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EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION

REPORT ON THE HUNDRED AND FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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2 June 2004

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REPORT ON THE HUNDRED AND FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OPENING OF THE SESSION

- 1. The Executive Committee convened for its Hundred and first Session at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 2 June 2004. Two meetings were held, chaired by Mr. M. Dembri (Algeria).
- 2. The session was attended by representatives of the following members of the Executive Committee: Algeria, Canada, Congo, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Romania, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, United States of America and Yemen.
- 3. In addition, the following Member States were represented by observers: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Gambia, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay and Venezuela.¹

CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES AND OBSERVERS

4. The Executive Committee took note that the Director General had examined the credentials of the representatives of and observers for Member States and found them to be in order.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

5. Mr. Dembri (Algeria) and Mr. N. Krishnamra (Thailand) were unanimously elected Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson respectively.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Executive Committee adopted the agenda set out in document MC/EX/655.

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¹ See List of Participants (MC/EX/662).

STATEMENT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL; REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE YEAR 2003; STATEMENTS BY DELEGATIONS

- 7. The Director General described major trends and developments affecting IOM in the past year and outlined four key areas of migration management that would be of growing importance in the future: migration and development, focusing on remittances from migrants; facilitation of migration through better organization of migration for work; application of technology to the regulation of migration; and the issue of security of personnel, especially in the context of forced migration.
- 8. The major challenge in the area of migration and development lay in fully tapping the enormous potential of remittances to further economic and social development in countries of origin. In many developing countries, remittances represented the most importance source of foreign exchange but were too often handled in a manner that worked contrary to beneficial social outcomes. Earners and recipients bore the brunt of high transfer charges; the use of unofficial channels to avoid government interference favoured cash transactions over job-creating investment; and remittances were often used to purchase imported consumer goods. The forthcoming G-8 Economic Summit would focus on better use of remittances, but much remained to be done for the remittance-receiving countries.
- 9. The Organization, in consultation with partner organizations and governments of developing countries, was testing pilot projects aimed at managing remittances more efficiently, covering a wide range of activities involving partners from the private and public sectors. Solutions would include cheaper transfer mechanisms, micro-enterprise lending funds, bond issuance against predictable remittance revenue, information campaigns for migrants and capacity-building of consular offices. IOM, a grass-roots based service-oriented organization, could serve as a catalyst for progress in the hugely important economic and development area represented by remittances.
- 10. In improving the organization of migration for work, significant progress towards facilitating migration had been made in April 2003 at the first Asian Labour Ministerial Consultations for countries of origin when IOM and ten Asian labour ministers met in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and where best practices were studied and information shared on the subject of overseas work. Topics included training and orientation prior to departure, protection of rights and enforcement of contracts, social protection schemes, investment of savings and best use of experience gained abroad. A second Colombo process meeting would be held in Manila in the autumn. Another important element of the process was dialogue with countries of destination; this would be pursued at a meeting to be held later in 2004. With many benefits to be reaped from the work of nationals in richer countries, it was clear that the governments with the best developed systems of migration management would profit the most.
- 11. In technology applications, biometrics was being advanced as a key feature in regulating migration through the development of tamper-proof travel documents which, in addition to making migration flows more secure, would save travellers the inconvenience of long delays and gratuitous harassment. IOM was a logical partner for governments in the challenge of applying the new technology worldwide. In the view of the Organization, biometrics should focus on facilitating legitimate international travel and exchange, a fundamental requirement in an interconnected world economy. Early consultation was essential to ensure that biometric systems

were fully compatible and accessible to all countries. Governments and IOM would be working hand in hand to that end, while regional groups would need to engage in consultations on the issue. In that context, it was important to guarantee the security of identity documents and to provide easy access to a central database for checking. To avoid the prohibitive cost of national systems, it was essential to establish intergovernmental custodianship of biometric identity data, in which IOM could play a useful role. Extensive controls would have to be built into the database to prevent unauthorized disclosure of biometric tracking and to provide reassurance to the public. Despite the manifold problems of policy implementation, biometrics offered many advantages which IOM should endeavour to maximize while minimizing the risks.

- 12. While the topics he had mentioned so far could have beneficial effects for migration, the issue of security of personnel was a negative trend. For the international organizations active in repairing the consequences of forced migration and in other development work, staff security had become a matter of serious concern. In the new security era, protection of personnel meant reducing exposure and carrying out assignments at a distance, through national staff and partners such as national ministries, NGOs and private firms. As a result, fieldwork would increasingly end up in the hands of entities not subject to United Nations security regulations. The question of relations with the military had arisen again, as in some countries the choice was work with them or not work at all.
- 13. It was hard to be sanguine about United Nations operations in dangerous places: humanitarian engagement was not compatible with a fortress mentality. Nevertheless, IOM's programmes continued to grow in the area of emergency and post-conflict work, for example in Sri Lanka, Haiti where an IOM office had been reopened Colombia and Afghanistan. IOM and other agencies must be prepared to define and pay for a working environment that was sufficiently secure.
- 14. In conclusion, he said that IOM had made significant advances in migration management in 2003. Signs of progress included the Organization's growing membership, the valuable role of the Council and intersessional workshops in providing a forum on migration for governments and civil society, enhanced relationships with migration partners, and progress in collecting arrears and solving long-standing governance questions. He looked to the further development of IOM as the principal partner of governments in multilateral migration management.
- 15. The Chairperson drew attention to the Report of the Director General on the work of the Organization for the year 2003 (MC/2141) and invited delegations to comment on it. He reminded them that, after examining the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2003 (MC/2140), they would be asked to adopt a draft resolution formally taking note of both reports together.
- 16. Statements were made by the following delegations: Switzerland, United States of America, Islamic Republic of Iran, Algeria, Sudan, Japan, Nigeria, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Australia, Egypt, Finland, Senegal, Argentina, Venezuela and Bangladesh.
- 17. Congratulations were extended by many speakers to the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson on their election, and to the Director General for his excellent activity report and his work at the helm of IOM.

