

COUNCIL

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REPORT ON THE

110TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL *

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Rapporteur: Mr L.A. Gberie (Sierra Leone)

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List of acronyms

HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ICMP	International Commission on Missing Persons
IDP	Internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NGO	Non-governmental organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

DRAFT REPORT ON THE 110TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL

Introduction

1. Pursuant to Resolution No. 1375 of 30 November 2018, the Council convened for its 110th Session on Tuesday, 26 November 2019, at the World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva. Seven meetings were held. The meetings were chaired by Mr M. Jespersen (Denmark).

Attendance²

2. The following Member States were represented.

Afghanistan	Costa Rica	Hungary	Montenegro	South Africa
Albania	Côte d'Ivoire	India	Morocco	South Sudan
Algeria	Croatia	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mozambique	Spain
Angola	Cuba	Ireland	Myanmar	Sri Lanka
Argentina	Cyprus	Israel	Namibia	Sudan
Armenia	Czechia	Italy	Nepal	Suriname
Australia	Denmark	Jamaica	Netherlands	Sweden
Austria	Djibouti	Japan	Nicaragua	Switzerland
Azerbaijan	Dominican Republic	Jordan	Niger	Thailand
Bahamas	Ecuador	Kazakhstan	Nigeria	Timor-Leste
Bangladesh	Egypt	Kenya	North Macedonia	Togo
Belarus	El Salvador	Kyrgyzstan	Norway	Trinidad and Tobago
Belgium	Estonia	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Pakistan	Tunisia
Benin	Eswatini	Latvia	Panama	Turkey
Botswana	Ethiopia	Lesotho	Paraguay	Turkmenistan
Brazil	Finland	Libya	Peru	Uganda
Bulgaria	France	Lithuania	Philippines	Ukraine
Burkina Faso	Gabon	Luxembourg	Poland	United Kingdom
Burundi	Gambia	Madagascar	Portugal	United Republic of Tanzania
Cabo Verde	Georgia	Malawi	Republic of Korea	United States of America
Cambodia	Germany	Maldives	Republic of Moldova	Uruguay
Canada	Ghana	Mali	Romania	Vanuatu
Central African Republic	Greece	Malta	Rwanda	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Chad	Guatemala	Mauritania	Senegal	Viet Nam
Chile	Guinea	Mauritius	Serbia	Yemen
China	Guyana	Mexico	Seychelles	Zambia
Colombia	Haiti	Mongolia	Sierra Leone	Zimbabwe
Congo	Holy See		Slovakia	
	Honduras		Slovenia	

3. A representative of Lebanon,³ which was an applicant for membership of the Organization, was also present.

4. Bahrain, Indonesia, Kuwait, Qatar, the Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia were represented by observers.

² The list of participants is contained in document C/110/13. Unless otherwise indicated, all documents and slide presentations are available on the Council section of the IOM website.

³ See paragraph 14.

5. The ILO, UNFPA and WFP were represented by observers.

6. The African Union, the Eurasian Economic Commission, the European Public Law Organization, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and the Sovereign Order of Malta were represented by observers, as were the following entities: “La Caixa” Foundation, the Danish Refugee Council, the Friends World Committee for Consultation, the International Catholic Migration Commission, the International Commission on Missing Persons,⁴ the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, the International Islamic Relief Organization, Migrant Help and Partage avec les enfants du monde.

Opening of the session and credentials of representatives and observers

7. The outgoing Chairperson, Mr Z.K. Korcho (Ethiopia), opened the session on Tuesday, 26 November 2019, at 10.15 a.m.

8. The Council noted that the Director General had examined the credentials of the representatives of the Member States listed in paragraph 2 and of Lebanon and found them to be in order, and that he had been advised of the names of the observers for the non-member States, international governmental organizations and NGOs listed in paragraphs 4 to 6.

Report of the Chairperson of the Council

9. The outgoing Chairperson drew attention to the important role played by the Council at a time when migration remained high on the global agenda. One notable achievement in the past year had been the appointment of the IOM Director General as the Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration and the establishment of the Secretariat to support implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. IOM had also embarked on internal governance reforms to ensure that the Organization was fit for purpose.

Election of officers

10. The Council elected the following officers:

Chairperson:	Mr Morten Jespersen (Denmark)
First Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Evan Garcia (Philippines)
Second Vice-Chairperson:	Ms Socorro Flores Liera (Mexico)
Rapporteur:	Mr Lansana Alison Gberie (Sierra Leone)

Adoption of the agenda

11. The provisional agenda contained in document C/110/1/Rev.1 was adopted by the Council and subsequently issued as document C/110/14.

⁴ See paragraph 17.

Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights

12. The Administration reported that, since document C/110/5/Rev.2 had been issued, Cabo Verde, Chile, the Republic of Korea and Malta had made payments. A payment from the Congo had removed that country from the list of Member States subject to Article 4, thereby reducing the number of such countries to 19.

13. The Council took note of document C/110/5/Rev.2 and of the additional information provided by the Administration.

Admission of new Member States and observers

(a) Application for membership of the Organization

14. The Council adopted by acclamation Resolution No. 1377 of 26 November 2019 admitting the Lebanese Republic as a Member of the Organization subject to the completion by that country of the internal administrative formalities required to ratify the IOM Constitution, and its notifying the Director General accordingly.

15. The representative of Lebanon said that full membership of IOM would give renewed impetus to his Government's relationship with the Organization and pave the way for new projects. Given the importance that his country attached to tolerance, diversity, dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflict, he welcomed the opportunity to strengthen its ties with IOM, an organization that nurtured those same values.

16. The Director General expressed appreciation for the close cooperation between Lebanon and IOM on past migration projects, which was especially crucial given the migratory flows in the region. He looked forward to the Government completing the formalities that would enable the country to become a new Member State of the Organization.

(b) Application for representation by an observer

17. The Council adopted by acclamation Resolution No. 1378 of 26 November 2019 granting observer status to the International Commission on Missing Persons at its meetings.

18. The representative of the ICMP thanked the Director General and the Council for having accepted her organization's application for observer status. The issue of missing persons was particularly important within the context of migration, and investigating disappearances along migratory routes was essential to upholding human dignity and the rule of law for all. She looked forward to even closer cooperation with IOM in future and expressed confidence that partnership between the two organizations would advance the security and well-being of migrants.

19. The Director General welcomed the new observer, stressing the important role played by observers in general and in particular those with which IOM shared so much common ground. The Organization would continue to strengthen international cooperation on behalf of human dignity.

Report of the Director General

20. The Director General submitted his report to the Council (C/110/10), accompanied by a slide presentation, and drew attention to the IOM Strategic Vision (C/110/INF/1) and the most recent update on the application of the Internal Governance Framework (S/25/INF/1).
21. The Council took note of the report of the Director General (C/110/10).

Draft reports on the 109th Session and the Third Special Session of the Council

22. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1379 of 26 November 2019 approving the reports on its 109th Session (C/109/15) and its Third Special Session (C/Sp/3/5).

Report on matters discussed at the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance

(a) Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2019

23. The Standing Committee Rapporteur said that, at its Twenty-fifth Session, the Standing Committee had examined the document entitled Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2019 (C/110/9), in which it was reported that the Administrative Part of the Budget remained unchanged at CHF 52,240,024, the Operational Part of the Budget had increased from USD 1.660 billion to USD 2.045 billion, and the level of Operational Support Income remained at USD 101.4 million.
24. The Standing Committee had recommended that the Council take note of the Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2019.
25. The Council took note of document C/110/9.

