

Check against delivery.

IOM Council 111th Session 24 to 27 November 2020
Statement of Norway

Chairman,

Let me join other speakers in thanking Director General Vitorino for his inspiring introductory remarks to the Council.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the leadership of IOM and the staff for the impressive way the organisation has managed to respond to the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The agreement amongst project owners and donor countries to redirect committed funding has enabled the IOM to make active use of 1300 health workers in critical circumstances. The assistance provided by IOM staff to visa and border crossing procedures has been truly impressive under otherwise more than stressful conditions.

We are all concerned about the many negative consequences of the pandemic for the migrants. For us the humanitarian aspects are key priorities. The pandemic has also caused socio-economic challenges. And we have seen increased levels of sexual and gender-based violence, human trafficking and modern slavery.

We appreciate the valuable work IOM has done to support migrants in need. And we urge you to convey our gratefulness to all your dedicated staff. We truly value their efforts during the crises.

Chairman,

No-one yet knows the full impact of the pandemic on the world economy. However, it will probably cause a setback that may also affect Member States' ability to finance IOM projects.

In this regard, the Programme and Budget for 2021 has an even larger degree of unpredictability than for a normal year. At the same time, the growth rate witnessed over the last decade has made urgent the structural reforms proposed by the Director General in the Internal Governance Framework (IGF).

The IGF seeks to improve the overall efficiency, risk management, accountability and transparency across the Organization. Capacity building is important. We support the strengthening of the mechanisms for audit and accountability.

And we expect the top leadership to be fully committed to the important work of preventing and reacting to integrity violations and misconduct. The zero tolerance policy regarding corruption must be obeyed at all levels.

We would also like to see an increased focus on greening of operations, and we welcome the ongoing efforts by IOM in this regard.

The steps needed for these improvements will necessarily carry some additional costs. We have noticed the request for further funding for Workstream 3: Business Transformation. We

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urge Member States to contribute to this by providing non-earmarked core support to the IOM.

We will continue our core funding. And we reiterate that the time has come to leave the zero-nominal-growth policy behind. We should instead opt for modest increases in the member states' assessed contributions in order to obtain the goals of the organisation.

Chairman,

A key guideline in the work of migration governance should be the promotion of regular and orderly migration and the prevention of irregular migration through a well-managed migration policy. We welcome IOM's ambitions to contribute where that is requested.

In this respect, the Global Compact is an important milestone. We expect the GCM to bring countries of origin and countries of destination closer together. That may create a better environment for discussions on difficult issues like return and the portability of social security benefits. We are proud contributors to the Multi-Partner Trust Fund as a tool to achieve the benefits that the GCM prescribes.

There is currently a record number of internally displaced people worldwide. The High-level Panel on Internal Displacement provides a unique opportunity to galvanise international support to finding solutions to situations of internal displacement. We are grateful to all of the states that have joined us in supporting the Panel. And we commend IOM for the efforts to address situations of internal displacement.

Chairman,

The growing membership of the organisation underlines the importance of global cooperation on migration issues. And it underscores IOM's diverse role as an operational actor, as a forum for discussion on migration policy and priorities, and as the leading organisation in the strategic international cooperation on migration governance.

We wish progress and success for the Organization in the years to come.

Thank you.