- 18. Many speakers referred to IOM's wide-ranging expertise and services. One delegate had been impressed by the Organization's role in the Angolan repatriation, the evacuation of third-country nationals in Côte d'Ivoire, the work of the Iraq Property Claims Commission and capacity-building for returnees with a view to their reintegration in society. Another considered that IOM had proven its flexibility in assisting with the movement of people, helping States to develop migration infrastructures, facilitating and assisting with regional processes such as the Bali Process and the Asia-Pacific Consultations, and promoting the dialogue on migration so that the international community could respond more comprehensively to migration issues.
- 19. Another delegate said that IOM had provided valuable core humanitarian and post-conflict support in her country, together with technical assistance and capacity-building in labour migration management in relation to pre-departure orientation, sustainable return and reintegration and mitigation of irregular migration. She hoped that the recommendations relating to the protection and provision of services to migrant workers, the optimization of benefits, capacity-building and data collection issued at the first Asian Labour Ministerial Consultations for countries of origin, held in 2003 in Sri Lanka, would be followed up effectively. A speaker from another developing country spoke of the need for return of skilled workers and assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons.
- 20. Speaking on behalf of the African Group, one delegate indicated that IOM's successful programmes and growing membership were a reflection of the dynamism of the Organization's staff. She expressed appreciation for IOM's valuable work in repatriation and reintegration assistance and programmes aimed at building Africa's capacity to deal with migration, and requested IOM and donor countries to devote more attention to Africa, which should be regarded as a separate geographical region for the purpose of all IOM operations, and separate information relating to it provided. In that context, the Organization's Migration Policy and Research Department should give greater emphasis to publications dealing with migration issues, especially in Africa which was the scene of the world's most numerous migration movements. She welcomed the establishment of the Geneva Migration Group (GMG) as an effective means of managing the growing complexities of migration. She expressed support for IOM's Migration Policy and Research Programme: its approach to migration issues in a globalized world and its data collection and management workshops were highly appreciated. Migration and development was a priority for Africa, and she looked forward to a forthcoming seminar on that topic.
- 21. Another speaker appreciated IOM's leading role in migration and development, facilitation of migration and migration and health. He especially looked forward to the forthcoming Seminar on Health and Migration to be held in June 2004 in Geneva, and to the International AIDS Conference his country would host in Bangkok in July 2004. He also requested the Director General to support the secondment of staff members of developing Member States at IOM Headquarters as, *inter alia*, a capacity-building measure.
- 22. Cooperation was called for between source and destination countries to ensure economic benefits from the gains of migration for both developing and developed countries and adequate assistance to source countries to develop their migration management structures so that adequate linkages with their nationals abroad could be established. In addition, assistance programmes should be set up in developing countries to give them the resources to restructure and expand their institutions, thereby producing highly-skilled personnel to meet the needs of developing and developed countries. Indeed, the brain drain could be reversed, with mutual benefits for all parties. The 1035 Facility, moreover, should be oriented towards building capacity in that area.

The Director General and the Organization were commended for their leading role in bringing migration to the fore of many international fora that had recognized the cross-cutting nature of migration developments. Migration was not simply necessary, but desirable, requiring the cooperation of all stakeholders.

- 23. The enormous potential of remittances was underscored by several speakers; one delegate pointed out that remittances represented the most important source of foreign exchange in her country and requested IOM to pursue regional dialogue on migrant worker remittances in Asia. She volunteered her Government's services in that endeavour. Another speaker requested further information on the creation of financial instruments for portfolio management schemes and, in particular, how globalized international financial markets could be linked to national financial markets in countries of origin. Information campaigns to help migrants decide how to allocate and invest their remittances would also be useful and it was suggested that approaches to linking all portfolio management schemes with national development priorities set by countries of origin should be explored, including incentives such as the creation of small and medium-sized businesses and microprojects. The issue could be examined at a future intersessional workshop on migration and development and at the forthcoming Council session in December 2004.
- 24. A speaker from a developing country urged developed countries to cooperate effectively with developing countries in finding solutions to migration problems and encouraged the international community to foster a common dialogue on migration and migrants. A balanced approach to migration, free of politization, as one of the many facets of globalization, was necessary in areas such as migration policies, investment, capacity-building, transfer of technology to developing countries, labour force issues and remittances.
- 25. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran asked IOM to sponsor further Afghan and Iraqi refugee repatriation projects. The Islamic Republic of Iran was directly affected by massive migration movements; to date, some 800,000 Afghan and Iraqi displaced persons and refugees had returned home voluntarily. He requested IOM to envisage projects in his country in the near future and urged donor countries to help Iran with refugee and migration problems. All parties would stand to benefit from such aid. In addition, the Academy for Migration and Refugee Studies, made possible by the Memorandum of Understanding signed by IOM and the Government of Iran in October 2003, would be inaugurated in July 2004 and could meet essential training needs if donor countries provided financial, technical, logistic and scientific support. Finally, he mentioned the inappropriate terminology used in the Director General's opening remarks to refer to the Persian Gulf region and requested that the correct term be applied in future references to the region.
- 26. In one speaker's view IOM should focus on its core mandate while another considered that the Organization should prioritize existing activities and discard obsolete ones before justifying new needs and demands. Another speaker said that priority attention should be given to the endogenous needs of migrants in sending and receiving countries which could be identified on country databases. In order to facilitate integration and reintegration in society, flexible structures should be established by migrants and receiving countries, accessible to migrants in their own language.
- 27. Important lessons could be drawn from the Asian experience in migration, for the region produced the largest number of international migrants worldwide. Migration held vast potential for poverty reduction in communities generating labour migration. IOM's institutional capacity

should be strengthened to meet new challenges in migration and its link to poverty alleviation. Despite the advantages of globalization, restrictive policies hindered the movement of labour, an important production factor, which should benefit from the same mobility as other factors, while complying with certain rules. Sending and receiving countries stood to benefit more from the movement of less skilled persons as service providers than from the complete liberalization of trade. Returnees also contributed to the local economy, bringing back innovative ideas and management and technical expertise. The speaker welcomed the consultations that IOM had initiated in Colombo in 2003 for Asia's main labour-sending countries and looked forward to furthering that process as well as engaging in similar consultations with receiving countries in order to forge political alliances and partnerships.

