

**Permanent Mission of India**  
**Geneva**

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**Statement by India during the General Debate of the 110th Annual Session of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Council delivered by Dr. Sadre Alam, First Secretary (28 November 2019)**

Excellences, Director General and distinguished delegates,

The delegation of India felicitates H.E. Mr. Morten Jespersen, the Permanent Representative of Denmark on his election as the Chairperson and other newly elected bureau members. We assure you of our full cooperation. We also express our gratitude to the outgoing Chair.

2. We take this opportunity to welcome the Lebanese Republic as a new member of the IOM. We encourage IOM to strive for universal membership and, in keeping with this spirit, for the office to have diversity through equitable geographical representation at all levels especially in the senior management as a strategic priority and a key institutional investment.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

3. Today, IOM is at a critical juncture and has, both, a new and expanding mandate. Our collective efforts to strengthen IOM and guide it strategically in the formative years of its relationship within the UN system and in the implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) will be crucial.

4. Internally, IOM will need to manage knowledge, resources, including technology, and risks optimally as well as develop capacities especially policy related to fully support its Member States and the field operations. For this, we continue to look forward to the leadership and vision of the Director General.

5. The IOM Strategic Vision 2019-23 which reflects the vision of the Director General as well as the expectations of Member States and is broadly aligned to both the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact is timely and a step in the right direction. We look forward to its effective implementation in partnership with Governments and other relevant stakeholders.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

6. The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs rightfully recognize migration as a largely positive phenomenon and a core enabler of inclusive and sustainable development. A strong, effective and responsive IOM, led and driven by its Member States, should steer the global migration discourse, supported by credible data and with developmental agenda remaining at the center stage. IOM should play a role not only in helping manage migration but also facilitating it as part of migration governance as well as part of efforts towards migrant inclusion and integration.

7. We appreciate the invaluable and constructive role played by IOM in shaping the GCM. Likewise, the IOM, through its role as the lead organization in the UN system on migration and the coordinator of the network for migration, fully guided by the Council,

should ensure the implementation of the compact in accordance with the laws, policies and priorities of its Member States to make migration work for all.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

8. We acknowledge the work being carried out by IOM in the field in challenging environments. IOM should continue its efforts to be a principled, accountable and transparent performance based organization through a results and rights-based approaches fully leveraging new technologies including information technology for catalyzing any organizational transformation.

9. IOM's own partnership within and beyond the UN system and fostering and supporting other partnerships of relevant stakeholders at all levels will be critical in ensuring a whole of system response to meet the needs and expectations of its Member States and achieve the shared goals of both the 2030 Agenda and the objectives of the Global Compact by enabling evidence based policies and actions adopting a migrant centric and humane approach.

10. The Program and Budget for the organization should reflect IOM's changing nature and be geared towards fulfilling the mandate provided by Member States. IOM needs to significantly increase its outlay and investment in policy capacity and research to support Member States and help build their national capacities to better manage migration. IOM should continue with its ongoing efforts to enhance predictable multi-year un-earmarked contributions from governments to help meet its core needs and to implement strategic institutional initiatives. We urge Member States to support this endeavour and enhance their un-earmarked voluntary contributions. Contributions received from non-state donors should be fully informed of conflict of interest based approaches.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

11. At the core of IOM's strength lies its staff which should not only be the best but also drawn equitably from all regions of the world as part of its commitment to ensuring diversity. It is concerning that a number of Member States are under-represented and around 27% of them unrepresented. IOM should consider adopting an evaluation tool or developing targets to periodically measure geographical diversity and representation in its staff and report on the progress made to its member states annually. Further, now having become a UN related agency, we request the IOM to consider joining the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) as part of its external monitoring and evaluation.

12. On Agenda item 10 regarding DG's proposal to strengthen top management including through appointment of the Deputy Director General in lieu of elections, as currently provided for in the IOM constitution, we wish to re-emphasize that in any future process related to the selection of the DDG, there should be a clear and lead role for the IOM council and it should be informed of the need to ensure in the IOM senior management, diversity and geographical balance and rotation. Needless to add that any decision on such an important issue should only be by consensus, failing which within a stipulated time the status quo could remain. In such an eventuality and particularly in view of the outcome of the third special session of the IOM Council, we could also consider exploring ways to further streamline the existing process of election of the DDG including through necessary changes in the relevant rules of procedure. We thank the DG for holding informal consultations prior to this council session on this proposal and remain open to working together to find a consensual way forward through an open, inclusive, transparent as well as a well defined and time bound process.

13. On the ongoing work related to the new IOM Headquarters building, we request the office to keep Member States fully informed and engaged.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

14. India is widely acknowledged as a major country of origin for migrants, globally. However, it is also being increasingly recognized that India is a major country of destination, as also a transit country. Our Government accords top priority to ensuring a safe, orderly, legal and humane migration process. Our national institutional framework for migrants welfare and protection has undergone a transformational change in recent years. For example, on the regulatory front, the e-Migrate system has ushered in greater accountability and transparency in the recruitment process. We are enhancing the skill-sets of our migrants through programmes like the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and its standardized certification. We have also taken a number of other initiatives to promote migrant welfare such as the online grievance redressal portal (MADAD); the pre-departure orientation pilot program; the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) for emergencies; the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) for insurance cover and put in place 24X7 help lines. Our diaspora engagement policy is very robust and institutionalized. We would greatly benefit by sharing our respective experiences in managing migration and mutually learning from each other's good practices.

15. We take this opportunity to reaffirm India's commitment to IOM and wish to underline the need to foster greater international cooperation amongst countries of origin, transit and destination and relevant stakeholders. We value our partnership with the IOM and are happy to announce that, in accordance with this Council's resolution no. 1266 (CIII) of 2013, we are in the process of granting the organization immunities and privileges through an appropriate host country Agreement.

16. Lastly, we look forward to constructive engagement and fruitful outcomes in this council session.

Thank you.

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