(b) Programme and Budget for 2020

26. The Standing Committee Rapporteur said that the Programme and Budget for 2020 (C/110/8) submitted at the Twenty-fifth Session of the Standing Committee had been reissued to incorporate the changes set out in document C/110/8/Corr.1 of 29 October 2019. In the reissued document, the Administrative Part of the Budget was calculated at CHF 52,242,614 and the Operational Part of the Budget was projected at USD 858.3 million, which was 15 per cent lower than in the Programme and Budget for 2019 at the same time the previous year. The projected level of Operational Support Income – USD 123 million – had been calculated based on the previous year's results and current and expected trends. While projecting an increased level of Operational Support Income entailed a certain degree of risk, it was unlikely that problems would be encountered unless demand for the Organization's services fell significantly. The increase had been allocated to help meet various important needs. Efforts would continue to be made through the Internal Governance Framework to identify core positions and determine how best to fund them.
27. Following a discussion, the Standing Committee had taken note of the Programme and Budget for 2020, as set out in document C/110/8 and its corrigendum, and had recommended that the Council approve CHF 52,242,614 for the Administrative Part of the Budget and USD 858.3 million for the Operational Part of the Budget.

28. One representative said that the increase in projected Operational Support Income would allow overhead payments to be invested more rapidly in critical back-office functions and help cover indirect management and oversight costs. Although he recognized that the Administration had to balance competing priorities when allocating the Organization's core resources and appreciated that efforts had been made to direct resources to chronically underfunded areas, more could have been done to support management and oversight functions. He recommended that, over the following year, Member States and the Administration hold more comprehensive discussions of budget structures and core resource prioritization in the Working Group on Budget Reform.

29. The Director General said that he looked forward to further discussions with Member States on the structural nature of the budget; the Administration was preparing a report in that respect. The Administration was also planning to compare its budget to those of other United Nations entities and to prepare a number of options for addressing structural flaws in the funding model that it would then present to Member States at the Working Group on Budget Reform.

30. The Council approved document C/110/8 and adopted Resolution No. 1380 of 26 November 2019 on the Programme and Budget for 2020.

(c) Amendments to the Staff Regulations

31. The Standing Committee Rapporteur said that, at the Standing Committee's Twenty-fifth Session, the Administration had introduced a document on amendments to the Staff Regulations (C/110/7), which had included a draft Council resolution for the Standing Committee's consideration. The Standing Committee had taken note of the proposed amendments and had recommended that the Council adopt the draft resolution.

32. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1381 of 26 November 2019 on amendments to the Staff Regulations.

(d) IOM Development Fund

33. The Standing Committee Rapporteur, referring to the document entitled IOM Development Fund (Status report: 1 January to 30 September 2019) (S/25/12), said that over USD 16 million had been made available in 2019 to support migration-related activities in developing Member States. The Office of the Inspector General had carried out an evaluation of the Fund in 2019 and had made a number of recommendations, all of which had been accepted by the Administration.

34. The Standing Committee had taken note of document S/25/12 and had recommended that the Council approve the proposed increase in budget ceilings for projects under Line 2 to USD 300,000 for national projects and USD 400,000 for regional projects by amending paragraphs 17(b) and (c) of Standing Committee Resolution No. 18 of 27 June 2018 accordingly.

35. The Council endorsed the Standing Committee recommendation and approved the proposed amendments to Standing Committee Resolution No. 18 of 27 June 2018.

(e) Report on the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States

36. The Standing Committee Rapporteur, referring to the document entitled Sixth annual report of the Director General on improvements in the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States (S/25/7), said that the Administration had reported that two new agreements had entered into force, bringing to 97 the total number of Member States, observer States and other territories

where the Organization had been granted full privileges and immunities meeting the criteria set out in Council Resolution No. 1266 of 26 November 2013.

37. The Standing Committee had taken note of document S/25/7 and had recommended that the Council remain seized of the matter and reiterate its call to Member States to grant the Organization privileges and immunities substantially similar to those enjoyed by the United Nations specialized agencies.

38. The Council endorsed the Standing Committee recommendation and again called on Member States to grant the Organization privileges and immunities substantially similar to those granted to the specialized agencies of the United Nations, particularly given IOM's status as a related organization within the United Nations system.

(f) Other items discussed at the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance

39. The Standing Committee Rapporteur briefed the Council on a number of other items discussed at the Standing Committee's Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Sessions.

(i) Resolutions and decisions

40. In pursuance of Council Resolution No. 1375 of 30 November 2018, the Standing Committee had adopted the following resolutions on 19 June 2019, at its Twenty-fourth Session: Resolution No. 19 taking note of the Annual Report for 2018, Resolution No. 20 approving the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2018, and Resolution No. 21 approving the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2019.

41. During that session, the Standing Committee had also approved the IOM assessment scale for 2020, as illustrated in document S/24/3, and had agreed to review the assessment scale for 2021 during the first half of 2020.

(ii) Exchange of views on items proposed by the membership

42. At the Standing Committee sessions, the Administration had introduced documents on the following topics selected by the Member States:

- Update on policies and practices related to migration, the environment and climate change and IOM's Environmental Sustainability Programme
- Developing policies and practices on sustainable reintegration
- IOM assistance to States implementing migrant protection and assistance measures
- Skills-based migration and partnerships: elements and essential prerequisites

43. The Standing Committee had taken note of the documents (S/24/5, S/24/4, S/25/4 and S/25/5, respectively) prepared by the Administration and of the comments made by the Member States in the ensuing discussions.

(iii) Statement by the Chairperson of the Global Staff Association Committee

44. At the Twenty-fourth Session of the Standing Committee, a statement had been made by the Chairperson of the Global Staff Association Committee, of which the Standing Committee had taken note.

(iv) Other reports and updates

45. At its sessions, the Standing Committee had also examined and taken note of the following reports and updates:

- Update on the IOM Strategic Vision
- Update on the Internal Governance Framework
- Status reports on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights
- Statement and a report of the External Auditor
- Report on human resources management
- Update on institutional efforts for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
- IOM partnerships with the private sector
- IOM global initiatives funding status
- Report on the IOM response to migration crises
- Update on youth and migration
- Information concerning the election of the Deputy Director General
- Final report on the IOM Development Fund for 2018
- Progress report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations
- Update on risk management
- Update on plans for the IOM Headquarters building
- Summary of the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development 2019–2023
- Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General
- Report of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee

46. The Council took note of the decisions and documents referred to in paragraphs 39 to 45 above.

(v) Reports on the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance

47. One representative requested that the phrase “skilled migrants” in the final sentence of paragraph 46 of the Report on the Twenty-fifth Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance be changed to “low-skilled migrants”, as per the speaker’s intended meaning.

48. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1382 taking note of the reports on the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance, as amended.

Senior leadership structure of the Organization

49. The Director General, providing an update on the status of his proposal for the appointment of two Deputy Directors General and amendments to the IOM Constitution, said that over the course of the consultations held since May 2019 the proposal had evolved to incorporate the concerns expressed by different stakeholders but had not yet achieved the required consensus. He stood ready to engage with Member States to explore all possible avenues to improve the proposal, in order to achieve the broadly supported objective of making IOM fit for purpose as the key migration agency with a strong top management team.