- 28. A number of financial issues were raised. Several delegations expressed concern over outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget. Some of them urged all countries in arrears to pay their contributions promptly and to take steps to negotiate repayment plans while one requested that countries in arrears provide information on their failure to pay and was joined by another in expressing appreciation to all governments that had recently paid their arrears and to the Friends of the SCBF Chair Working Group on Outstanding Contributions for its efforts to tackle the problem. There was support for the recommendations to take the discussion to a higher level. One delegate appealed to Member States and the Administration to show understanding towards countries that had fallen behind in their payments and said that her country was doing its best to meet its arrears.
- 29. A number of delegations stressed the importance of financial discipline and cost containment within the Organization while another encouraged IOM to use its resources in a cost-effective manner. Yet another speaker, however, expressed concern over financial constraints: although the merits of cost-reduction were undeniable, it was important to ensure an adequate funding base for IOM to carry out its mandate effectively.
- 30. The delegate of Japan urged IOM to pursue zero nominal growth in the Administrative Part of the Budget. Although the Japanese Government had a huge budget deficit because it had borrowed heavily from financial markets, it was prepared to meet its financial obligations. Its representation in the Organization, currently eight officials, was not, however, commensurate with its status as a major contributor to the Administrative Part of the Budget. With his country's assessed contribution for 2005 at 19.468 per cent, it would be difficult to justify such expenditure to taxpayers.
- 31. The delegate from Switzerland announced that his Government would make a voluntary contribution of CHF 400,000 to the Operational Part of the Budget.
- 32. One delegate was in favour of the measure taken by the Organization to reduce staff costs substantially by means of the Manila delocalization whereas another said that the delocalization was premature and counterproductive to the smooth operation of IOM and therefore not in the bests interests of Member States and migrants. He urged the Administration to conduct an evaluation of the direct and indirect impacts of the delocalization since its inception in 2002, and to make available the external auditor's recommendations in that respect. Another delegation noted, however, that the Administration's initiative deserved careful consideration.
- 33. One delegate pointed out that the Report of the Working Group on Budget Planning Strategy was indicative of Member States' interest in streamlining IOM's internal procedures. He recommended that Discretionary Income should be used wisely for priority sectors, for it contributed to IOM's flexibility and served as an innovative tool for financing operational

activities under the 1035 Facility. Another speaker said that the report had provided a clear understanding of the budget planning process and expressed appreciation for the work of the Group.

- 34. Referring to the Constitution, one speaker advocated that the Executive Committee should encourage Members to pursue national ratification processes to finalize IOM constitutional amendments.
- 35. Another major concern expressed by many speakers was the high level of insecurity, placing expatriate staff at risk in trouble spots throughout the world, in particular in Iraq.
- 36. One delegate said that inter-agency cooperation was essential in dealing with the issue. Common approaches to the security problem, including information sharing among partners in the field, should be developed. Solutions should aim at making staff security an institutional priority covered by the budget. The Swiss delegate said that his Government had pledged CHF 100,000 to the Staff Security Unit (SSU). The delegate of Australia said that her Government would also be making a contribution to the IOM Staff Security appeal to help meet recognized security standards enabling the Organization to carry out its work effectively. Another speaker, though not yet in a position to make a commitment, looked forward to doing so. However, in the eyes of one delegation, international staff security was not necessarily a problem common to all countries; security needs should be carefully assessed before proceeding with blanket implementation and unnecessary expenditure.
- 37. The representative of a developing country stressed that genuine migrants should not have to pay the consequences of widespread insecurity, although it was understandable that after the events of 11 September 2001 stricter security measures within and around borders had been established. Deportation whittled away migrants' fundamental rights and undermined the benefits of migration for development. IOM, supported by the international community, should strive to find sustainable solutions to the problem. Another delegate asked the Director General what measures were being envisaged to make new entry regulating instruments focus on the facilitation, rather than the prevention, of international travel.
- 38. The need for regional, interregional and international cooperation, including close coordination with other international organizations, was underscored by many speakers. In one delegate's view, it was the key to building migration cooperation and partnership. Another representative pointed out that it was also useful in combating human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms trafficking and terrorism. Human trafficking and irregular migration were two major concerns of another developing country: the link between terrorism, drug trafficking and trafficking in women and children was well known. She urged IOM to pursue its counter-trafficking initiatives, in particular by providing assistance to victims and resource building, with a view to eliminating such practices.
- 39. One speaker appreciated IOM's efforts in gender mainstreaming and encouraged the Organization to work even harder on the issue, taking into account the specific needs of women and children. She emphasized the importance of action to combat trafficking. Another speaker announced that his Government had made the elimination of trafficking a national priority and a third, endorsing the Report of the Director General on the work of the Organization for the year 2003 (MC/2141), in particular for its emphasis on migration and health, stated that the SARS

epidemic had brought home the impact of migration in a globalized world and the need for international cooperation in taking global health measures.

