

**IOM – 111th Session of the Council (24.-27.11.2020)  
Agenda item 11: General debate**

Chair, Director General, Excellences and Distinguished Delegates,

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union.

Since early 2020, the spread of COVID-19 has been presenting considerable challenges for lives of people anywhere in the world. In the area of global mobility, its consequences are the most devastating for people on the move, especially for those who were already in vulnerable situations prior to the pandemic. Many migrant workers lost their jobs, livelihoods and due to restrictions on borders even the possibility to return home. Sharp drop in global remittances causes additional economic constraints for low and middle-income countries of origin.

The crisis has underlined the necessity of a global response and accelerated the coordination among the UN agencies, including through the UN Migration Network. IOM again proved its competence and assumed full responsibility as the lead UN Agency for migration.

Thanks to IOM activities at the entry points, in reception centres, deploying IOM health and medical staff and providing updated information on mobility restrictions, governments and migrant communities were able to cope better with the difficult situation.

Slovakia commends the IOM staff for quick response on the ground. We appreciate the flexibility of the organization in adapting its ways and methods of work to new circumstances and its focus on the most vulnerable populations.

In addition to commending the reaction of the Agency to the global health crisis, we note with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of the Internal Governance Framework and welcome the new IOM Migration data strategy and Continental Strategy for Africa. We are awaiting with great interest the finalization of the Strategy on Migration, Climate Change and the Environment.

We would also like to reiterate that building resilience capacity for climate change and enhancing disaster risk reduction, together with development assistance and cooperation with countries of origin remain crucial for addressing the root causes of migration and finding sustainable solutions to migration issues.

Slovakia furthermore welcomes the consensus reached by the Member States on the Director's General proposal to strengthen the senior leadership structure of IOM. We are confident that consolidating the management will enable to accelerate the reform process and further increase the Organization's efficiency and effectiveness.

In the upcoming period, our attention should be directed at socio-economic recovery and addressing continued limitations to mobility, which are likely to continue for some time in the future. In this regard, global response through multilateral cooperation, and tackling the migration challenge in its complexity as an integral part of the Agenda 2030, are indispensable.

Slovakia stands ready to contribute further to this international ambition and to continue its support to IOM in addressing the challenges and opportunities of migration worldwide.

Thank you for your attention!