50. Member States agreed that the challenges inherent in IOM's continued growth and its leadership role in the field of migration would require day-to-day, specific and concrete leadership from top management. A significant number of them supported the Director General's proposal that a transparent recruitment process that was competitive and merit-based would result in the appointment of highly qualified people to the posts of Deputy Director General and could increase the number of women in senior leadership positions. Other Member States, while agreeing that the proposal would help IOM adapt to its greater responsibilities and improve its effectiveness, underscored the need for a consensus-based approach so as to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of whichever solution was chosen and avoid dissent within the Organization. Opinion was divided on whether the proposal constituted a fundamental change to the IOM Constitution. Some representatives sought assurance that any changes made would have no financial implications for Member States, while others said that the process of electing the Deputy Director General constituted an important part of the Organization's checks and balances system.

51. One group of Member States considered that it was important not to rush through the reforms; the changes proposed were fundamental and had financial implications. The Council should consider establishing an open-ended working group to discuss the Director General's proposal in greater depth, within the context of the broader reform agenda. The discussion should address all important administrative and operational aspects of comprehensive reform, including geographical diversity and gender balance.

52. Following further discussions held in informal meetings, the Council adopted Resolution No. 1383 of 29 November 2019, in which it was decided to continue consultations and establish a working group to formulate recommendations, by the end of March 2020, regarding the Director General's proposal.

Panel discussions⁵

(a) Launch of the *World Migration Report 2020*

Panellists

Marie McAuliffe, Head, Migration Policy Research Division, IOM, and co-editor of the *World Migration Report 2020*

Binod Khadria, professor of economics and education, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, and co-editor of the *World Migration Report 2020*

Doreen Debrum, Permanent Representative of the Government of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Michael von Ungern-Sternberg, Permanent Representative of the Government of Germany to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Moderator

António Vitorino, Director General, IOM

53. The Director General said that, for 20 years, the World Migration Report had provided the most reliable evidence and analysis possible. While each report had initially been focused on a specific theme, the format since the 2018 edition had been to provide a broad overview of global trends in Part I and to explore various specific themes in greater depth in Part II.

⁵ Video links to all three panel discussions are available on the Council section of the IOM website.

54. Ms McAuliffe outlined the structure and content of Part I of the *World Migration Report 2020*, which was designed to provide useful data and analysis to readers all over the world, especially those studying or working in migration. Supplemental information on IOM initiatives had also been provided, to give examples of how the Organization's work related to larger migration trends. Data had been presented in such a way as to demonstrate the evolution of trends over time, the stark differences between regions and the overall complexity of the situation. Narrative descriptions of some key features had also been included to allow readers to grasp them quickly. The 2020 Report was available online to download for free and had been released in digital form only, so as to reduce production costs and the environmental impact.

55. Mr Khadria summarized the structure and content of Part II of the Report, which included six thematic chapters. Each of those chapters had been written by a team of scholars from both the global South and North and contained a discussion of policies, practices and directions for future research. Taken together, the two parts of the Report struck a balance between empirical data and expert analysis. It was hoped that the 2020 Report would have an even greater reach than the 2018 edition.

56. Ms Debrum thanked IOM for its work on the challenging and highly sensitive issue of climate-induced migration and displacement. Discussion of the unprecedented prospect facing her country – the wholesale relocation of the entire population of one country to another – was morally unacceptable, but necessary and vital. The Marshallese were being forced by climate change to continue the hard-fought battle they had waged for independence. From their unique perspective as a low-lying nation (the Marshall Islands had an average elevation of 2 m above sea level), climate-induced migration was not only an issue of policy and human rights, but also a traditional security issue. The Marshallese asserted their right to nationhood, and to sovereignty over the country's borders and the resources within them, just as the people of any other United Nations Member State would.

57. Evidence was mounting that climate change posed an ever greater threat to freshwater lines, food security, marine ecosystems and coral reefs. The consequent risks of coastal flooding and overtopping would put the entire Marshallese population at risk and might well result in the loss of its homeland. The time had therefore come to build on global cooperation and take strong practical measures to address emissions, not so as to limit economies, but to limit risks and, perhaps most importantly, build resilience. The Marshallese had adopted a comprehensive national adaptation plan, but much remained to be done to boost climate resilience and address the wider development gap. To that end, they were working to delineate the country's exclusive economic zone (roughly the size of Mexico) under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, so as to safeguard their sovereign rights to fisheries and other marine resources – potentially all they might be left with.

58. The current situation was not the first experience the Marshallese had had of migration and displacement. Back when the country was a United Nations trust territory, certain communities had been relocated during and after the 67 large-scale nuclear weapons tests conducted there between 1946 and 1958. The islands to which they were moved – and where some of them remained in exile – did not provide the same levels of food security, and the displacements had caused a sense of loss that could never be truly erased. When the islands' leaders had petitioned the United Nations Trusteeship Council to halt the tests in 1954, they had invoked the unique place of the land in the country's traditional social structure: land was not bought, sold or exchanged; it was a common good held by all. If the land no longer existed or served its purpose, what would become of the Marshallese, not only as a nation or people, but also as individuals? Evidence-based analyses and reports like the World Migration Report served as a wake-up call to act.

59. Mr von Ungern-Sternberg, noting that the situation in Germany was obviously different, said that migration- and refugee-related issues were nonetheless affecting everybody in one way or another: economically, socially, and in terms of human rights, peace, security and stability. In Germany, the topic permeated the political debate, in the country's institutions and in society at large, about developments nationally and throughout the European Union. Migration shaped Germans' views of countries of origin and as such affected their perception of relations with the outside world.

60. The Government of Germany was keenly aware of the need for robust international governance and cooperation, and for strong and adequately financed global, regional and domestic institutions. It fully supported the Organization's efforts to that end and the Director General's endeavours to reform the structure of IOM and make it more effective in the current context.

61. His Government attached great importance to the *World Migration Report 2020*. Reliable data were the foundation of evidence-based planning and policy design, but were meaningless without analytical debate. Part II of the Report stimulated such a debate, considering the effects of emerging trends such as the rapidly growing number of migrants (especially young and women migrants), integration efforts, the plight of children in a migration context, migration governance and the contribution of migrants to society.

62. The Report presented a risk: that, like many other very good reports, it would have little impact. However, it also presented an opportunity: that it would contribute to preventive, forward-looking action, and that it would have an impact and change the lives of the people concerned. It would take work to realize that opportunity. The Government of Germany had therefore been one of the first to respond positively to the Director General's request for contributions to the Start-up Fund for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, with a contribution of EUR 2 million for 2019.

63. One question nevertheless remained: how could the contents of the Report be spread more widely? Should they not be made available, not just to the political class, but also to civil society, in schools and universities, to the media, in cultural circles and to trade unions and employers, all of which were strongly affected by migration? Disseminating the Report was a crucial task for all Member States, not just for IOM. How should they go about "merchandising" the messages it contained?

64. In response, Ms McAuliffe stressed that IOM was indeed striving to improve the merchandising and reach of the Report. A team of interns was currently analysing how the 2018 Report had been used, and a concept note was available on a World Migration Report toolkit for outreach through three streams: media, officials and educators. A fourth stream of work on civil society organizations outreach was already under way. So far, the reach of the 2018 Report appeared to be wide: in addition to being downloaded over 460,000 times, it had 67 mentions in publications in 26 countries and 11 languages, and 584 citations in academic literature. It was particularly encouraging to note that the Report was being used to fact-check racist and xenophobic rhetoric on social media. She agreed that untapped opportunities remained, and welcomed further discussion on how to continue to promote the Report for use in both programme development and public discourse.