- 40. The substantial benefits to be derived from forging closer ties with other relevant organizations, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), were alluded to by one delegate who commended IOM for working more closely with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). One delegate said that the question of IOM's future place in migration management would in part be formed by the proposed revision of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and IOM, and encouraged IOM to bring its strengths to the fore at the negotiating table.
- 41. Developing international migration law and strengthening IOM's capacity in that field was welcomed by many speakers. A clear framework set up by developed countries to accept legal migrants would have an important impact on reducing the growing migration movements, while IOM should assume a more proactive role in norm-setting with a view to protecting migrants' rights and achieving a managed migration regime. Migrants' human rights should be respected in all circumstances and the establishment of an International Migration Law Department at IOM to provide a much-needed migration law database was welcomed. The establishment of a migrant's legal status, based on qualifications, occupations and family group extracted from that database, could lead to sound, effective policy-making.
- 42. Responding to the statements, the Director General expressed appreciation for delegates' support for the Organization. Regional arrangements were the engines of progress in multilateral migration management and those such as the Colombo and Bali Processes, were functioning well. In reply to a query, he stated that in a new dimension of the Organization's regional work, IOM was helping the African Union develop a strategy for migration. A declaration would be presented at the African Union summit to be held in July 2004, which he hoped would unlock IOM activities to help Africa.
- 43. Addressing comments on remittances, he explained that the main deterrent was the high transfer cost (10 to 15 per cent) borne by remitters of funds. The costs could be reduced through the use of normal banking channels, allowing large margins with which to fund socially desirable projects. Success would depend to a large extent on the willingness of migrants to trust new systems and of governments and banks to rely on remittances to repay bonds they would float. One country, Brazil, had successfully converted remittance flows into lending schemes. Although many intergovernmental organizations had begun research on remittances, few had actually set up practical working arrangements. He agreed that intersessional workshops would be an appropriate forum for further discussion of the issue.
- 44. Security was high on IOM's agenda. He thanked the governments that had announced their intention to contribute to the Staff Security Unit. IOM was recognized as a leader in security awareness training and many organizations relied on its expertise. He concurred with the statement that there were differences in levels of insecurity, depending on the country. Owing to the emphasis placed by the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) on a centralized security system and personal accountability, a sophisticated approach to the issue could not be adequately provided, thus hindering organizations' multilateral work. In regard to biometrics, he stressed that the technology had to be accessible to all, with interoperability as its key feature.

- 45. Regarding a query on how to turn the brain drain into brain gain, he stressed that IOM's policy in developing countries was to carry out research on expatriate communities and advise governments on legislation that would encourage migrants and their resources to return to their home countries to aid development. Inter-agency cooperation was an important facet of IOM's work, as shown by the Organization's recent involvement with the ILO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), both members of the Geneva Migration Group (GMG). The Director General was in favour of creating a partnership with the World Bank, particularly since it was keen to work on the issue of remittances to boost development. Finally, much progress had been made in collecting outstanding contributions and negotiating repayment plans, thanks to the efforts of the Friends of the SBCF Chair Working Group on Outstanding Contributions, the Administration and peer pressure from Member States.
- 46. The Chairperson expressed his satisfaction at the spirit prevailing throughout the debate, namely a consensus on the need to achieve organizational efficiency based on IOM's role as a service provider and its cooperation with other international organizations. A new vision of migration had emerged over the generations. Africans had emigrated to take part in the reconstruction of Europe in the wake of the two world wars, with massive labour flows in later years creating a climate of fear and tension. Today, however, migration was considered to be a positive force, building bridges between cultures. IOM was part of that process. Regional processes in Asia and Latin America had received a great deal of attention but recent strides made in Africa and Europe relating to the movement of people through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Barcelona Process were also worthy of note.
- 47. As to the reintegration of returnees, priority should be given to stimulating development in their country of origin, in line with the current emphasis on international cooperation. The provisions of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families should be kept in mind. Furthermore, migrants' savings should be channelled effectively through appropriate banking and financial mechanisms to spur development in their home countries. Demands for skilled labour from developing countries to replenish aging populations illustrated the trend in many developed countries. IOM's vision of migration should take into account the impacts of globalization.
- 48. Despite the advantages of biometrics in regulating migration, caution should be exercised in the use of personal data, which must be protected. Individuals should have access to all information relating to them. In addition, identification technologies should not be used for purposes other than determining a person's identity and guarantees should be established to prevent abuse.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2003

49. The Executive Committee examined the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2003 (MC/2140), the relevant section of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659), the Report by the External Auditors (Office of the Auditor General of Norway) on the accounts of IOM for the financial year 2003 (Conference Room Paper/11 (*English only*)) and a draft resolution on decisions taken by the Executive Committee (MC/EX/L/162).

- 50. The Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance summarized the relevant discussions in the Subcommittee. Cumulative expenditure under the Administrative and Operational Parts of the Budget had increased by 18 per cent to USD 440.6 million in 2003 and both parts of the budget were underfunded. Nevertheless, the underfunding of approximately USD 1.8 million brought forward from 2002 under the Operational Part of the Budget, which included UNSECOORD fees for 2002, had been reduced to USD 50,000 in 2003, in spite of the significant financial challenges faced by the Administration. Although expenditure under the Administrative Part of the Budget had been kept under strict control and the budget had been balanced before taking extraordinary items into consideration, increased provision for doubtful receivables resulting from unpaid assessed contributions had resulted in a deficit of approximately CHF 600,000. The External Auditors had drawn attention to an adverse trend in the payment of assessed contributions and had accordingly recommended that the Administration should vigorously pursue its collection activities and do everything possible to reduce the outstanding balance.
- 51. The Executive Committee took note of the abovementioned reports and adopted Resolution No. 108 (CI) on decisions taken by the Executive Committee pertaining to the Report of the Director General on the work of the Organization for the year 2003 (MC/2141) and the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2003 (MC/2140).

