

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



STATEMENT OF BRAZIL – GENERAL DEBATE
107th session of the IOM Council

Mister Chairman,

Brazil aligns itself with the statement made by Colombia on behalf of GRULAC and would like to make the following additional comments in its own national capacity.

At the outset, allow me to express our appreciation for the work carried out in 2016 by Ambassador Bertrand De Crombrughe and Ambassador Geert Muylle, as Chairmen of the IOM Council.

We would like to congratulate you, Ambassador John Quinn, for your election, and assure you that you can count on our continuous engagement and support for all your endeavours.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the Kingdom of Tonga for the membership application to the IOM.

Mister Chairman,

Brazil could not agree more with the statement delivered by the Director-General. These are no ordinary times. In the course of 2016, the world has witnessed the rise of intolerance, xenophobia and hate in mainstream political discourse. This phenomenon has singled out migration as the source of all failings, with dire effects for migrants and their families.

The human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals, regardless of their migratory status, need to be equally respected. Migrants must have access to justice, as well as to government social programmes, including public health and education. Perpetrators of violations against migrants must be held accountable.

It is important to develop a comprehensive and integrated understanding of the causes and benefits of migration, which fully takes into account the principle of shared responsibilities among states of origin, transit and destination.

Brazil is fully committed to promoting the integrity of the migratory process, through the prevention and combat of human trafficking and smuggling.

Driven by our conviction of the positive contribution of migration to society, Brazil adopted an active policy to address the influx of Haitian migrants into Brazil, with full respect for their human rights. In the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Brazil implemented a humanitarian visa programme aimed at establishing a safe and legal pathway and curbing irregular and clandestine channels migration. Nowadays, more than seventy-five thousand Haitians live in Brazil regularly, enjoying full rights in equality of conditions with the Brazilian nationals.

In order to better address the Haitian migratory flow to Brazil, my Government and IOM established a partnership which led to the inauguration, in September 2015, of the "Brazil Visa Application Center" in Port-au-Prince, where more efficient services can be rendered for visa applicants. As a result, since then, more than 20,000 visas have been processed by the Brazilian consular authorities in that capital.

Inspired by the experience with the Haitian migrants, Brazil developed a humanitarian visa programme designed to receive persons affected by the Syrian conflict. More than nine thousand visas on humanitarian basis have been issued to Syrian nationals since 2013. Approximately 2,500 Syrian have received refugee status in Brazil under the programme.

During the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on Great Movements of Refugees and Migrants and the US Leader's Summit on Refugees, held in New York last September, Brazil committed to renew the programme for persons affected by the Syrian crisis and agreed to receive additional 3,000 Syrian refugees.

The Brazilian Government is committed to the intergovernmental process for the adoption of a Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018.

Mister Chair,

Finally, we would like to commend the Organization for the conclusion of the association agreement between the IOM and the United Nations. It reflects the growing centrality of migratory themes in the UN System. Brazil stands ready to contribute to strengthening the relationship between the two organizations, in accordance with Council Resolutions 1309 and 1318.

Thank you.