

Check against Delivery

Geneva November 25th 2014

**INTEREOS Membership for Observer Status in the
International Organisation for Migration (IOM)**

Ambassador William Swing, Director General of the International Organisation for Migration, Members and Observers of the IOM Council, Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. Director General, I congratulate you on this important occasion of the 105th Session of the IOM Council and wish to say how very happy and honoured I am to be with you here.

Firstly, allow me to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to you Ambassador Swing and to the Council of the International Organization for Migration for having received and positively considered our application for Observership Status in the International Organisation for Migration. On behalf of the INTEREOS Council in Rome, the Staff of INTEREOS and on my own behalf I'm honoured and pleased with the outcome and I thank you for this.

Honourable Director General, Excellencies and Friends

INTEREOS, as an International Humanitarian Organization is committed to adhering to international humanitarian principles, standards and practices in providing protection support and assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and others affected and displaced by natural disasters, primarily in saving lives through early interventions in emergencies, including dedicated support to meeting the special needs of women, children and youth while working with partners in contributing to the larger international efforts in finding lasting solutions for them.

Given the numerous and complex emergencies, including newly emerging crises we are seeing in the world today there is no doubt that players in the international humanitarian architecture need to work together more and better than ever before to make a difference to the lives of the weak and downtrodden of society. Achieving this calls for greater global partnerships in which all humanitarians could and should strive to move forward together in a concerted and coordinated manner. It is this vision that has compelled INTEREOS to also seek and foster closer ties with the IOM for the betterment of displaced populations until they are in reach of home.

I'm proud to say that INTEREOS already enjoys a long standing collaboration with the IOM in several countries, from Afghanistan to Somalia and Yemen and from South Sudan to the Central African Republic to mention a few. In fact we are already collaborating for instance in the Clusters, including the Non-Food Items and Emergency Shelter and in Camp Coordination

and Camp Management, but we can and should do more as the challenges ahead are demanding.

Ambassador Swing, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I will add that a particular noteworthy aspect of our operational partnership with the IOM which we consider as being strategic is that our interaction and working approaches at the field level are pragmatic and operations-grounded. This helps achieve results, despite working under insecure and hardship conditions. Our respective field colleagues work side by side in contributing to address vital life needs of hundreds of thousands of affected persons. In our gathering here in Geneva, I wish to take this opportunity to pay special tribute to our respective field colleagues for their dedication and untiring contribution for the good and upliftment of the suffering.

Ambassador Swing, Colleagues and Friends

While conserving, sustaining and possibly strengthening our collaboration and partnership in the future with IOM, we look at the status of our Observership in IOM as an opportunity to also contribute to policy level discussions at INTERSOS to enriching our organization. Warfare, Poverty and Climate Change are compelling people to move and to take life-threatening risks. Notoriously in the Mediterranean and particularly in Italy, where INTERSOS Head Quarter is located in Rome, we are confronted by unprecedented tragedies and consequent concerns over the protection and treatment of people at sea and beyond on land. We take this wonderful opportunity to advocate for all appropriate measures to be undertaken by all concerned to protect people at sea and reduce human sufferings and deaths.

Finally, given the strong and growing presence of IOM in crises countries and danger zones worldwide and with our newly gained Observer status in the IOM, INTERSOS looks forward to strengthening its strategic partnership with IOM and take it to higher levels in the years ahead to better respond to displaced and needy populations we jointly stand to serve.

In conclusion, to you Ambassador Swing and all present here, INTERSOS is truly honoured today to take our place as Observers at this 105th Session of the IOM Council and we look forward to continuing our participation in future IOM Council Sessions and works in the years ahead.

Thank you.

Marco Rotelli
Secretary General of INTERSOS