65. The Director General said that the success of the *World Migration Report 2020* would depend on Member States taking ownership of it and adapting its information to their respective populations and political environments, as even basic terms could be interpreted differently in different contexts. IOM relied on its country offices to spread the Report's message in such a way that it was picked up by newspapers, television and radio. A careful, localized approach was also required when sharing the information on social media. The true challenge lay in reaching sceptics and those spreading an anti-migration discourse. While the large number of downloads of the 2018 Report was encouraging, access alone was not enough: feedback from Member States would be essential for improving the quality and relevance of future reports. Only then could the Report's usefulness to all stakeholders be maximized.

(b) Building peace and creating conditions for development: internal displacement, stabilization and reintegration

Panellists

Almaz Mekonnen Zereay, State Minister of Peace, Ethiopia

Z. Martial Wilfried Bassolé, Director General of Territorial Development, Burkina Faso

Teresa Ribeiro, Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal

Rob Jenkins, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, USAID, United States (participating via video link)

Jeffrey Labovitz, Director, Department of Operations and Emergencies, IOM

Moderator

Laura Thompson, Deputy Director General, IOM

66. The Deputy Director General said that conflict and instability had resulted in the internal displacement of an estimated 41 million people worldwide. Without efforts to promote peace, there was a risk of protracted displacement and dependency, which would jeopardize implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It was widely recognized that the humanitarian and development nexus needed to include peace as well, under a broader triple nexus, as sustainable peace was vital to successful humanitarian response and long-term development. However, linking humanitarian and political agendas could undermine life-saving operations and increase security risks, especially in volatile situations. It was therefore important to consider how to lay the foundations for addressing the long-term needs of IDPs and their host communities.

67. Ms Zereay highlighted the issue of internal displacement in Ethiopia, which was largely driven by environmental factors and conflict, and explained that the country was also host to almost 1 million registered refugees and asylum seekers. In that context, the government agenda was focused on sustainable peace, reconciliation, inclusion and social cohesion, with the Ministry of Peace playing a central role. Specific measures included the establishment of a ministerial task force, under which various ministries worked with regional authorities to provide a sustainable response to the issue of displacement. A strategic plan had also been launched to manage the safe voluntary return of IDPs, although severe funding constraints had limited the capacity to find long-term solutions. In relation to refugees, a new law had recently been enacted that would give them access to work permits, primary education, financial services and official documents, enabling new arrivals to thrive alongside their host communities.

68. As a country with a deep-rooted tradition of hospitality, Ethiopia was committed to helping displaced and returning populations and other people in need. She welcomed the assistance provided to date by IOM and the international community, but stressed that her Government needed additional support to implement its programmes for displaced persons. Although ongoing efforts to return and reintegrate IDPs were proving successful, the focus was on preventing displacement in the first place, including through prevention work and the development of a culture of conflict resolution among stakeholders. Resolving the challenge of internal displacement and preventing future displacement was indivisibly linked to achieving lasting peace; unresolved displacement issues could cause instability and threaten peacebuilding efforts, while durable solutions for IDPs could not be achieved without security. Ethiopia would therefore continue to strive for lasting peace in the region.

69. Mr Bassolé said that the wave of yearly terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso that had started in 2015 had become increasingly deadly, with the latest attack in September 2019 causing the deaths of some 620 people. The number of IDPs had risen exponentially as a result, from 47,000 in December 2018 to 486,000 in October 2019. The resulting aid requirement had stood at USD 187 million in October 2019, but that amount was far from being raised.

70. In view of the rapid deterioration of the situation, the Government, together with its partners, had set up an emergency programme for the Sahel region, based on its experience of combating terrorism and supporting IDPs in 2016 and 2017. The programme had been organized to meet four aims: help defence and security forces deal with security challenges; strengthen the presence of the State on the ground; optimize management of emergencies, including humanitarian crises; and foster people's resilience, through greater respect for human rights, social cohesion, the return of IDPs and efforts to combat extremism and radicalization.

71. To those ends, three projects had been carried out under the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, aimed at: supporting peaceful conflict resolution at the community level; promoting a culture of peace and social cohesion between the populations of the Sahel and North Africa; and building trust between the Government, the defence and security forces, and the different population groups. Implementation of the projects had helped ease the intercommunity tensions that had arisen in early 2019 following the terrorist attacks and had improved collaboration with the defence and security forces, thereby enabling the armed forces to foil a number of terrorist attacks.

72. A number of challenges remained, however. The first was to make the territory safe. The second was to ensure that population groups continued to trust in the ability of the defence and security forces to ensure security and stabilization, in view of the risk of further internal and external displacements. The third concerned the ability of the Government and its partners to respond to the security and humanitarian emergencies that had multiplied since January 2019, sparking fears of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis.

73. The key to meeting those challenges was for the Government and the relevant parties to rapidly resolve the security situation, without which a humanitarian response would be impossible. That required a new way of doing things, focusing on in-depth action to transform societies and territories with a view to making them more resilient. To that end, flexible but pragmatic approaches needed to be found that provided an effective response to both security challenges and humanitarian emergencies. There was a need for greater coordination between governmental and non-governmental partners and for alignment of social and financial public policies, with short-term macroeconomic stabilization objectives relegated to the medium term.

74. In Burkina Faso, it was clear that security was a prerequisite for maintaining peace and carrying out humanitarian and development activities, thereby illustrating the security, humanitarian and development nexus. For that reason, Burkina Faso had called for the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission to convene in a special session, in order to mobilize resources to fund priority actions to address the Sahel emergency. There was no time to lose.

75. Ms Ribeiro said that Ethiopia was a key country when it came to peace in the region, and the practices described by Ms Zereay could have a positive influence in neighbouring countries. The peace agreement with Eritrea was a huge achievement, and it was in the interest of the international community to provide strong support to Ethiopia's government to ensure sustainable peace and prosperity for the population. The volatile security situation in Burkina Faso posed a number of challenges that, similarly, required robust responses from the international community.

76. Mr Jenkins said that USAID was rethinking and recalibrating its way of working along the lines mentioned by previous speakers. It was, for example, creating a new bureau to deal specifically with conflict prevention and stabilization. Humanitarian efforts, crucial as they were, simply treated the symptoms but did not effect a cure. Since displacement was caused by conflict, which in turn was caused by political factors, a political and diplomatic solution was required.

77. Humanitarians and development agencies nevertheless had an important role to play. The end goal was the same for all: to make the world a safer place, one step at a time. To that end, it was necessary to break down barriers between individual agencies and work collectively to meet the needs of migrants, refugees and IDPs.

78. While the deep-seated problems underlying many conflicts could take a long time to resolve, there was much that the international community could do in the areas of humanitarian assistance and stabilization. The *Stabilization Assistance Review* published by the United States Department of State provided an overview of lessons learned from two decades of stabilization efforts in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, distinguishing for the first time between efforts in the areas of defence, diplomacy and development. The document was available online and he encouraged participants to read it.

