

UK opening statement at the IOM Council - November 2021

I would like to begin by underlining the UK's steadfast support for IOM's work, and we are proud that the UK is a key partner for IOM.

We are all aware that this will be a tough year ahead. Humanitarian needs are rising, COVID-19 continues to rage, and conflict and fragility continue to displace people from their homes in countries such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and many others. Humanitarian access, protection and International Humanitarian Law are under threat. We are also seeing the use of irregular migration as a tactic of hybrid warfare by the regime in Belarus. The UK will stand shoulder to shoulder with IOM as it continues to support those in need during this challenging period, and promote safe, regular and orderly migration around the globe.

We view this moment in time as crucial in IOM's history. Given IOM's growing size, reach and influence, we welcome the responsible approach being taken to adapting the organisation. We welcome the appointment of the two new Deputy Director Generals Amy Pope and Oguchi Daniels, and we strongly support the DG-led Internal Governance Framework (IGF) and Budget Reform efforts.

We applaud the implementation of the IGF, we urge that it is implemented in its entirety as soon as practicable, and we request continued updates on its implementation – but also on the results and impacts that can be expected and are achieved. We expect to see efficiency and effectiveness gains from, for example, standardisation and digitalisation of processes.

Furthermore, we are also supportive of addressing the current imbalance between the core and field parts of the organisation. As you know the UK is a longstanding donor and we have provided multi-year unearmarked funding. We welcome the effort to correct the current structural imbalance in the budget to ensure that essential services and standards,

such as in investigations, preventing sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, learning, accountability and programme management, etc are delivered across the organisation - and we are open to further discussion about how to do this.

We welcome the improvements in the functioning of the Office of the Investigator General and the transparency with which this has been done – and we insist IOM share continued, regular information on the OIG's operation. We acknowledge the progress made on PSEAH, such as the rolling out of the 'we are all in platform' and we insist that this issue remains at the front and centre of managements concerns.

We welcome IOM's continued work to ensure migration perspectives, and specifically the Global Compact for Migration, are integrated into the work of the whole UN system and in national policy frameworks. 2022 be an important year for the GCM with the first Migration Review Forum in May. We stand ready to work with IOM and with our fellow GCM signatories to make this a success.

We also urge to IOM to continue to better coordinate its work with other UN agencies and partners.

In concluding, I want to salute IOM staff for their dedication and professionalism, often on the front line in very difficult circumstances. Finally, we commend DG Antonio Vitorino's clear and thoughtful leadership, and with the two new DDGs at his side we have high expectation and high faith in the future of IOM.