



Statement on behalf of the State of Israel

International Organisation for Migration 105th Council Session - General Debate

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Director-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honor to take the floor at this 105th Session of the IOM Council. We join others in welcoming the countries who have just become Members of the Organisation.

Let me begin by extending my thanks to the Director-General for his strong leadership and direction of the organisation. Israel also wishes to praise the IOM staff for their dedication and hard work, often performed under difficult or dangerous circumstances.

Israel commends the IOM for the strong role it has played in the many humanitarian and migration crises we have seen over the last year.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel attaches great value to the close partnership with the IOM. We continue to collaborate with the IOM on a broad range of capacity-building mechanisms and other projects, including areas of major concern such as registration, integration, and counter smuggling and trafficking efforts.

The IOM provided reintegration assistance to more than one hundred migrants in Israel, including returning families, ill migrants and victims of trafficking who were leaving Israel to go to Thailand, the Philippines, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and other African countries.

At the beginning of this year the IOM Mission in the Netherlands hosted an Israeli delegation to study Dutch migration policies and programs, particularly with regard to open centers for irregular migrants and asylum seekers.

Cooperation with the IOM regional Mission in Vienna has been especially fruitful as well. In 2014, IOM Vienna staff facilitated a workshop on migration data, provided training to Israeli officials on Assisted Voluntary Return, and provided additional Counter-Trafficking Training for one staff member.

Mr. Chairman,

This past year saw a marked increase in incidences of human trafficking, often occurring within national borders or within the same region, but escalating further into transcontinental trafficking. Israel attaches great importance, and allocates a relevant part of its budget, to combatting this issue. In this regard, we welcome the efforts of the IOM and the initiatives taken to fight human trafficking, especially of women and children.

As stated in the latest UNODC report on human trafficking, one in three known victims of human trafficking is a child, with girls and women targeted in particular, making up more than 70% of the victims. This horrific phenomenon can only be defeated through tight cooperation, sharing of best practices, and a zero-tolerance approach.

Israel and its Anti-Trafficking Unit, together with the OSCE, UNODC and the IOM, created a seminar targeted towards judges and lawyers which, over the course of two days during the month of October 2014, provided training and preparation to address the critical role of the judiciary in combating human trafficking, and the successes of implementing an anti-trafficking policy.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel welcomes the IOM's efforts in building cooperation with other relevant bodies, its role in different forums dealing with issues regarding migration, and its work towards developing relations with the private sector.

We appreciate the opportunity to take part in this General Debate, and hope to provoke a fruitful discussion on the current and future challenges encountered by this Organisation. We hope to see further efforts to develop the IOM and allow it to flourish, and wish for more instances of strategic partnerships arising in order to fulfill the maximum potential and aspirations of the Organisation.

I thank you.