



Statement delivered by the Republic of Malta at the General Debate of the 110th Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr Chair, on your appointment as Chairperson of the Council Bureau. We look forward to work with you and the other members of the Bureau in the coming months.

Mr Chair

The Republic of Malta aligns itself with the statements delivered by the European Union and would like to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

Situated in the middle of the Mediterranean, Malta has dealt with migration for the better part of the past 15 years, and during that time, the migratory flows that Malta has experienced have changed considerably. Up till the 17 of November, the total number of arrivals this year via the Central Mediterranean route to Italy and Malta is 13,117, compared to 23,723 in the same period last year - a 45% decrease. When one considers that there was approximately an 80% decrease in arrivals between 2017 and 2018, one can quickly appreciate that the work focused on the challenges of migration is reaping results.

This is however, of little consolation to my country that has experienced a 168% increase in the number of arrivals to its shores. Furthermore, it is clear that much more also needs to be done. Let us not forget that over 1000 migrants have been reported dead or missing in 2019 while crossing the Mediterranean.

Mr Chair

One major positive that my country can take from this situation is the cooperation it benefits from IOM. In fact, Malta has benefitted from IOM's support through direct assistance, capacity building and management of migration. IOM has also been instrumental in the relocation of migrants that are disembarked in Maltese ports and are relocated to other European countries following their pledges. We are grateful for this.

Given that all migrants reaching Malta depart from Libya, Malta also benefits from the excellent work IOM is conducting in that country, which despite the difficult conditions on the ground, has maintained a very productive presence in the country. The invaluable work being done to stabilise host communities is leaving its benefits. Libya clearly needs to be part of the equation and initiatives are needed to create more opportunities in different sectors in order to attract people away from human traffickers and smugglers of migrants.

Mr Chair

I would like to conclude by touching upon the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which will soon mark its first anniversary. Malta was and remains a firm supporter of the Compact, as although a global approach will never replace a regional one when dealing with migration, Malta believes that wider cooperation and best practices can be shared globally in order to improve regional aspects. In this regard, Malta would like to call for further efforts by supporting states to complete the modalities and implementing phase, so that we can start working on the 23 objectives set out in the GCM.

Thank you.

- *CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY* -