibility and operational capacity, is maintained.

Check against Delivery

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, let me express Austria's full support for IOM's work for the benefit of migrants worldwide. IOM is and will stay an important partner for Austria. We are confident that IOM will live up to current and future challenges and play the central role Member States expect it to play in the field of migration.

Thank you very much.