



PERMANENT MISSION OF SWEDEN

Geneva

IOM Council Session 26–29 November 2013  
Statement by Sweden

Mr Chairperson,

I would like start by thanking Director-General Bill Swing for his presentation on the state of the organization and reiterate our strong support and appreciation for his leadership of IOM in this time when the world needs to work together to address the challenges and benefits of international migration more than ever. The tragic events in Lampedusa, as well as the increasing number of refugees from the Syria conflict among those seeking a better future in Europe and elsewhere, are only some examples that highlight the need for increased dialogue and cooperation in this area.

Keeping to the Director-General's tradition of alliteration, we also would like to highlight three important "Hs" – the High-level dialogue, House-keeping and Humanitarian activities.

First, the recent **High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development** was a good opportunity to take stock of our achievements and also to explore new areas for consensus and increased cooperation. Our assessment was that the Dialogue in New York was indeed positive and demonstrated how far we have come in these discussions since 2006. We agree with the UN Secretary General's introductory statement at the HLD, that a large part of this progress has been "made possible by the climate of trust that we established in the Global Forum on Migration and Development". As the current chair of the GFMD, Sweden is proud to take this process forward – in close cooperation

with states, international organizations, including IOM, civil society and other stakeholders – to make GFMD “more dynamic, more durable and more development focused”.

We were particularly encouraged by the overwhelming support by member states for the inclusion of migration and development in the post-2015 agenda. Overall, we saw a number of substantive issues from the High-level Dialogue that can be taken forward in the GFMD – including empowerment and protection of human rights of migrants, standards for recruitment and recognition of qualifications of migrant workers and migrants in crisis.

As the leading global organization on migration, IOM has an important role to play in these discussions. We welcome the strong recognition of the role and expertise of IOM that was expressed by member states at the HLD and encourage IOM to continue this engagement.

We believe that further efforts can be made to improve the work of the Global Migration Group to strengthen coordination and synergies on migration and development. In this regard, we appreciate the constructive efforts by IOM. We also support a more inclusive role of IOM in the GMG, in order to ensure stronger continuity and solid migration expertise across the chairmanships.

Sweden welcomes the call by the Secretary General for regular meetings between his special representative Mr Peter Sutherland, GMG and GFMD to identify shared priorities and we look forward to take this new dialogue forward in the weeks and months to come.

The High Level Dialogue also highlighted the need for an open and unbiased analysis of the IOM-UN relations. In this regard, Sweden welcomes the establishment of an informal working group to serve as basis for a more informed discussion and stands ready to contribute to these discussions.

Our second “H” refers to **House-keeping**, where Sweden has shared the concern about IOM’s weak financial situation, which has been discussed in detail in the Working Group on Budget Reform over the

last year. In our own comparison of Geneva-based organizations, IOM ranks among the bottom six organizations with a weak financial position based on a number of criteria, including equity and debt-to-equity ratio. We have seen important core functions – such as oversight, audit, monitoring and evaluation being severely hampered by these financial constraints.

We are therefore very pleased that the proposal to strengthen the core budget of IOM was adopted by the members yesterday. We want to congratulate Ambassador Crombrugge for his tireless efforts in spearheading these important discussions and thank member states for their flexibility in reaching a decision on this matter. However, this decision does not solve all of IOM's financial challenges, and continued financial vigilance and efficiency considerations must remain a priority to the organization.

Third, we want to highlight IOM's developing role in the **Humanitarian area**. This year has seen a steady stream of new natural disasters and escalated conflicts that have forced people to move within their countries and across international borders. Often migrants have been caught in these crisis and many countries have called on IOM for assistance to evacuate and help its citizens.

IOM has also continued to play an important role to contribute to the overall response and efforts of the international humanitarian system for internally displaced people and assisting UNHCR in its work to assist and protect refugees. We note that IOM's budget in emergency situation continues to grow. At last year's Council, we adopted the new Migration Crisis Operational Framework as a tool to strengthen synergies between different sectors of assistance and generally improve IOM's response in emergency situations.

We also attach great importance to IOM's active and constructive involvement in relevant fora for humanitarian coordination, such as the CAP process and the Inter Agency Standing Committee. However, we believe that there is a need to strengthen IOM's institutional capacity – particularly at the Headquarter level – to improve emergency response and coordination in crisis situation. That is why Sweden has decided to

support the Multi-donor proposal to develop IOM's Humanitarian Policy Framework by 1,8 million USD for this and the coming two years. We look forward to work closely with IOM and other interested stakeholders in this process.

Mr Chairperson,

Let me conclude by reiterating my Government's appreciation and support for the important work of IOM in this time of increasing human mobility. We look forward to continued close cooperation, both bilaterally, and in the lead up to the Global Forum in Stockholm in May next year, and beyond.

Thank you!