79. Mr Labovitz agreed that the subject of security was one that reverberated across many countries. Internal displacement was a vast, long-term issue, and 27 per cent of countries affected by displacement had areas where development agents could not operate. It was therefore significant that the United Nations system had committed to the “new way of working”, notably by incorporating peace into the humanitarian and development nexus. In conflict settings, peacebuilding could establish foundations for long-term development, but IOM believed that it was often given insufficient attention. One example of how peacebuilding could address the mobility dimensions of crisis was the *Midnimo* (unity) project. The city of Kismayo, in Somalia, for example, had experienced instability due to conflict and drought, and there were almost 65,000 IDPs in the area, in addition to around 50,000 returnees. While it was essential to address humanitarian needs in such situations, the preferential treatment of mobile populations could exacerbate tension and lead to renewed conflict. Through the *Midnimo* project, which was government-led with the support of IOM and the United Nations, a conflict-resolution system had been established to improve dialogue and help communities develop their own solutions. The success of the project had led to the implementation of similar projects in other countries, adapted to the local context.

80. Transition and recovery formed the cornerstone of IOM’s peacebuilding activities, with a focus on empowering populations, rebuilding social capital, and promoting social, economic and political participation. A community stabilization methodology had been developed to implement peacebuilding programmes on the ground. In 2018, USD 496 million had been invested in transition and recovery programmes, with 312 projects in more than 70 countries; nearly half were multi-year projects, in line with the new way of working and the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing. Peace was indeed a vital addition to the humanitarian and development nexus, and IOM would continue to invest in institutional capacities in order to strengthen that approach. However, no progress could be made without political will or without developing a nuanced understanding of local contexts.

81. One regional group drew attention to the specific challenges faced by IDPs, including marginalization and a lack of access to shelter, food and basic services. A failure to address those needs – and the needs of host communities – could lead to secondary displacement, gradually eroding coping mechanisms and resulting in the loss of productive assets. Sustainable solutions were hard to find without political solutions. It was therefore essential to invest in prevention and address the root

causes of vulnerability and conflict through localized analysis, while meeting humanitarian needs and strengthening resilience; application of the triple–nexus principle was critical in such work. System-wide approaches were needed to address protracted displacement, notably through the United Nations new way of working, and IOM should contribute to the work of the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement. Lastly, it was important to have a holistic, needs-based approach to reintegration at the individual, community and structural levels.

82. One delegate said that reintegration was a continual process that could be facilitated by the development of a comprehensive framework for integration. Social infrastructure was indeed important for ensuring community cohesion during reintegration; greater attention should be paid to the relationship between returnees and the host population. He asked how much of a challenge it had been to build trust during the *Midnimo* project and whether any specific initiatives had been introduced in that respect.

83. One observer organization welcomed the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development 2019–2023, but suggested adding “children” as a fourth cross-cutting issue – in addition to inequalities, the environment and climate change, and gender – given that they represented a large percentage of arrivals. IOM should also systematically bolster partnerships with civil society during implementation of the Strategy; it was notable that the theme of the Civil Society Day of the Twelfth Summit of the Global Forum on Migration and Development included strengthening implementation and enriching partnerships for migrants and communities.

84. Mr Labovitz said that the *Midnimo* project supported the Somali Government and built bridges between the host community and returnees through peace dialogue platforms, which had enabled people to work together and express their needs. Although the situation in Kismayo remained fragile, progress had been made by bringing people from different groups together.

85. Mr Bassolé, providing further information about efforts to rebuild trust in Burkina Faso, described the historical and colonial context that had contributed to the population’s lack of trust in the defence and security forces. Efforts to rebuild trust had included the involvement of community leaders in joint civilian and military activities designed to improve relations between the two groups. Civil society had also played an important role in trust-building activities. It was important for the population to feel that the defence and security services could protect them; otherwise they might turn to terrorist groups instead.

86. Ms Zereay explained that efforts to build peace in Ethiopia were based on engaging as many people in dialogue as possible – both IDPs and members of local communities, including elders, religious leaders, young people and women. In addition, peace agents went out into the communities to speak to particular target groups identified as having played a part in conflicts. She stressed that the process was long and slow, but that dialogue was key to building trust and finding common solutions.

87. Ms Ribeira agreed that it was important to involve civil society in meeting challenges. The humanitarian and emergency assistance recently provided by Portugal, with support from IOM, to Mozambique in the wake of two devastating cyclones in occurring quick succession had relied heavily on civil society.

88. The Deputy Director General concluded by noting the complexity of the situations discussed and the clear need for a comprehensive approach that linked humanitarian and security responses to long-term development requirements. It was also of paramount importance to include the populations concerned in efforts to find lasting solutions.

(c) Mobility dynamics in the Sahel

Panellists

Dodo Boureima, Permanent Secretary, Réseau Billital Maroobé, Niger

Bouna Yattassaye, Deputy Director General, National Agency for Health Security, Guinea

Ángel Losada Fernández, Special Representative for the Sahel, European Union

Richard Danziger, Regional Director for West and Central Africa, IOM Regional Office in Dakar

Moderator

Aissata Kane, Senior Regional Adviser for Sub-Saharan Africa, IOM

89. The moderator said that mobility in the Sahel, which concerned both African and non-African countries, took different forms. An overview of the mobility dynamics involved would foster a better understanding of the causes and challenges, and outline the possibilities for promoting mobility that was safe, regulated and – above all – humane.

90. Mobility in the subregion was bound up with factors including seasonal and harvest-dependent migration, transfer of livestock from one grazing ground to another, conflict-related displacement, climate hazards, the search for better work, and even tourism. It included labour migration outside the sub-Saharan Africa region, including towards North Africa and Europe.

91. The panel discussion would analyse the security-related, humanitarian and development issues involved and look at how the vulnerable communities affected had coped with their precarious situations, which in many cases had been compounded by intercommunity violence, terrorist attacks and the effects of climate change, leading to the massive, forced displacement of civilians. Natural disasters, including spreading desertification and drought, were giving rise to increasing mobility, which posed many challenges. Health was also an important aspect to consider when looking at the cyclical mobility of migrants between Sahel countries and beyond.

92. Mr Boureima said that his organization, Réseau Billital Maroobé, had been established in 2004 when national organizations had realized that a number of emerging challenges to the transfer of livestock from grazing ground in one country to another could not be managed by one country alone. The two main challenges currently faced by nomadic herders were climate change and the lack of security in the region. In West Africa in particular, climate change had led to the destruction of natural resources, the onset of animal disease, the low productivity of livestock and the impoverishment of nomadic herders. In addition, land was increasingly being used for agricultural purposes at the expense of grazing, mobility had been restricted and natural resources had been seized by private entities.

93. A number of actions had been taken to address those problems. For example, at national level, nomadic herders were receiving training that endowed them with more knowledge and skills for diversity of outcomes and economic power. Disaster risk management was being facilitated through IT systems, political dialogue and tools for the prevention and management of food insecurity. Regionally coordinated work was being carried out to secure land titles for herders and ensure the safety of grazing land. In addition, action was being taken to foster the integration of young people, and platforms had been established to teach them about the causes of, and possible solutions to, conflicts.

94. Mr Yattassaye, addressing the link between health and migration, said that a large proportion of migrants arriving in Guinea were from the Sahel, in particular from two of the country's neighbours,

Mali and Senegal. Destination countries for migration from Guinea included Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, the Niger and Senegal. That raised a number of health concerns, especially if one considered that between 2005 and 2019 close to 19,000 Guinean migrants had returned to Guinea under an IOM voluntary return programme.

