

111th Session of the IOM Council

Draft National Statement by Ireland

Ambassador Michael Gaffey

Virtual Meeting - 25 November 2020

Chair, Director General, Excellences and Distinguished Delegates,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union and adds the following in its national capacity. I would first like to congratulate you Ambassador Garcia on your election as Chair of IOM Council and express our gratitude to Ambassador Jespersen and his team for all their work over the past twelve months.

We welcome Director General Vitorino's Statement updating the Council on IOM's work during a very challenging year. There are now signs of hope in relation to the pandemic, but we will be living with its impact for a long time to come. We join the Director General in saluting the work of all of IOM's staff throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. We also recognise the essential role that migrants have played as frontline workers and lifelines for our struggling economies.

If the last year has taught us anything, it is to that we need to be prepared for the unexpected. Tragically, every year brings its share of crises but the truth is we were not ready for a pandemic that so fundamentally and rapidly affected our planet, and how we interact with each other, at every level. One thing we can be certain of in the midst of this pandemic is that the Global Compact on Migration is more important and relevant now than ever before. Progress made on implementation of the historic framework for international migration cooperation

was discussed extensively during the first regional review of the GCM for the UNECE region in recent weeks. This first ever regional review will hopefully lay the foundation for many more to come and Ireland will continue to play a leading role.

Another important element that has become ever clearer over the past 9 months is ensuring that IOM is equipped with the tools and resources required to respond in a coherent, flexible and transparent manner. Progress made by the Office of Inspector General over the past 12 months is especially welcome - Ireland would place particular importance in this work as a key pillar for the health of IOM.

It is clear that flexible, unearmarked core funding to IOM is absolutely vital. Only flexible resources can permit flexible responses and allow IOM to drive the much needed changes to its Internal Governance Framework, including its policy leadership, coordination capacity, investigations functions and independent oversight. Ireland has been providing core funding to IOM for the past two years and we very strongly urge other countries to do the same. There is, undoubtedly, also an important place for earmarked funding. and IOM's work with individual states on addressing public health related challenges during the Pandemic has been an example of this. Ireland also continues to support initiatives where we see a gap, including the upcoming establishment by IOM of the Global Migration Media Academy.

Funding is one aspect of ensuring that IOM is adequately equipped to carry out its mandate effectively. Another is to get the organisational architecture right. In this regard, Ireland very much welcomes the work which is underway on institutional strengthening within IOM. Reaching agreement on the process for appointing two new Deputy Directors General last month was an important signal of support from the membership of the Council to the Director General. The next

step is to develop budget and financing arrangements that empower the organisation to lead the migration work of the multilateral system effectively.

The challenges that we have all faced during 2020 and the extent to which the pandemic has impacted on all aspects of migration have undoubtedly been daunting. A rough sketch of the future of mobility is starting to become clearer to all of us and it is apparent that the intersection between public health and international travel will be deeply intertwined. We are fortunate that we have IOM and the 23 objectives of the Global Compact for Migration to guide us. As we progress with the regional reviews of the GCM, exploring and sharing best practices in implementation and follow-up, and examining too the challenges remaining, let us re-commit to working together – and ensuring a cohesive UN response, as guided by the UN Migration Network and the important leadership role of the IOM in this.

Ireland remains steadfast in our support of this work.

Thank you.