



107TH IOM COUNCIL SESSION: 5TH – 8TH DECEMBER, 2016

AGENDA ITEM 10: GENERAL DEBATE

STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA DELIVERED BY MR. ALEXANDER BEN-ACQUAAH, MINISTER-COUNSELLOR ON THURSDAY 8TH DECEMBER, 2016

Mr. Chair,

First permit me in my national capacity to congratulate you and the Bureau on your successful election. Ghana assures you of her full support and cooperation as you conduct the affairs of this Council session and indeed throughout the entire year.

Ghana also thanks the Ambassador William Swing, the Director-General and his team for the abled manner in which they have steered the affairs of the Organisation. Ghana aligns itself with the African Group statement.

We welcome the admission of the Kingdom of Tonga and the new observer organisations to the IOM fraternity.

Mr. Chair,

Debatably, history has an indirect way of reminding us that the entire human race, regardless of location, are migrants. Today, the most prominent root-cause of human mobility is attributable to climate change, the scourges of war and the quest to seek better living conditions, among several others. Ghana believes that the way forward to managing and/or possibly stemming this unprecedented migration phenomenon that we have witnessed in these past few years is not through xenophobic and hateful rhetoric or the closure of borders to these migrants, but rather through close collaboration between countries of origin and countries of destination. Having said this, the expertise and platform provided by specialized international organisations such as the International Organisation Migration as a useful avenue for addressing this challenge, cannot be over-emphasised.

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Over the past three decades Ghana has been home to thousands of migrants and refugees from our sub-region, and as part of our renewed commitment to meet our obligations under international humanitarian law, the Government of Ghana with the support of the IOM and other development partners including the European Union (EU) and the German Development Co-operation (GIZ) in April of this year, launched the Ghana National Migration Policy and its implementation plan.

The goal of this migration policy is to, among others, promote the benefits of migration, while minimizing the costs of migration through the successful implementation of the Policy to guide the management of Ghana's internal, intra-regional and international migration flows. The Migration Policy comprehensively addresses key migration elements in Ghana namely irregular migration, human trafficking, migrants smuggling, labour migration, brain drain and gain, diaspora engagement, dual citizenship, remittances, return, re-admission, and re-integration of Ghanaian migrants, Border management, refugees issues and many others.

The Policy also covers the crucial linkages between migration and climate change, health, trade, tourism, education and gender. With this new migration policy, Ghana has successfully integrated migration into its Forty-year National Development Framework. Allow me, Mr. Chair, to use this opportunity to extend Ghana's special thanks to the IOM for supporting the development of the Ghana's National Migration Policy through the IOM Development Fund (IDF) project.

Mr. Chair,

To address the complex migration challenges in the West African sub-region, the Ghana Immigration Service collaborated with the IOM to jointly implement the Ghana Integrated Migration Management Approach (GIMMA) through a project three-year project spanning the period 2014 to 2017.

The Ghana Integrated Migration Management project seeks to enhance the institutional capacities of law enforcement officers to effectively manage Ghana's borders, promote safe and legal migration, and strengthen migration data management for evidence based policy making purposes.

Ghana in July of this year, commenced the issuance of visas-on-arrival to all African nationals as part of efforts to enhance free movement of people across

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the continent. Ghana is committed to playing its role to bring to fruition the African Union's Agenda 2063 policy document, which includes the abolition of visa requirements for all Africa citizens in all countries on the continent by 2018. We commend the role play by the IOM in this regard.

I thank you Mr. Chair.