95. After describing a number of migration-induced health emergencies – the Ebola epidemic in 2014–2016, various outbreaks of cholera, meningitis, yellow fever and measles, the higher than usual HIV prevalence rates in some sectors of the economy – he outlined the steps Guinea had taken with regard to preventing future epidemics in the country. It had introduced a health emergency response system and “mapped” health risks, with support from IOM. Under a WHO public health surveillance programme, it had set up emergency medical response teams at prefecture level, for the detection of and rapid response to health emergencies. It had also established emergency health operation centres and centres for epidemiological treatment.

96. IOM had helped Guinea to identify over 40 migration entry points – two of which accounted for some 80 per cent of migration flows between Guinea, Mali and Senegal – at which a health-screening system had been set up to eliminate all potential health risks related to migration. Another project, supported by partners including IOM and the European Union, had enabled Guinea to identify vulnerable zones near the border with Mali and oversee the management of health concerns for both resident populations and migrants. In addition, a project supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, together with IOM, addressed the issue of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis for sex workers and truck drivers.

97. It would be challenging for Guinea, in the present context, to continue the valuable work initiated under those projects once cooperation with partners such as IOM had come to an end. The security challenges experienced in the Sahel remained, however, compounded by the difficulty of managing the huge migration flow and its health implications. The issues of migration and health were closely linked and should continue to be considered jointly since migrants travelling through the Sahel passed through many countries, often in an attempt to reach Europe. As a Sahel border country, and a country affected by the recurrence of diseases that had the potential to become epidemics, Guinea had to manage health risks in the country in order to prevent them from spreading in the Sahel.

98. Mr Losada Fernández said that European Union activities in the Sahel – where traditional patterns of intraregional migration had been disrupted by political crises, institutional weaknesses, mounting radicalization and growing insecurity – centred on five countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. Climate change and high population growth rates accompanied by youth unemployment had further aggravated a humanitarian crisis currently affecting approximately 7 million people.

99. Much earlier, in 2011, the European Union had adopted the Sahel Strategy, which was based on the principle that security and development go hand in hand. In 2015, it had adopted the Sahel Regional Action Plan to combat radicalization and address issues involving young people, migration and border control. It had been turning its attention to the funding and institutions required to implement the Action Plan when the major migration crisis unfolding across Europe had prompted the European Union to convene the Valletta Summit on Migration, in November 2015. The Summit had approved its own Action Plan, aimed at fighting the root causes of migration, strengthening cooperation for regular migration, enhancing protection of migrants (including refugees), combating human trafficking and smuggling, and improving cooperation on returns, readmissions and reintegration. To implement that plan and foster rapid and flexible action, the European Union had created the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Of the approximately EUR 4.6 billion with which the Fund operated, 4 billion had already been invested in 210 programmes, many of them in the Sahel, aimed at combating instability, building capacities and maximizing the impact of migration on development.

100. Turning to the relationship between IOM and the European Union, he pointed to the positive impact of the flagship EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration, which covered 26 countries in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and North Africa and was funded by the Emergency Trust Fund. Between May 2017 and September 2019, the Initiative had supported the voluntary return of tens of thousands of migrants and provided assistance to tens of thousands more people in their countries of origin. Those activities had enhanced security in the Sahel and therefore in Europe as well. In the course of his travels to the region, he had observed that the biggest concerns of migrants, including refugees, were schooling for their children, gender-related issues and registration of their identities.

101. In conclusion, he pointed to three major challenges: the urgent need for action in the face of the intolerable situation the Sahel was facing; the need for the coordination of efforts in a region in which various stakeholders were applying myriad strategies and action plans; and the need for the countries of the Sahel to take ownership of their future. The European Commission intended to work with Africa as opposed to working for Africa.

102. Mr Danziger said that IOM defined the Sahel more broadly as the countries, or parts thereof, facing similar challenges in the strip of land between the Sahara Desert to the north and the savannah to the south. The Sahel was a region of opportunity, with the potential, for example, to generate 14 billion kilowatt hours of energy per year and to harness the demographic dividend (64 per cent of the population was under 25). A traditional crossroads for migrants, it was also, as previous speakers had said, beset by a host of problems – climate change, youth unemployment, the rise of violent extremism, weak governance. The implication of 18 international strategies, several special representatives, two economic communities and multiple regional organizations and treaties only served to underscore the need for coordination and for United Nations agencies to deliver as one in the region.

103. The United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, which had been adopted pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2056 (2012), formed the framework for IOM’s multipronged approach in the region. First, the Organization acted on the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, boosting the resilience undergirding development work with host communities and migrants in the border areas through which migrants transited but in which the presence of the State was often weakest; such areas often became easy targets for extremist groups. The IOM approach was inclusive and transparent – involving not only nomadic pastoralists and settled farming communities, but also the local authorities – and informed by climate change considerations. It was also conflict-sensitive and evidence-based. The latter aspect included collecting data on internal displacements and migratory flows; and the development of the Stability Index and its indicators for gauging whether conditions were right for returns. In that regard, IOM support for the African Observatory for Migration and Development in Rabat, Morocco, would be important.

104. Protection and assistance activities for migrants constituted a second prong, notably under the AU–EU–UN Tripartite Taskforce on the Situation of Stranded Migrants and Refugees in Libya. IOM conducted its humanitarian activities in the Sahel much as it did everywhere in the world, providing crucial health care and psychosocial assistance to migrants and helping both to create income-generating opportunities for returning migrants and to prevent people from having to leave their countries in the first place. In that respect, IOM focused on young people, women and even former Boko Haram militants. It attached importance to maintaining and building peace, bringing communities together, building confidence in the local authorities and rebuilding State authority.

105. Lastly, IOM endeavoured to support regular migration channels, working with the Community of Sahel–Saharan States, the Economic Community of West African States and the G5 Sahel, inter alia on implementation of the 2018 Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African

Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment. The situation was urgent, but long-term objectives also had to be met. He stressed the need for regional and subregional integration, so as to eliminate inequities within the region, and emphasized the central position of the Sahel in terms of the environment and climate change.

106. One observer organization highlighted a pressing operational reality reported by field colleagues in the Niger: an increasing number of children migrating alone from the Horn of Africa had suffered horrific abuse, including torture and rape by traffickers. In one case she described, the child concerned had been rescued under the UNHCR Emergency Transit Mechanism and was in the process of being resettled. In view of the scale of the problem, States should up the number of resettlement places, offer complementary pathways (including family reunification), and prioritize the cases of unaccompanied children referred by the Emergency Transit Mechanism in the Niger and Rwanda. Resettlement was a life-saving protection mechanism that worked.

107. One delegate, stressing the importance his country placed on security and stability in the Sahel, said that it intended to provide assistance there in close cooperation with international partners such as IOM, in the form of: capacity development for 1,000 officers in justice administration and relevant sectors over the following three years; vocational training and education; and supporting communities hosting migrants and IDPs in the context of the humanitarian and development nexus.

108. The representative of a regional group said that the Sahel and Lake Chad region faced many challenges linked to poverty, lack of stability and economic fragility, further exacerbated by climate change in a region where more than 80 per cent of the population relied essentially on agriculture and pastoral activities. In addition, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and other illicit trafficking activities were an integral part of the informal economy. Efforts needed to be stepped up to combat such practices. More recently, attacks on civilians, which were increasingly linked to non-State armed groups, had resulted in more displacement, both internal and across borders.

