



November 24, 2014

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
GENEVA

The 105th Session of the Council of the IOM
Agenda Item 10: General Debate
Geneva, November 26, 2014

**Statement by Ambassador AHN, Young-jip
Representative of the Republic of Korea**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to you for assuming the chairmanship of this very important session of the Council. I assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and support in all of your endeavors. I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the outgoing Chair of the Council, His Excellency Luis Enrique Chavez Basagitia, Ambassador of the Republic of Peru, for his skillful guidance and contribution to building trust between the member states of the IOM and the administration. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Independent State of Samoa to the membership of the IOM.

My appreciation also goes to the Director General, His Excellency Ambassador William Lacy Swing who has successfully steered the IOM under the challenging and complex operating environment. My delegation reaffirms its support for his ongoing comprehensive reform initiatives, which have already started to bear fruit.

Mr. Chairman,

I welcome the progress made in the implementation of the "2014-2016 budget-strengthening plan for the core structure." We look forward to seeing continued success in implementing this three-year plan that will strengthen functions across all components of the core structure.

We also welcome the efforts of the IOM to expand its donor base by reaching out to non-member states and emerging donors. Particularly, given the budget constraints of many, if not all, countries, I would like to ask for more efforts to tap into the enormous potential of the private sector. We trust that the Director

General's initiative for "marketing and branding the IOM" will be instrumental in these efforts.

In addition, we welcome the progress made by the "Working Group on IOM-UN Relations and IOM Strategy" and we hope that it will provide Member States, in a timely manner, with strategic vision of the partnership as well as a more in-depth analysis of the *pros and cons* of each option.

Concerning the issue of human resources management, we would like to briefly point out two things: Firstly, we concur with the Director General in that the IOM needs to work more to achieve gender balance at the senior managerial level. Secondly, we call upon the IOM to take more proactive measures to improve the geographical disparities in the international staff, bearing in mind the enormous merits of having staff with better knowledge and expertise of local situations.

Mr. Chairman,

As the Director-General rightly put it, we are facing unprecedented humanitarian crises. We believe that the IOM's notable achievements in responding both to acute and protracted situations of forced displacement deserve our special appreciation.

In this connection, we welcome the establishment of a working group on humanitarian policy. It will serve as a good opportunity to assess the IOM's humanitarian portfolio and explore ways for future activities. We hope that the working group will conduct its work in line with the IASC's statement on the "centrality of protection" and its outcome will feed into the preparatory process for the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

The Republic of Korea has been a strong supporter of the IOM, as a co-lead of the Global CCCM (camp coordination and camp management) cluster, in tackling humanitarian emergencies in various parts of the globe. Today, I am pleased to announce that the Government of the Republic of Korea has recently decided to make a voluntary financial contribution of five hundred thousand US dollars (\$500,000) to support the IOM's activities in Iraq, in addition to the previous five hundred thousand USD provided in October. This one million USD contribution is a token of our commitment and trust in the IOM.

Mr. Chairman,

Indeed, we live in an era of great human mobility. Migration has been transformed in its scale and complexity, calling for increased demands on and efforts by the IOM, whose core mandate remains the same – an organization that seeks to promote safe, regular migration for the benefit of all.

The Republic of Korea is not an exception. Having been one of the most homogenous societies for almost 5,000 years, our country has recently experienced an unprecedented flow of immigration. We are witnessing an annual increase of 10 percent, pushing the number of foreigners staying in Korea up to approximately 1.8 million.

The Government of the Republic of Korea spares no effort to accommodate foreigners in a friendly and warm manner. We are now implementing the 2nd “Basic Plan for Immigration Policy,” a 5-year master plan for the years from 2013 to 2017 in order to coordinate various policies affecting immigration. We also operate “Multicultural Family Support Center” as well as “Korea Immigration and Integration Program” to provide language education and counseling to foreigners first settling in Korea. We have set as one of the priorities of our immigration policy “Prospering Together with the International Community” – our efforts to realize the vision of the IOM for “Migration and Development.”

In 2009, the Government of the Republic of Korea and the IOM jointly established the IOM Migration Research and Training Center (MRTC) in Seoul. We will work together with the IOM to transform the MRTC as the leading migration research and training center in the Asian region.

The status of the immigrants in Korea has improved to such an extent that in 2012, an immigrant became a member of the National Assembly for the first time in the Korea history. I am pleased that the Honorable Ms. Jasmine LEE will have an opportunity to share her experience on Thursday, November 27th under the agenda item 14: the “Migrants’ Voices.”

Mr. Chairman,

The world holds high expectations for the IOM. The IOM should continue to enhance its fundamental role of facilitating the orderly and proper management of international migration, as well as continue its important role of promoting cooperation on migration, advancing migration research, and supporting governments in understanding and coping with the complexities of modern

migration while maintaining humanitarian assistance to the displaced people and migrants suffering from natural and man-made disasters. I reaffirm the strong support and commitment of the Republic of Korea to work closely with the IOM in all its endeavors.

I thank you. /the end/