



**108<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council  
of the International Organization for Migration**

**Statement of Belgium for the General Debate**

Geneva, 28 November -1 December 2017

(check against delivery)

Madame Chairperson,

(Belgium associates itself with the statement made by the EU and its members states)

Belgium congratulates IOM with its first anniversary as a UN-related agency since the signing and the coming into effect on 19 September 2016 of the Agreement concerning the relationship between the United Nations and IOM.

We appreciate the considerable progress IOM has made in strengthening coordination and collaboration with other parts of the UN system and wish to pay tribute to DG Swing and his colleagues in this regard.

Looking forward we believe it is important for IOM to further deepen and widen these partnerships in order for IOM to show, through its particular expertise in migration-related matters, that it is part of the solution in the various "construction sites", among which prominently figure the migration compact and the UN reform issue. Hence, it is important for IOM to further build up its expertise and policy capacities and not to wait till the second half of next year. It is also important that the "Geneva-side" of the system remains united.

As we are now coming to the end of the consultation phase of the GCM-process with the stocktaking meeting in Mexico next week, we think that it is appropriate to already recognize the substantial contribution of IOM to the ongoing GCM-process.

Without pretending to be exhaustive we would like to commend IOM for the preparation of thematic papers, its support to national consultations and regional consultative processes, the organization of the International Dialogue on Migration, engagement with civil society, the Migration Leaders Research syndicate, media and communications outreach and last but not least its undeniable support to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on International Migration.

We wish for IOM to continue to play a substantial role during the intergovernmental negotiations phase and the intergovernmental conference in December 2018, during which the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration will be adopted.

**We reiterate our strong support for IOM's current and future role as the global lead UN agency on migration, including in the follow-up and the review process of the GCM.**

Finally, Belgium - as a proponent of predictable and flexible funding - calls upon other member states to provide IOM with sufficient multiannual and unearmarked voluntary contributions in order to achieve its mission as the leading UN Migration Agency.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson