

110th Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration

Geneva, November 28th, 2019

DRAFT STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF IRELAND

H.E Ambassador Michael Gaffey

Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geneva

Ireland aligns with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Chair,

May I open by congratulating you on your election and assuring you of my delegation's full support. I would also like to welcome Lebanon as the newest member of the IOM Council. It is encouraging to see the Council moving closer to Universal membership.

We thank the Director General for his detailed opening statement, and the staff of the IOM, around the world, for their dedicated and tireless work. We add our voice to those expressing horror and condolences to all in the Organisation for the tragic loss of life this year. We must state again, clearly, that humanitarian workers can never be a target in the difficult environments in which they work on our behalf.

Chair,

Recent years have seen significant developments in the mandate and mission of IOM, which have rightly brought the Organisation fully into the fold of the international multilateral system. Since its formal integration into the UN system, just over three years ago, IOM has consistently demonstrated its value as a coordinating, convening and implementing partner of the international community. In 2018, it was tasked to serve as the Secretariat and Coordinator of

the UN Network on Migration. Now, as we focus on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, the weight of responsibility on the shoulders of the Director General and your staff, has increased measurably. It is incumbent on all of us to support you in your efforts to carry out your complex and challenging mandate as effectively as possible, with the necessary organisational structures and supports.

For Ireland, history has taught us that migration can bring devastation and despair to communities, but also enormous and tangible benefits. The critical factor is how appropriately and effectively it is managed. Because my country's history has been defined in so many ways by migration, we are firmly convinced that we need, as a global community, to forge a broad consensus on how to realise the potential of migration to improve the lives of people across the world. From the New York Declaration of 2016, which we were proud to co-facilitate with Jordan, to the Global Compact for Migration, we believe that progress is being made towards that consensus. Of course, progress is not universal and consistent, and the emerging challenges to multilateral action need themselves to be challenged. Approaches to migration have in places turned away from engagement and cooperation towards isolation and exclusion. We believe that IOM, through its work with governments and communities, has an important role to play in allaying fears and in providing reassurance that there are real, workable and beneficial solutions to the challenges migration can pose, which can enrich the economic, social and cultural welfare of nations.

The mission of IOM is an increasingly complex one, from providing technical assistance to states on migration management to the delivery of lifesaving humanitarian interventions for displaced populations. IOM's work, in close partnership with the European Union, through the EU Trust Fund for Africa, is a concrete example of the vital role it can play. Ireland supports that work through our voluntary contributions. We have also supported your work in Mozambique

in the wake of Cyclone Idai as well as the establishment of a regional migration data hub for Southern Africa.

However, it is above all in recognition of IOM's particular role in the implementation of the Global Compact, that we decided this year to join the group of countries which provide IOM with core funding. We will maintain and increase this funding. We believe that providing our international partners with the capacity to prioritise in line with the objectives agreed, in this case through this Council, is an extremely effective way to support the achievement of results. We encourage other states to consider contributing to the Organisation's core resources in this flexible manner.

We also believe that IOM senior management needs the requisite flexibility to ensure that the structures of the organisation are equal to the task and responsive to the shifting scope of work the organisation undertakes.

In conclusion, let us remind ourselves of the purpose of our collective efforts in support of IOM. People have migrated throughout human history. But when they migrate in today's world, it should be out of choice. When deprived of that choice, they must not be deprived of the generosity and care that we, as their fellow global citizens, can provide for them.

Thank you.