

*111. session of the IOM Council - 24-27 November 2020*

*General Debate, agenda item 11*

*Statement by Denmark*

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Chair, Director General, Distinguished delegates,

Denmark aligns with the statement made on behalf of the EU and its Member States and adds the following in its national capacity.

Denmark thanks the Director General for his comprehensive report and commends IOM for its steadfast response to the severe impact of the current global health crisis.

COVID-19 affects all of our countries but it has undoubtedly hit the hardest in existing humanitarian crisis where it is a compounding factor. We fear that in humanitarian crisis the most vulnerable populations will bear the brunt of the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic.

Denmark has shown global solidarity with a swift COVID-19 response with three COVID-19 help packages addressing both short term humanitarian and health needs as well as longer term socio-economic efforts, including more than 85 mill. USD in humanitarian assistance. In addition, we have provided an extraordinary contribution to IOM's COVID-19 appeal in the amount of 30 million DKK. This is testament to our continued commitment to international solidarity, and – in this year where we celebrate the UN's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary – our unwavering commitment to multilateralism.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significant gendered impacts, including by exacerbating risks of gender-based violence and of sexual exploitation and abuse. We encourage IOM to step up its efforts to protect women and girls in a comprehensive manner by

strengthening GBV prevention, mitigation and response, including access to crucial sexual and reproductive health services.

Chair,

Denmark recognizes that safe, orderly and regular migration can be a catalyst for growth, welfare and stability, whereas irregular migration can have negative political and economic consequences for countries of transit, destination and origin.

Migration is a cross border phenomenon that requires strong international cooperation. It is a key priority for the Danish government to improve global migration management to reduce irregular migration which is unsafe and the cause of immense human suffering. There is a clear need to change the incentives that lead people to embark on dangerous journeys. We need to combat the cynical human smugglers and we need to be able to effectively return those found not to be in need of international protection and without a right of stay. The Danish government believes we need a fair and humane asylum and migration management system within international law.

In this context, Denmark sees the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) as a useful framework for improving management of migration, including combatting human smuggling and trafficking, cooperation on return and readmission, addressing drivers of irregular migration and enhancing international and regional cooperation on migration.

Denmark regards the 2030 Agenda as the main vehicle to address root causes of irregular migration and to promote and uphold the human rights of migrants, including migrants in vulnerable situations. The fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals is highly relevant for achieving the objectives of the GCM.

Through our development cooperation, Denmark will increasingly seek to build capacity for better migration management, and will continue to work within the framework of the GCM in support of safe, orderly and regular migration. To that end, Denmark has provided input for the upcoming report of the Secretary General on the GCM and a voluntary contribution on the national implementation of the GCM for the regional GCM review for Europe. Denmark has also allocated 15 million DKK to the Multi-Partner Fund for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2019 to support joint UN efforts related to migration.

Denmark fully supports IOM in its new tasks as coordinator and secretariat for the UN Migration Network. It is important that the Network becomes a success and that all UN agencies engage fully in order to ensure a better, more coherent and joined-up approach across the UN system.

Chair,

The current crisis has underlined some inherent weaknesses in IOM's funding model. An organization with such a high dependence on project funding and limited core funding, is very vulnerable in a situation where large parts of its work either came to a stand-still due to border closures or had to be recalibrated in response to the exacerbated needs caused by the pandemic. It is crucial that these weaknesses are addressed. As IOM's membership, we all have a joint responsibility to ensure that IOM's funding model is sustainable and allows IOM to deliver on its many responsibilities.

Reaffirming Denmark's strong support to IOM, Denmark entered into a strategic partnership agreement with IOM in 2018 and has for the third year in a row provided multiyear, un-earmarked and highly flexible funding in the amount of 25 mio. DKK.

Subject to parliamentary approval we will do the same next year – and the following year. Only a limited number of countries provide this type of flexible and multiyear funding for IOM. We strongly encourage more member states to provide IOM with this type of funding in order for the Organization to be more sustainably funded.

In addition to core funding, Denmark presently finances IOM projects to a value of 75 million DKK covering migration management activities in Morocco, Nigeria, Sudan, Pakistan and the Western Balkan states. And the project portfolio is expected to increase even more before year end.

In 2020 Denmark also increased funding to IOM's efforts in Africa (in inter alia Ethiopia and Egypt) in the amount of 25 million DKK to mitigate irregular migration and strengthen migration management.

Chair,

Denmark fully supported the assessment of the need for IOM to strengthen its top management to enable IOM to live up to its strengthened role in the global migration governance architecture. Denmark thus welcomes the newly adopted reform to strengthen the leadership of the Organization, with the appointment of two Deputy Directors General, one focusing on operations, and the other on management and reform. This will help better equip IOM to cope with current challenges as well as its new responsibilities within the United Nations system.

Denmark continues to attach importance to IOM's character as a responsive, efficient, cost-effective, and independent agency with an effective field presence. Given IOM's new roles and responsibilities, it is all the more important that IOM's core structure is sufficiently supported. There is also a continued need for strengthened internal

capacities and internal governance as well as stronger accountability and oversight mechanisms. To that end, Denmark is very supportive of the Internal Governance Framework and welcomes the roadmap for the implementation of the Internal Governance Framework. A costed business plan for the ongoing institutional transition process would be an important instrument for prioritisation.

Denmark will engage constructively in ongoing budget reforms with a view to ensuring that IOM has a sustainable funding model. At the same time it is underlined that there is still a need for a clearer basis for prioritization and the development of a results framework for measuring the impact of IOM's work, including system-wide results-based management. The ultimate aim would be to – in due course – have three results-frameworks speaking to each other linking the GCM with the Migration Governance Framework (MIGOF) and the SDGs at global level with an internal results framework around the Internal Governance Framework and the Strategic Vision of IOM.

We encourage IOM to strengthen reporting on the impact of un-earmarked funding and showcasing how this type of funding can be transformative for IOM – in order to maintain and attract more flexible funding.

Chair,

For Denmark as a donor of core funding for the Organization, organizational effectiveness, internal governance, oversight, accountability and transparency as well as continued efforts to strengthen anti-corruption efforts and combat sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment are key conditions for our continued support. We also expect IOM to continue to make progress towards results-based management and reporting as well as continuously improving risk management with a focus on lessons learned across operations.

Transparency with donors regarding any cases of financial irregularities and SEA is an absolute necessity. Denmark looks forward to regular updates on risk management and on the work of the Inspector General, and underline that it is crucial that the office of the Inspector General is independent and has sufficient resources.

Finally, allow me to express our sincere appreciation for IOM's staff carrying out their important work under these particularly difficult circumstances.

Thank you.