



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SLOVENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA**

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**106th session of the IOM Council
General Debate**

Statement by Slovenia

Mr. Chairman,

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to make some additional comments in its national capacity. At the outset let me congratulate you Ambassador on your election as Chair.

Mr. Chairman,

Today we are facing the unprecedented migration flows in all parts of the world. With the ongoing conflicts, poverty and climate change it is expected that the growing trends will continue. Every day we are sadly reminded of the human tragedies and suffering of people on the move which need to be at the forefront of our response. Therefore more should be done to prevent further loss of lives.

We should strengthen our efforts and cooperation in fighting migrant smugglers and traffickers of human beings and in preventing irregular migration flows. Slovenia remains committed to share the burden in these efforts and is thus taking an active role in the EU Operation Sophia in the Mediterranean Sea.

The primary focus of our efforts should not be in stemming migration but rather in promoting legal migration, mobility and addressing illegal migration. It is important that people on the move are provided with accurate and current information about the dangers of irregular migration, false expectations and distorted image of life that awaits them. Tackling illegal migration and addressing the root causes is a shared responsibility of the entire international community and not of individual country or region.

We believe that better cooperation and strengthening of political dialogue, between countries of origin, transit and destination is crucial in finding durable solutions for the challenges before us.

The EU-Africa Summit on migration in Valletta has brought a clear political commitment that we should manage migration flows in all their aspects together, guided by the principle of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility.

Slovenia believes that urgent close regional and interregional cooperation is important. In the past months we have been faced with a massive flow of refugees and migrants along the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkans migration route. Thus far, more than 248,000

people have entered Slovenia, a country of two-million. This figure represents more than 12 per cent of our entire population. We are doing our utmost to manage the migration flows and protect the people in need, especially the most vulnerable groups, as well as to guarantee security for all. We appreciate the assistance of other EU member states, as well as of IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF and others in these efforts.

In conclusion, we would like to underline that Slovenia has traditionally good cooperation with IOM on the return of illegal migrants, particularly with regard to voluntary return with assistance. We are particularly grateful to the IOM for the granted technical/humanitarian assistance. We would also like to express our deep appreciation for the valuable work of Director General Ambassador Swing and his staff at the IOM.

Thank you.