



**European Union
Statement**

IOM 111th Council (24-27 November 2020)

**EU SPEAKING ELEMENTS – Item 12
General debate**

Geneva, 24 November 2020

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

111th Session of the IOM Council (24 – 27 November 2020)

Draft EU Statement

Item 13 – General Debate

1. Chair, Director General, Excellences and Distinguished Delegates,
2. I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.
3. We thank the Director-General for his statement and the update on current activities.
4. We welcome this opportunity to continue the discussion of IOM's work and issues of importance in these challenging times marked by the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. Saying that it has been an eventful time since the last IOM Council would be an understatement. The EU and its Member States remain deeply concerned about the impact of the pandemic. We recognise the magnitude of the related health emergency as well as its secondary impacts, including socio-economic consequences, affecting in particular those in most vulnerable situations. The COVID-19 pandemic and related movement restrictions have had a significant impact on migration and human mobility. Its effects are being and will continue to be acutely felt especially by those already affected by humanitarian crises. However, we need to realise that in the current pandemic situation, such movement restrictions might be justified based on objective criteria, such as the health and epidemiological situation.

6. We applaud the efforts of health, humanitarian and development workers, doctors and researchers as well as all other essential workers. We also recognise the role played by migrant workers in these efforts. We commend IOM's staff commitment and dedication in providing support and response worldwide, often in remote and conflict-ridden areas. Their protection and the preservation of the humanitarian space must remain priorities.
7. We praise IOM's flexibility in adapting its activities to the new challenges, importantly also as part of "one UN" response to this global crisis. We also welcome IOM's efforts to consider the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to reflect on the future of migration and human mobility. We emphasize the need for a strengthened cooperation and more synergies within the UN family and beyond, in line with each and everyone's respective core strengths and mandates.
8. We urge IOM to continue paying particular attention to address the needs of migrant women, children, victims of torture and persons with disabilities, who are disproportionately affected by the pandemic, as duly recalled by the recent adoption by consensus of the UNGA Resolution: Women and girls and the response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).
9. The EU and its Member States have followed from the beginning a strong joint up approach to address the short and longer-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the 'Team Europe' approach, we have mobilized a package of almost EUR 39 billion – combining

resources and expertise from the European Commission, the Member States and the EU financial institutions – to address the emergency response and humanitarian needs, strengthen health, water/sanitation and nutrition systems and mitigate the economic and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic worldwide. This is one of the greatest collective mobilizations in the EU's history. In this effort, we emphasised a rights-based and people-centred approach that focuses on the most vulnerable and marginalised groups and on people in vulnerable situations.

10. The European Union and its Member States continue to support IOM as the lead UN agency on migration. We also welcome IOM's important role in ensuring better coordination of migration-related work within the UN, notably as the coordinator and secretariat for the Network. This improved coordination on migration amongst UN agencies should also be carried out and operationalised at field level in partner countries, and within UN country teams. These points were clearly made during the recent Regional Review in the UNECE region.
11. The EU and its Member States continue to pursue a comprehensive approach to migration. The New Pact on Migration and Asylum proposed by the European Commission in September aims at addressing both the internal and external dimensions of the EU's migration policy. That is why the new Pact places tailor-made and comprehensive partnerships with third countries and regions, as well as with international organisations, at the centre of the external

dimension of the EU's migration policy. We consider IOM as an essential partner in this area, not only as an implementing partner but also for its capacity to support national and regional efforts towards development of better migration regulations and policies, as well as focus on the challenges locally and address the root causes of irregular migration. It is key that we build on concrete lessons learnt and good practices achieved during the last years, including by building capacities in partner countries.

12. The EU and its Member States are providing significant support to IOM, including financially as the largest contributors to IOM's budget, collectively and individually. We have also contributed extensively, collectively and individually, to IOM's Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19, which is currently funded at 46%. We call on other donors to support this appeal.
13. The EU and its Member States highly appreciate the involvement of IOM in the mobilisation of funds for current migratory crisis like the Donors Conference for the Venezuela last May.
14. In order to respond to the growing challenges, the short- and long-term consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, and migrants' needs, including security, socio-economic and health related issues, the cooperation between the EU, its Member States and IOM will have to intensify. We welcome the continued efforts by the administration with regards to the reform agenda, with the aim of making the organisation more fit for purpose and strengthening the core structure.

We encourage IOM to continue ensuring full transparency, integrity, robust monitoring and reporting as well as oversight.

15. The EU and its Member States will continue to support IOM in its important work.

16. Thank you!