STATEMENT BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STAFF ASSOCIATION

- 52. A representative of the Staff Association Committee (SAC) made a statement which focused on five topics of concern to staff: the poor performance of the IOM Provident Fund, the lack of administrative resources to meet new demands arising from the significant growth in IOM membership and operations, the Manila delocalization, personnel policies at IOM and dialogue with the Administration.
- 53. The IOM personnel was seriously concerned about the persistent underperformance of the Provident Fund in comparison with the financial market. Members of staff therefore welcomed the external audit to which the Administration had agreed and trusted that it would underscore the urgency of undertaking certain drastic changes, including the appointment of a completely new Provident Fund management, accountable to Provident Fund members. The Provident Fund should offer capital growth at least equal to the inflation rate, so as to enable staff to plan for their retirement on a sound financial basis and should make more options available to members, including the possibility of freely joining other retirement schemes.
- 54. Additional administrative resources had not been made available to meet the new demands generated by the substantial expansion of IOM membership and operations. The zero nominal growth in the Administrative Part of the Budget was having a negative impact on structures, job security, staff safety and well-being and hence on staff morale. The Staff Association was grateful to Member States, and particularly the United Kingdom, for the extra funds supplied in 2003 to enhance security arrangements but funds had already run out and yet IOM continued to render valuable services in many hazardous locations where staff had previously been physically threatened and attacked. He therefore called upon Member States to regard staff and office security as a core management responsibility to which sufficient resources should be allocated in the Administrative Part of the Budget.

- 55. Although much time, effort and money had been devoted to the Manila delocalization, the lack of clear and open communication among all concerned was a source of dissatisfaction. The SAC recommended that the Director General should broaden the analysis and decision-making process and that delocalization of functions should occur only after an independent review had been conducted to ascertain whether maintaining zero nominal growth in the Administrative Part of the Budget for Headquarters by transferring functions away from Geneva had produced real savings. The review should be carried out in coordination with staff representatives so as to guarantee its fairness and integrity.
- 56. When the Staff Association had made its previous statement in the autumn of 2003, it had raised certain critical issues with regard to IOM personnel policies, especially the lack of job security for long-serving temporary staff and had pointed to the need to strengthen Human Resources Management (HRM), yet crucial functions were about to be transferred to Manila. The recent review of HRM functions undertaken by the Administration had been based on moving functions out of Geneva in a zero nominal growth environment, rather than on analyzing the HRM services in the framework of the standards of service implemented by the ICSC, as the SAC had requested in 2003. The review had not taken the requests made by the SAC into account and was not based on discussions between the SAC and the Administration. Staff reductions in the Field or at Headquarters would lower the quality of work performed by the Organization for its Member States. It was therefore imperative to find a solution for the 2005 budget that would enable the Administration to refrain from taking decisions that would undermine staff morale and the Organization's capacity to fulfil its mandate worldwide.
- 57. The SAC acknowledged the Administration's endeavours to engage IOM Member States in a dialogue about the future of the Organization and called upon it to involve staff in every stage of the process. The SAC would canvass the staff as to the advisability of IOM forming part of the United Nations system and would inform Member States accordingly. The SAC hoped that it would be invited to join any working groups the Administration might establish to study issues that would have major repercussions for the staff.
- 58. The Director General said that he had taken careful note of the points raised by the SAC, which would receive close attention from the Executive Committee and the Administration.
- 59. One speaker considered that the main message emerging from the SAC representative's statement was that if the Organization continued to expand while the growth of the Administrative Part of the Budget remained constrained, the Administration would have to provide Member States with clear guidance as to which activities the Organization could still undertake, since at a certain point the Organization could not take on further activities if the core structure was not adjusted to support such activities. She therefore recommended that when preparing the budget, the Administration outline a variety of scenarios and plainly indicate the consequences of a failure to provide the Organization with more funds. The Member States should also pay greater heed to the concerns of the SAC; she welcomed the fact that serious note had been taken by the Administration of the concerns raised and that it would try to do better in the future.
- 60. The Chairperson agreed with the preceding speaker's comments and recommended that the Administration be asked to provide scenarios in future in order to move away from the concept of zero nominal growth which, in his view, signified stagnation and thus regression. He felt that Member States should be able to revise from time to time their position on this matter. He also felt that the Excecutive Committee and Council should make a recommendation concerning the

precariousness of the situation of IOM staff and that short-term contracts be replaced by contracts of unlimited duration, which he felt would contribute to better performance by staff at Headquarters and in the field.

61. The Executive Committee took note of the statement by the representative of the Staff Association.

REVISION OF THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2004

- 62. The Executive Committee examined the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2004 (MC/EX/656), the Programme and Budget for 2004 (MC/2117), the relevant section of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659) and a draft resolution on Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2004 (MC/EX/L/163).
- 63. Summarizing discussions in the Subcommittee, the Rapporteur said that the total for the Administrative Part of the Budget remained unchanged but the scale of assessment had been adjusted to take account of the admission of a new Member in December 2003 after the approval of the scale for 2004. The scale now totalled 101.437 per cent. The Administration had reiterated the need for IOM to strengthen its involvement in international migration law with a view to improving its services in that field and had indicated that corresponding proposals would be reflected in the draft Programme and Budget for 2005. The Operational Part of the Budget had increased in the revision by USD 21.2 million to a new level of USD 574.4 million. The increase in the project-related overhead fee, from 9.5 per cent to 12 per cent, to pay for IOM's share of UNSECOORD fees had generated more income than initially anticipated. Having examined the document in detail, the Subcommittee recommended that the Executive Committee approve the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2004 (MC/EX/656).
- 64. Two delegates requested assurances that the discussion of any strengthened involvement of IOM in international migration law was still in progress. While the initiative had received broad support from Member States, some of them had raised questions and were expecting the Administration to give further information in regard to budgetary implications. Another speaker expressed the opinion that the region of the Americas had been treated less advantageously in the budget than other regions and hoped that the imbalance would be corrected in the future. He also asked why expenditure of the IOM Office in Mexico was to be covered by Discretionary Income. One delegate requested clarification on the increase from approximately USD 9 million to well over USD 39 million of the budgeted resources for the Community Improvement Governance Initiative in Afghanistan.
- 65. In reply, the Director General explained that activities in connection with international migration law would not lead to a raising of the existing budget ceiling. There would be ample opportunity to discuss the matter in the context of the Organization's endeavours to improve its efficiency.
- 66. The Director of Resources Management said that the success achieved in the implementation of the Community Improvement Governance Initiative in Afghanistan had led to an expansion of the scheme and to the receipt of more funding for it. The full amount of USD 39 million was earmarked for projects that would be carried out in 2004. He confirmed that every effort would be made to absorb new activities related to international migration law without