109. Mr Boureima said that there was a long tradition of movement between the Sahel countries and those to the south, which received more abundant rainfall. Even before the climate had started to change and governance to weaken, movement had been essential for the peoples of the Sahel; many relied on seasonal work to make ends meet, and herds often “wintered” in the Sahel countries before returning south during the dry season. Because nomadic pastoralists had long been marginalized in policy terms, they were at present both victims and sources of instability in the region. It was true that the European Union, the World Bank and IOM had started drawing up programmes for that segment of the population, as a means of resolving intercommunity issues, but the impact had yet to be felt by the average herder on the ground.

110. Mr Losada Fernández stressed the importance of restoring national governmental and other institutional presence in regions that were home to different communities and in which extremist groups exploiting ethnic differences had in some cases stepped in to fill the void left by the State.

111. Mr Danziger pointed out that IOM had started monitoring herd movements as well, as a means of alerting groups of nomadic pastoralists and sedentary communities to potential points of tension and enabling traditional conflict-solving mechanisms to be activated. He was grateful for the support that IOM received in the region and stressed that it worked hard with UNHCR to resolve problems of migrant abuse.

112. The moderator, for her part, underscored the importance of coordination and coherence in the region. To that end, no matter what aspect IOM was focused on, it acted in line with the new way of working adopted by the United Nations.

Migrants' voices

Niloufar Rahim, medical doctor, member of the KEIHAN Foundation

Nadir Nahdi, producer and founder of BENI, a creative platform for sharing stories and journeys

Moderator

António Vitorino, Director General, IOM

113. Dr Rahim said that she had been born in Kabul, Afghanistan. Her earliest memory was of hiding, at two years old, at her mother's feet in a truck, unable to understand what was happening and unaware that she was about to become a refugee. After living for a time in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, her family had arrived in the Netherlands when she was 10 years old. She had managed to learn the language and attend school, eventually going on to study medicine. During medical school, she had seized every opportunity that presented itself – a characteristic shared by many migrants, who took nothing for granted and felt they always had to work harder than others to be respected for themselves and not be judged by their backgrounds. She found herself in constant search of balance and her own identity: was she a refugee who must prove herself, or a Dutch citizen with a life many Afghans could only dream of? It was that life-long dilemma that motivated her to give back.

114. As a member of KEIHAN (Knowledge, Education, Integration, Helping Afghans in the Netherlands), she was able to use her medical training to help people in Afghanistan. The country's health-care system and medical curriculum had been devastated by war, and the teaching of anatomy had been banned under the Taliban. But thanks to KEIHAN's Anatomy Teaching Innovation programme, anatomy courses had been reintroduced at the medical university in Kabul, and there were plans to expand the project to other universities. Clinical skills training was also severely lacking, with most doctors taught only the theory. In cooperation with IOM, she had therefore begun training trainers in essential clinical skills such as stitching, administering life support and drawing blood. KEIHAN also organized academic exchanges that brought 5 to 10 Afghan medical students to Leiden University for a semester to gain medical knowledge and experience they could take back to their home country.

115. Although she hoped that some day children would never have to go through difficult journeys like hers, she knew that was unrealistic. Everyone should have the opportunity to live a peaceful life and enjoy the right to education, health care and happiness. In the meantime, the KEIHAN team, made up entirely of migrants and refugees, was working hard every day to make the world a little better.

116. The Director General asked Dr Rahim whether the trainers and students she had worked with in Afghanistan might not decide to pursue a path similar to hers and migrate. Investment in qualifications and advanced training often triggered migration, as people gained confidence and felt that they were more likely to succeed abroad. The Council had discussed the issue at the macro level, and it was important to add personal stories like Dr Rahim's to the debate.

117. Dr Rahim said that it was true that not all of the students she had trained had stayed in Afghanistan, with some choosing to study in the United States or Europe. However, the solution was not to stop training them, but rather to train a large enough group that at least some chose to stay and continue passing on their knowledge. She was amazed by the hard work and dedication of the trainers in Kabul. Both she and they were hopeful that the younger generation would go on to make lasting change.

118. Mr Nahdi, in a presentation supplemented with excerpts from his videos, described growing up in London as a child of mixed Indonesian, Kenyan, Pakistani and Yemeni heritage, with members of

his extended family hailing from places as distinct as Colombia, Jamaica, Spain and Turkey. His parents had never prioritized one culture over another; instead, they had wrapped the family in a delicately stitched fabric of cultural wholesomeness, with the result that his personality – and ultimately his work – had been suffused with the concepts of migration, identity and heritage. He considered himself fortunate to have grown up in an environment that viewed one’s cultural heritage as an added value rather than as a barrier between people.

119. That being said, growing up with such a complex heritage also had its challenges, akin to living in several circles, or communities, simultaneously. It was only as he grew older that he had realized that other people were able to relate to his experience of living simultaneously in the culture he encountered at home, that of his adopted country of residence, and that of his work and school environments.

120. The events of 11 September 2001 had marked a turning point in his life and in the lives of many migrants. Overnight, pupils from migrant and minority backgrounds went from glorying in who they were to feeling that they had to justify their identities and existence. Mainstream Western society stopped seeing him as an innocent young boy and considered him an outlier, someone whose values did not align with theirs, an object of racial harassment and attack.

121. After earning a Master’s degree and engaging in humanitarian and development work in the Middle East, he had felt the need to be creative and filmed a first video, a parody of Pharrell Williams’ music video for “Happy” featuring a purely Muslim cast that had garnered over 1.7 million views in the space of roughly seven hours. That success had led him to decide to focus on video-making. However, although his original intention had been to cast the Muslim community in a fresh light, criticism that he was in fact “appeasing” Western condemnation had prompted him to focus, not on countering a narrative that he considered inherently problematic, but on creating an “alter-narrative”. He had decided to start a YouTube channel, BENI, under the tagline “If you don’t define yourself, someone else will.”

122. Among the videos he had since produced, one was particularly meaningful to him: the story of why his grandmother had left Indonesia. The video allowed viewers to become emotionally invested in an ordinary story – a grandson trying to connect with his grandmother – and had taught him to create compelling narratives allowing non-migrants to relate to migrants. He had since shot videos about a guerrilla gardener in refugee camps in Lebanon and about two friends in Myanmar – one a Rohingya Muslim, the other a Buddhist – bridging the divide between them to set up an orphanage. He planned to continue filming stories that drew on emotional nuances to connect people of different backgrounds.

123. The Director General observed that one of the most striking things brought to light by IOM data was that, in most countries where anti-migrant sentiment ran high, prejudices were strongest in regions with fewer migrants. How effective could story-telling be in fighting that phenomenon? Could creating a direct connection with migrants’ reality make a difference?

124. Mr Nahdi believed that it could, especially if it was presented as an alternative narrative. A counter-narrative accepted an initial narrative – for example, that his community was a problem – whereas an alternative narrative helped people move beyond stereotypes. The video in which he set out to discover his grandmother’s story did not paint him as a Muslim migrant who was therefore inherently different, but simply as a grandson looking for his grandmother, which was a relatable experience for people everywhere. In order to allow people to relate to the migrant experience, migrants had to be depicted from a more universal point of view.

General debate⁶

125. Statements were made by the following Member States listed in alphabetical order: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt (also on behalf of the Arab Group), El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Libya, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia (also on behalf of the African Group), Nepal, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

126. The representative of the Philippines informed the Council of the intention of several Member States from the Asia–Pacific region to form a group at IOM.

127. The Permanent Observer for the European Union delivered a statement on behalf of the Union's members.

128. Statements were made by one observer State, the Russian Federation, and by two observers, the Sovereign Order of Malta and UNFPA.

