



REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta to the UNOG and other International Organisations in Geneva H.E Dr. John Paul Grech

106th Session of the IOM Council 24th – 27th November 2015

Thank you Mr. Chairman

Director-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates

Malta fully aligns itself with the Statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. My participation at this 106th Session of the IOM Council also has a special meaning. Only a fortnight ago, in recognition of the importance my country attaches to the challenges posed by migration and the benefits that could be accrued by a well managed migration, the Valletta Summit on Migration came to a successful conclusion. Many have contributed to this success, amongst which the IOM, a special contributor to the Summit.

In the wake of countless tragedies in the Mediterranean, in which hundreds of migrants have lost their lives, the international community underwent efforts to try to stop such occurrences from repeating themselves. The international community assured the moral duty and responsibility of trying to save lives. But this is dealing only with the symptoms.

The only way we can manage migration is by working together, and by turning our principles into actions. Our purpose is not only to address the plight of vulnerable people in the Mediterranean, but also to reflect on our collective response to the global crisis, to agree on joint approaches and to take concrete steps so that migration is ably managed and not becoming a tragic loss to all. Ours is a joint responsibility. We must deliver in a spirit of partnership and solidarity.

The Valletta Summit on Migration took place at the opportune moment. Both Africa and Europe are under heavy pressure in trying to manage the scale and effects of the refugee crisis as well as to deal with the increasing number of people on the move globally. The Valletta Summit bears testimony to the fact that one of our biggest responsibility is to address the root causes of such movements as well as to strengthen our dialogue and cooperation on migration comprehensively.

What clearly emerged at the Valletta Summit was the need for our African partners to help us better address our common challenges. Indeed, one of the Valletta Summit's successes has been the ability to look at the migration crisis from different perspectives, taking into account the concerns of all countries involved and to focus on concrete actions and initiatives. The focus for us now is to ensure that the targets we have set at the Valletta Summit together with our African

partners are met and implemented, including 16 short-term flagship initiatives. These initiatives include more focused development programmes, programmes supporting mobility¹, supporting the capacities of the countries of origin and transit, partially on border management, strengthening our cooperation on the fight against migrant smuggling and human trafficking as well as strengthening cooperation on returns, readmission and reintegration.

The IOM has and continues to play a pivotal role in the management of migration, in the promotion of international cooperation on migration issues and in the provision of humanitarian assistance to migrants in need. I seize the opportunity to sincerely thank Director General Ambassador William Lacy Swing for a great job done in 2015. We remain committed to support his efforts to enhance the IOM's overall effectiveness. We also continue to support the Director General's discussions with the UN Secretariat General on the future of IOM-UN Relations.

Mr. Chairman

IOM is spearheading innovative and pragmatic measures to deal with the management of migration. Malta commends the IOM for its constructive and robust response to the tragic events in the Mediterranean, via its recently launched 'Response Plan for the Mediterranean and Beyond'. The Plan proposes interventions in reaffirming the collective responsibility of states, institutions and organizations to respond to the strenuous situation that the international community is facing. We are pleased to note that the Plan is not only centred on the protection of migrants' rights and enhanced partnership amongst all concerned stakeholders but it also stresses on the need to integrate required action across areas of origin, transit and destination. Full implementation of the plan and the effectiveness of the results are contingent upon mobilizing the required financial resources, which IOM estimates at US\$780 million. It is therefore of the essence that Member States play their part in ensuring that this target is reached.

We highly value our close partnership with the IOM. Since 2007, Malta has been working with the Organisation on a broad range of areas. Some areas include assisted voluntary return and reintegration in countries of origin, resettlement of refugees to the United States and other European countries, counter-trafficking initiatives, and facilitating the integration of Third Country Nationals. Throughout, we have shown that despite size, social realities and opportunities, Malta has lived up to its culture of assisting those in need.

Mr. Chairman

The multi-disciplinary nature of migration demands the establishment of a strategy which looks into innovative multilateral cooperation with a view to achieving sustainable solutions. We believe that IOM's vast experience and expertise will be key towards achieving this goal.

Thank you

¹ Such as increasing the number of scholarships for researchers and students including from Malta.