any increase in the overall level of the budget. The Office in Mexico was funded from Discretionary Income because the Administrative Part of the Budget was funding in principle only Missions with Regional Functions; furthermore, the IOM Mission in Mexico did not meet the objective criteria listed in Resolution No. 949. Nevertheless, the allocation of Discretionary Income, which was a scarce resource, demonstrated the commitment of IOM to the country in question and it was hoped that some substantial, fully-funded projects would be launched there and would help to expand the Office and programmes in the region.

- 67. Speaking on behalf of the African Group, the delegate of Algeria recommended that, in the Operational Part of the Budget, Africa and the Middle East should be treated separately so that it would be possible to identify projects in Africa which, as the most sorely tried continent, deserved the greatest attention. The same delegate felt that IOM's proposal on IML was extremely valuable and had broad support. Assistance that IOM could offer in shedding more light on the many international legal texts concerning migration and on the links between them might promote new regional and subregional relations.
- 68. The representative of Sudan drew attention to the fact that no reference had been made to his country in the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2004, although Sudan had the largest number of internally displaced persons in the world (about 4 million), as well as some 500 refugees sheltering in neighbouring countries who would need to be repatriated to Sudan.
- 69. The Chairperson pointed out that the document under discussion related to a budget already approved. Looking to the future, he expressed the hope that once the peace agreement had entered into force, projects could be submitted for financing under the Operational Part of the Budget.
- 70. The Executive Committee adopted Resolution No. 109 (CI) approving the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2004.

ASSESSMENT SCALE FOR 2005

- 71. The Executive Committee considered the proposed adjustment of the IOM assessment scale for 2005 (MC/EX/657) and the relevant section of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659).
- 72. The Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance provided a summary of the Subcommittee's deliberations, during which the Administration had recalled that the IOM assessment scale for 2005 was based on the United Nations assessment scale for 2004 and that the same principles, guidelines and criteria that the Council had endorsed in previous years had been applied. The proposed scale for 2005 achieved the objective set in 1994 of aligning the IOM and United Nations scales closely and, along with the admission of new Members, resulted in an assessed surplus of 0.852 per cent which was available for distribution to the Members assessed at minimum and maximum rates in accordance with one of two possible scenarios. The Subcommittee recommended that the Executive Committee adopt the scale of assessment for the Administrative Part of the Budget as shown in Annex II, column 4 (scenario 1), of document MC/EX/657 and that the governing bodies review the assessment scale for 2006 in May 2005.

- 73. The representative of Mexico pointed out that the new assessment scale almost doubled his country's contribution. At the United Nations General Assembly the previous year, Mexico had announced its intention of pressing for a revision of the method used to calculate contributions so as to avoid abrupt and unexpected changes. The criteria for determining contributions should take into account each country's ability to pay and any upward movements in assessments should be gradual and better balanced.
- 74. The Director of Resources Management acknowledged that Mexico's assessment rate had risen significantly but explained that IOM had no control over the assessments established by the United Nations. If, as a result of Mexico's recommendations, its assessment rate at the United Nations was lowered, as had happened in the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran which had faced a similar situation two years earlier, IOM would automatically follow suit. The IOM scale for 2005 had to be based on the United Nations scale for 2004, since IOM followed the latter with a one-year time lag.
- 75. The Executive Committee approved the proposed adjustment to the IOM assessment scale for 2005 as set out in column 4, Annex II, of document MC/EX/657 and requested that the assessment scale for 2006 be reviewed in the spring of 2005 by the governing bodies.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON BUDGET PLANNING STRATEGY (COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 1092 (LXXXVI) OF 21.11.03)

- 76. The Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance and Rapporteur of the Working Group presented the report of the Working Group on Budget Planning Strategy entitled "Background information on budget planning and related matters" (MC/EX/660). Council Resolution No. 1092 of 21 November 2003 had requested the Bureaux of the Council and the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance to set up a working group to discuss and elaborate the Organization's budget planning strategy. Consequently, the Chairperson of the Council had held three informal consultations with the Members of IOM with the aim of helping Member States and the Administration to understand each other's concerns and to rebuild mutual confidence in the Organization's budget planning. The information contained in document MC/EX/660 had been thoroughly discussed at the consultations which had focused on sources of funding, classification and definition of posts, budgeting methods and the budget planning process for the core structure.
- 77. Firstly, with regard to sources of funding, it had been recognized that the Organization had been financing part of the core structure from project-related overhead income which is a part of the Discretionary Income, excluding the portion set aside to cover UNSECOORD fees. It had been agreed that administrative expenditure, staff and support costs and/or activities could be met from such income, provided that the costs were limited to the Organization's variable needs.
- 78. Secondly, the detailed information on the classification and definition of costs provided in the document under consideration had enabled Member States to understand the basis on which staff costs were calculated. It had been acknowledged that the Organization had little control over costs stemming from staff salaries and statutory benefits, which were based on the United Nations common system scales.
- 79. Thirdly, two possible methods could be used to budget for the Organization's administrative expenses: zero-based budgeting or incremental budgeting. According to the Administration,

incremental budgeting was more appropriate for fixed costs, while zero-based budgeting was better for variable costs. The Administration had been requested to pursue its cost-saving and efficiency measures and to report regularly on the results. It had also been asked to amend the format and presentation of the Administrative Part of the Budget and the section on Discretionary Income in line with the budget planning process.

