



## Statement by Sweden – IOM Council 111th Session 2020

Delivered by: H.E. Ms Anna Jardfelt, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Sweden in Geneva

Mr. Chairman, Director-General, Distinguished delegates

Sweden aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

Let me begin by thanking Director-General Vitorino for his presentation. Sweden commends IOM for its important work in the field and – we are pleased to note – as an increasingly important stakeholder in the global effort to strengthen multilateral cooperation on migration.

During the past few years, Sweden has used this opportunity to speak at the Council to advocate for efficiency and change. We have highlighted the need for organizational reforms aimed at making IOM fit for purpose, and we have encouraged more Member States to follow Sweden's lead by contributing both financially and politically to this cause. Our intent for next year, pending parliament approval, is to provide IOM with approximately 10 million USD in additional flexible funding aimed at strengthening the Organization's core structure.

As already noted during this Council session, we currently live in a world which has altered many of our previous priorities. The pandemic has shifted our focus from long-term goals to urgent needs. At the same time, it has also highlighted the need for more, not less, international cooperation. In some

ways, IOM has been well situated to respond to this crisis. With its large field presence and flexible organizational structure, IOM has worked closely with the rest of the UN family ensuring that migrants are included in the world's COVID19-response. Be it in terms of humanitarian relief, access to health, advocating for migrant workers' rights, or from a socioeconomic perspective.

That said, we must not lose sight of the bigger picture. If anything, the pandemic has highlighted the urgency of a strengthened IOM, both structurally and financially. The global character of the current crisis requires a strategic response that can only be achieved by having a strong institutional framework ensuring coherency. Likewise, the projectized nature of IOM often means *less* flexibility as funds needed for COVID19-related work has already been allocated to other causes.

This long-term perspective is the focus of Sweden's first organizational strategy for the cooperation with IOM 2020 to 2022. The strategy, which is grounded in the MOPAN assessment, highlights three areas of key concern where Sweden would like to see a strengthened IOM: Organizational structure, policy capacity, and the financial model. These issues currently guide our ongoing dialogue with the IOM administration. We are very willing to share the organizational strategy with colleagues from Member States who are interested in Sweden's view on these topics.

Chair, Director-General,

In this context, we are pleased to note that IOM has *not* lost sight of the bigger picture. On the contrary, IOM has continued to push for reforms, for example through the launch and initial implementation of the Internal Governance Framework. We also support the decision by the Special Council to accept the Director-General's proposal for the selection of two DDG positions, a change that we hope will further strengthen IOM's core

management structure and facilitate the reform agenda. We recognize and support the need to take immediate action to mitigate the adverse effects of the ongoing pandemic. At the same time, these long-term structural reforms are key to ensuring the Organization's ability to deliver into the future. We therefore encourage IOM to continue down this road, and we invite more Member States to join us in supporting the Organization on this journey.

Mr. Chairman. Let me conclude by reiterating Sweden's appreciation and support for the important role and work of IOM, and we look forward to continuing our fruitful cooperation.

Thank you!