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INTERVENTION

by

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to the

106th Session of the Council

of the International Organization for Migration
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Ambassadeure et représentante permanente auprès des Nations Unies et de la Conférence du
désarmement Mission permanente du Canada auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à
Genève

à la

106^e Session du Conseil

de l'Organisation internationale pour les Migrations
Genève, le 24-27 novembre 2015

**INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
106TH COUNCIL**

Statement on behalf of the Government of Canada

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of my delegation I would like to thank the Director General for his report earlier this week. Let me also offer my congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. There can be no doubt that issues related to international migration are the subject of unprecedented levels of attention in many parts of the world, and that IOM's role is more important than ever.

My delegation is especially grateful to IOM for supporting Canada as we work to deliver on our commitment to quickly resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees. We very much appreciate the broad range of IOM assistance in this effort, from migration health to operational support and movements.

Canada looks to IOM at this time of unprecedented migration to help governments uphold the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants as well as sending and receiving societies. We join the Director General in recognizing that more must be done to counter xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiment.

Mr. Chairman,

The question of IOM's status as an independent inter-governmental organization, and its relations with the United Nations system, has been a topic that has preoccupied members of this Council for the last two years. Canada welcomes the adoption of a resolution to enable the IOM to improve the basis of its relationship with the United Nations while preserving the Organization's unique institutional character, its non-normative approach to migration, and its independence.

We take this opportunity to emphasize the resolution's call upon the Director General to report back the developments of discussions to the Member States on a continuous basis, including reports on anticipated cost implications. It is crucial, too, that states continue to work with the IOM as the Organization evolves, to ensure everything that we value about it is further strengthened, and is not compromised. For this reason, we attach particular importance to the comprehensive list of essential elements laid out in the resolution. Canada believes strongly that any way forward must preserve these.

This year members of the IOM's council have been presented with a number of policy documents that provide important guidance for the IOM and its staff, including the Migration Governance Framework and Humanitarian, Protection and Health policies.

These are all important topics. Canada would, however, like to emphasize how important it is that IOM not spread itself too thin and that the Organization continues to focus on its **migration** mandate.

There can be no doubt that IOM plays an increasingly important humanitarian role. Canada welcomes the Humanitarian Policy and its clear articulation of IOM's responsibilities vis-à-vis internationally agreed humanitarian principles. Similarly, Canada recognizes that the IOM has extensive expertise and a distinct role to play with respect to migrant health, but encourages the IOM to consult with the World Health Organization, the lead agency in the field of international health.

My delegation notes with regret that the revised IOM Gender Equality Policy for 2015-2019 shared with this Council includes no reference to gender identity or sexual orientation, nor to the specific vulnerabilities of LGBTIQ migrants. In our view this represents a critical omission.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion let me take this opportunity to underline how deeply Canada values our collaborative and positive relationship with the IOM and looks forward to continuing this longstanding partnership for years to come. My colleagues in Ottawa are particularly pleased to be hosting the Director General and his management team at the first high level Canada-IOM bilateral consultations in Canada next week, which will be an opportunity to further deepen this relationship.

Thank you