- 80. Finally, it had been agreed that the information in document MC/EX/660 should continue to serve as a basis for the preparation of future budgets, on the understanding that Member States would continue to review and approve the annual Programme and Budget, including proposals concerning the use of project-related overhad income to fund the core structure of IOM, during meetings of the Organization's governing bodies. Consultations paving the way for decisions on these matters would be part of the annual budgetary cycle and should assist Member States and the Administration to streamline the process of preparing and approving the Programme and Budget. Given the complexity of the process, the Chairperson of the Council had recommended that the Administration should hold regular briefing sessions on financial and administrative questions for newly arrived diplomats dealing with IOM affairs.
- 81. A draft resolution reflecting the existing practice of using part of Discretionary Income to finance the core structure of IOM, which would supersede Resolution No. 949, had been tabled at the last meeting of the working group, but no consensus had been reached on its wording. As the working group had executed its mandate, it was proposed that it be dissolved and that consultations on the exact wording of the draft resolution should continue informally. Thereafter the Chairperson of the Council would circulate a new draft well in advance of the next meeting of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance.
- 82. One delegate regretted that, despite the progress made, the working group had been unable to present the Executive Committee with final recommendations: the issue of budget planning strategies and the definition of criteria to govern the use of Discretionary Income to cover core costs of an administrative nature were very important as the practice constituted an obstacle to the transparency and accountability of the Organization's management. He therefore trusted that a draft resolution establishing the principle that proposals for the use of Discretionary Income to cover administrative expenditure required the approval of the governing bodies would be submitted to the Council session in November 2004.
- 83. The Chairperson of the Council considered that the most important aim of the informal consultation process, namely the restoration of mutual confidence, had been achieved. He was sure that agreement would be reached on the wording of the draft resolution in the near future. He endorsed the recommendations of the Rapporteur of the Working Group regarding the dissolution of the working group, the presentation of future budget proposals in line with the direction contained in document MC/EX/660, the briefing of newly arrived diplomats and the continued quest for consensus, in particular with regard to a possible revision of Resolution No. 949, and that the results should be presented at the next sessions of IOM governing bodies.
- 84. The Executive Committee took note of the Report of the Working Group on Budget Planning Strategy (MC/EX/660) and accepted the recommendations of the Rapporteur of the Working Group as summed up by the Chairperson.

OTHER ITEMS ARISING FROM THE REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND FINANCE

Outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget

- 85. The Executive Committee had before it four documents: the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659), the Status Report on Outstanding Contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget (SCBF/268), the Addendum to the Status Report on Outstanding Contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget (SCBF/268/Add.1) and the Final Report on the work of the Friends of the SCBF Chair Working Group on outstanding contributions (SCBF/269).
- 86. The Director of Resources Management provided a brief update on the situation since the meeting of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on 3 May 2004. There had been a modest improvement and a total of CHF 710,000 had been received, from nine Member States, towards payment of outstanding assessed contributions. The result was that the number of Member States subject to Article 4 of the Constitution had fallen from 23 to 21; the number of Member States in arrears had dropped from 52 to 49; and the total amount outstanding was CHF 7.5 million. The number of Member States that had negotiated a repayment plan had risen from three to four, with the addition of Argentina, which had informed IOM that the first payment under the repayment plan would be made before the end of the current month. Nevertheless, the situation was alarming: the Administration was working very closely on the matter with Member States and would report progress at future meetings of the governing bodies.
- 87. Summarizing discussions in the Subcommittee, the Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance said that the Administration had expressed great concern at the situation of outstanding assessed contributions as the amounts outstanding had increased. The Administration had outlined the steps it was taking with Member States to seek payment. Most delegations had stressed the urgent need for Member States that had not honoured their financial obligations to make every effort to do so.
- 88. Some delegations from countries subject to Article 4 of the IOM Constitution had also taken the opportunity to confirm, announce or explain developments in their country's situation and some had also indicated that measures were under way to make payments towards outstanding amounts. Following the presentation of the Final Report on the work of the Friends of the SCBF Chair Working Group on outstanding contributions (SCBF/269), the Deputy Director General had thanked the Chairperson of the Subcommittee for the excellent work done. It had been generally agreed in the Subcommittee that the time had come to take the issue of outstanding contributions to a higher level at IOM, involving the Director General as well as the Deputy Director General, and that the matter should be placed on the agenda of the Council.
- 89. The Chairperson said it was clear that IOM needed resources to meet its administrative expenses. It was therefore essential that States be urged to pay their outstanding contributions as soon as possible.
- 90. The Executive Committee took note of the status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget (SCBF/268 and SCBF/268/Add.1) and of paragraphs 15 to 34 of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659); noted with appreciation the efforts made by some States to pay their outstanding

contributions; noted with serious concern the deteriorating situation and urged all Member States in arrears to make every effort to pay their outstanding contributions as soon as possible; urged, in particular, the Member States whose contributions had been outstanding for two or more consecutive years to pay their contributions in full, or to agree to a repayment plan together with the Administration, and make payment of a first instalment as soon as possible; and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Final Report on the work of the Friends of the SCBF Chair Working Group on Outstanding Contributions (SCBF/269).

