



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

Statement

**Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi
Permanent Representative of Pakistan**

**111th IOM Council Session
(24 November 2020)**

**Honourable Chairperson,
Director General,
Excellencies,**

Let me begin by commending you, Mr. Chairman, for your dynamic leadership. We deeply appreciate your wide ranging consultations and your patient yet skilful handling of the question of IOM senior leadership positions.

We also value the efforts and outreach by Director General Vitorino and his team, especially in steering the organization amidst the outbreak of COVID pandemic.

Mr. Chairman,

The drivers and impacts of international migration continue to evolve; stimulating economic opportunities but also, in some cases, troubling trends.

The normative landscape is largely shaped by positive developments, as evidenced by the adoption of the Global Compact on Migration and the establishment of the UN Network on Migration.

The international migration and its dividends also represent a win-win proposition for countries of origin and destination. Migrants continue to drive prosperity, innovation and sustainable development.

However, the growing application of a political lens to international migration and the resultant amplification of ill-informed narratives against migrants is a matter of serious concern.

Mr. Chairman,

The social, economic and public health disruption caused by COVID-19 highlights the challenges that IOM and its member states cannot remain immune from.

The global reporting and surveys point out that the socio-economic impacts of this pandemic will be wide-ranging in impact and time horizons. It is clear that there will be disproportionate effects on the developing countries especially those who have large migrant populations abroad or host large number of migrants. These effects are evident in the form of reduced fiscal space and dwindling streams of revenue including remittances and export earnings.

It is, therefore, important that these economic pressures are eased on developing countries in ways that respond to the enormity of their economic and fiscal challenges.

A global response to these challenges is needed that entails some degree of shift in approach, priorities and programmes of the organization.

The GCM provides the requisite framework; of solidarity, shared responsibility, international cooperation and unity of purpose.

One of the priority areas for my delegation is to enhance both the scale and flexibility in pathways for regular migration. We encourage the IOM to explore additional ways and work with member states in this area.

Mr. Chairman,

The evolving landscape of international migration underscores the need for IOM to enhance the range of its services including through greater periodicity of dialogue and cooperation among and between States, businesses, organizations and other stakeholders.

We recognize and appreciate the reform efforts undertaken by the Director General aimed at making the Organization more effective, responsive, agile and fit for purpose.

This Council may also consider further discussion on the viability or continuation of the project-based nature of the Organization as well as the current budget model in keeping with the imperatives of predictability and sustainability.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to share briefly some of the measures taken by my Government to assist and facilitate Pakistani diaspora and irregular migrants in the country since the outbreak of COVID-19.

Special flights were operated to repatriate more than 250,000 stranded Pakistani migrants in the wake of COVID-19 restrictions and job losses between the months of March and July this year.

The Central Bank of Pakistan has launched an innovative banking solution allowing banking and investment facilities to Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs) through fully digital arrangements and remotely (Roshan Digital Pakistan Account).

We reiterate the call for a road map to reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances to less than 3 percent and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 percent by 2030 in line with target 10.c of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Irrespective of the legal status or number of migrants and despite economic constraints, Pakistan has afforded to the refugees and migrants social mobility, employment opportunities and access to health and education.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reaffirming our belief, as a country of origin, transit and destination in the promise of migration and its shared dividends for all people, societies and countries.

The IOM has a vital role to facilitate the migration process and services that yield economic and social benefits for all countries.

I thank you.

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