

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION
COUNCIL 107th SESSION 5-8 December 2016
GENERAL DEBATE

Statement of Belgium

Dear colleagues,
Distinguished representatives,
Director General,
Mr. Chair,

1. Belgium aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and its member states and wishes to make a few additional comments.
2. As a founding Member State of IOM Belgium congratulates IOM with its 65th anniversary. Since IOM's creation in Brussels in 1951, Belgium shares a long history of cooperation with IOM aimed at supporting IOM in the realization of its mandate. Belgium recognizes IOM as a multilateral partner in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals by emphasizing IOM's role as a flexible, operational and transparent global lead agency in the field of migration.
3. Looking back at 2016, we witnessed IOM's impressive growth in membership, project portfolio, core structure and overall budget. The process of optimizing IOM, its governance structure and its operational capacities will therefore need to remain a continuous priority and point of attention in the future to ensure a managed and manageable growth path.
4. 2016 is also the year of IOM's entry into the UN System and of the landmark New York Declaration, which puts the migration issue firmly on the agenda for the coming years with the development of the global compact on migration, in which IOM as leading agency on migration has to play its rightful role, both in the consultative process integrating the various regional and thematic viewpoints, expertise, etc., as in the negotiation process itself, including through serving the international conference as its secretariat general, as this would constitute a strong sign of trust and confidence of the UN-family in IOM. In this regard, Belgium already decided to respond to IOM human resources needs by financing a junior professional officer for their IOM's global compact team in New York.

5. Finally, on September 22nd 2016 Belgium's longstanding partnership with IOM was further strengthened and IOM's strategic and operational role in the management of migration flows further confirmed when our Minister of Development Cooperation signed a framework agreement with IOM's Director General Swing to provide multi-annual un-earmarked funding to IOM in order to promote international cooperation on migration and to assist in managing migration in a safe, orderly and regular manner involving full respect of human rights and dignity of all migrants. Thank you.