129. The Council extended a warm welcome to Lebanon, soon to become the Organization's newest Member State, and congratulated the ICMP on obtaining observer status. It saluted the tireless efforts of IOM personnel working in hostile environments to deliver essential assistance to migrants and deplored the tragic deaths of four IOM staff members killed in South Sudan in October 2019.

130. IOM was commended for its work as the lead agency on migration, supporting implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration one year after its adoption. Indeed, several Member States, having adopted or considering a national plan for migration as part of their efforts to implement the Global Compact, said that they looked to IOM for assistance in that regard. An effective, responsive and Member State-driven IOM should support those Member States implementing of the Global Compact, guided by the Council and in accordance with the States' laws, policies and priorities of States.

131. It was gratifying that the Organization, with its vast experience and capabilities, had agreed to host the Secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration. Several delegates nevertheless made it clear that, in strengthening its global role in connection with the Network, IOM must not stray from its core mandate. Others announced that their governments had made or were considering contributions to the Start-up Fund for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, a United Nations Multi-partner Trust Fund.

132. The Director General and the Administration were commended on their transparent, consensus-based approach to internal reform, which had resulted in the development of the new IOM Strategic Vision. The Strategic Vision acknowledged the importance of developing the Organization's policy capacity while retaining its character as a responsive, flexible, cost-efficient, non-normative organization that remained true to its core values. It was aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

⁶ Texts of statements, as and if received from Member States and observers, are available on the IOM website at www.iom.int.

Development and the Global Compact, and addressed a number of recommendations made in the wake of the recent MOPAN assessment.

133. Delegates also commended the development of the Internal Governance Framework, which should be implemented quickly. Improvements to IOM's core activities had not kept pace with the Organization's rapid growth, and the control, risk, investigation, evaluation, internal audit and anti-fraud functions would all have to be overhauled if the Organization was to be fit for purpose. Sufficient resources had to be allocated to the Office of the Inspector General in particular. While measures to improve the internal justice system were welcome, it was also important to swiftly investigate any allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, and to ensure enforcement of the zero-tolerance policy in that regard and towards fraud.

134. Now that the Strategic Vision had been finalized, attention should turn to structural issues. Indeed, the biggest challenge to successful reform was IOM's weak funding model and its unsustainable reliance on Operational Support Income to finance administrative and core functions. Some Member States encouraged discussion of funding matters within the Working Group on Budget Reform, which should consider a wide range of financing options, including prioritizing funding from overhead income for management and support functions. In addition, several representatives encouraged all Member States to contribute unearmarked funding, so as to ensure sufficient resources for institutional reforms.

135. A matter of concern to many representatives was the need to promote an objective narrative on migration in order to counteract the scourges of racism and xenophobia, which threatened multilateralism and undermined solidarity towards migrants. Other representatives considered it a priority to tackle the interlinkages between climate change, the environment, security and migration. Indeed, the latest report of the United Nations Environment Programme warned that some regions of the world could soon become unlivable, thus spurring increased migration; IOM should take pre-emptive, multilateral action with regard to the threat of climate change.

136. Various Member States highlighted the Organization's work in Libya, where the ongoing war had resulted in a humanitarian crisis and large numbers of IDPs; expressed concern at the plight of the Rohingya community; underscored the impact of the huge migratory flows out of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the activities undertaken in that regard; and denounced the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen, which continued to receive an unprecedented influx of irregular migrants despite being itself convulsed by conflict.

137. The Director General thanked the Member States that had adopted, or were planning to adopt, a national plan to implement the Global Compact and that had made or announced contributions to the Start-up Fund. He reminded the Council that the Global Compact was a platform for international cooperation, implementation of which would depend on Member State decisions; it was therefore up to the Member States to identify priorities. The Administration stood ready to support Member States once those priorities had been established and to help them draw up national implementation plans; it would also report back to Member States on the progress made by the United Nations Network on Migration.

138. He endorsed the effort to establish a regional group for the Asia-Pacific region at IOM, which was in line with the Bureau's work to improve geographical representation at IOM. He, too, expressed gratitude to all IOM staff members; their work in North Kivu during the outbreak of Ebola was particularly praiseworthy.

139. The Director General thanked Member States that had provided unearmarked contributions, thereby allowing the Administration to embark on critical internal reforms even before the MOPAN

assessment, the conclusions of which were fully in line with the Administration's own assessment. He agreed that the current funding model was unsustainable and that the time had come to address its shortcomings, including by involving the private sector in supporting not only refugees but also migrants.

140. One priority under the Internal Governance Framework was to address the internal justice system, which required additional investment, notably in terms of human resources. Detailed information regarding the system, including the status of investigations, would be presented to the Council in 2020; in the meantime, the new case-management approach would facilitate reporting and help tackle the backlog. In addition, new instructions had been adopted on the division of responsibilities between the inspection and investigation functions, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Ethics and Conduct Office, to speed up the process and restore trust among IOM staff. Unfortunately, competition for qualified human resources was stiff between all United Nations agencies and IOM was not necessarily best placed to attract candidates. Together with the Deputy Director General and the Administration, he was committed to seeing that the Office of the Inspector General was allocated sufficient resources, and to guaranteeing a zero-tolerance policy for corruption.

141. Addressing concerns expressed by Member States, he said that hate speech, especially on social media, was a major threat to tolerance and migrant rights. He hoped that the data contained in the *World Migration Report 2020* would be useful for correcting the distortion of migration realities with a view to combating anti-migration rhetoric. IOM would also remain focused on the impact of environmental degradation and climate change on migration.

142. Turning to recent specific IOM operations, the Director General, referring to the large-scale movement of Venezuelan nationals, said that it was important for the international community to understand the pressure that host governments were under and the level of needs in areas such as education and health care. Given that many displaced Venezuelans intended to stay outside the country for a considerable length of time, the issue should be approached in terms of not only humanitarian aid, but also integration, recognition of qualifications and access to labour markets, housing, education and health care. He expressed concern that the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform had secured only about 60 per cent of the funding required for the year; a new appeal would be launched in early 2020. In Asia, IOM stood ready to work with the Government of Myanmar and other partners to create the requisite conditions for the safe and dignified return of those displaced from Rakhine state in Myanmar and currently living in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Regarding Libya, IOM remained committed to ensuring the voluntary return and reintegration of stranded migrants from Libya and to supporting internally displaced Libyans. Closing migrant detention centres should be a priority for Libya and the international community. In Yemen, IOM was carrying out large-scale operations on the ground, working very closely with other United Nations agencies to assist migrants and IDPs.

Date and place of the next sessions

143. Several Member States, noting how difficult it was for smaller delegations in particular to arrange to be present at several concurrent meetings, asked the Administration to try to avoid scheduling IOM governing body sessions at the same time as those of other organizations, such as UNHCR and the ILO.

144. The Chairperson said that he was sure he spoke for many delegations in supporting that request and appealed to the Administration to do its utmost to take it into consideration.

145. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1384 of 29 November 2019, according to which its next regular session was tentatively scheduled for November 2020 and the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance was invited to meet at least twice during 2020.

Closure of the session

146. Before closing the session, the Chairperson thanked all delegations for their active participation, in particular in the discussion on the Organization's senior leadership structure. The outcome they had achieved was sure to move the process forward.

147. The Chairperson declared the 110th Session of the Council closed on Friday, 29 November 2019, at 12.15 p.m.