Support for developing Member States and Member States with economy in transition – 1035 Facility

- 91. The Executive Committee examined the reports on Support for developing Member States and Member States with economy in transition (SCBF/264, SCBF/265 and SCBF/265/Corr.1) and the relevant part of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659).
- 92. The Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance said that, in the Subcommittee, the Administration had indicated that, based on the internal evaluation of the Facility carried out in 2003, certain features of the selection criteria and management guidelines had been reinforced and other features revised. Documents SCBF/265 and SCBF/265/Corr.1 summarized the criteria currently in use for the Facility and gave a status report on the first quarter of 2004, while document SCBF/264 provided a full account of allocations in 2003. In response to some concerns that the distribution of funds in the first quarter of 2004 did not reflect a regional balance, the Administration had assured the Subcommittee that every effort would be made to achieve an equitable distribution of resources available under the Facility.
- 93. The Chairperson of the Subcommittee requested clarification on the status of the report of the informal working group on the 1035 Facility, which she had submitted at the request of its Chairperson, and asked when it would be discussed formally.
- 94. Two delegations, emphasizing the great value of the 1035 Facility in enhancing capacity and assisting migration management projects in developing Member countries, urged greater involvement of the Permanent Missions in Geneva in the project submission procedure. One of them pointed out that it was difficult for the countries most in need to know the content required and deadlines for submission of applications to the Missions with Regional Functions (MRFs) in order to qualify for funding. Detailed guidelines formulated by IOM and made available to the Permanent Missions in Geneva would make the process more transparent and accessible. The other speaker stressed that the Facility must remain responsive to the real needs of developing Member countries and must therefore receive adequate funding; States were urged to make voluntary contributions to support the Facility.
- 95. The Director replied that he was aware of some of the difficulties entailed in submitting 1035 Facility projects and would work with the Head of Technical Cooperation on Migration to improve the process of project approval.
- 96. The Legal Adviser drew attention to paragraph 11 of the Status Report: 1 January to 31 March 2004 (SCBF/265) on the subject which indicated clearly the channels, including the Permanent Missions in Geneva, through which projects could be submitted. The submission procedure was already fairly flexible but he suggested that interested delegations might wish to

discuss possible improvements or simplification with the Manager of the 1035 Facility. Replying to the Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, he explained that the document prepared by the informal working group chaired by the delegate of Canada had been received by the Administration and recently despatched to Members. The Administration would be in contact with the Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance to discuss future steps.

- 97. The Chairperson concurred that the 1035 Facility was of great value but pointed out that the Facility, at USD 1.4 million, was relatively small. Needs were enormous and, if the amount were spread thinly, it would not enhance IOM's image. Criteria for funding must therefore be examined carefully. The comments made showed that there was room for improved coordination between the Permanent Missions, States applying for assistance and donor States, in order to achieve effective action. Discussion of the document produced by the informal group chaired by the Canadian delegation should give rise to an interactive debate on the 1035 Facility and the means of increasing the Facility and its effectiveness.
- 98. The Executive Committee took note of the reports on Support for developing Member States and Member States with economy in transition 1035 Facility (SCBF/264, SCBF/265 and SCBF/265/Corr.1) and of paragraphs 51 to 57 of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659).

Review of IOM's decentralized structure - Report by the External Auditors

- 99. The Executive Committee considered the report by the External Auditors (SCBF/266) and the relevant paragraphs of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659).
- 100. Outlining the discussions in the Subcommittee, the Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance said that the Administration had commended the review performed by the External Auditors, which had proved necessary now that the Regional Offices had been in existence for almost ten years. The Subcommittee had taken note of the Review of IOM's decentralized structure contained in document SCBF/266 and had invited the Administration to initiate implementation of the relevant recommendations, taking into account comments and observations made by Member States, and to propose appropriate changes in the context of the Programme and Budget for 2005.
- 101. The Executive Committee took note of the Report by the External Auditors on their Review of IOM's decentralized structure (SCBF/266) and of paragraphs 58 to 64 of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659), and invited the Administration to submit proposals on the implementation of the Subcommittee's recommendations, in the context of preparing the Budget for 2005.

Manila Delocalization

- 102. The Executive Committee examined the Update on Manila delocalization (MC/EX/658) and the relevant paragraphs of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659).
- 103. The Rapporteur of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance reported that the Administration, in introducing the Update on Manila delocalization, had explained that the plan to

transfer additional functions to the Field was in response to suggestions from Member States that further savings could be made in managing the growth of the Organization. A factor that had to be taken into consideration as well as cost was whether the necessary technology was available to perform certain activities at a distance. The return on investment was estimated by the Administration to take 2.3 years. Delegations generally had expressed appreciation for the Administration's efforts to contain costs through delocalization of functions but had raised some concerns regarding the potential financial benefits and the impact on functions at Headquarters.

104. The Executive Committee took note of the Update on Manila delocalization (MC/EX/658) and of paragraphs 65 to 69 of the Report of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on its Ninety-first Session (MC/EX/659).

OTHER BUSINESS

105. The Executive Committee noted that requests for membership had been received from the Governments of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Republic of the Niger and Afghanistan, their assessments being 0.075 per cent, 0.040 per cent and 0.040 per cent respectively. The applications for membership would be considered at the forthcoming Eightyseventh (Special) Session of the Council.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION

106. Pursuant to Council Resolution No. 972 (LXXIV) of 26 November 1997, the Executive Committee would not hold a session in November 2004. The next session would therefore be held in spring 2005 in Geneva, with the provisional dates of 1 and 2 June 2005.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

107 The Chairperson thanked the Meetings Secretariat and the interpreters and declared closed the Hundred and first Session of the Executive Committee of the International Organization for Migration at 5.40 p.m., Wednesday, 2 June 2004.