



International Office for Migration Council 112th Session

Statement by Vanuatu delivered by Ambassador/Permanent Representative to the UN and UN Agencies in Geneva

Thank you Mr Chairman and good afternoon,

It is a privilege and an honour to deliver this statement for the Republic of Vanuatu.

Mr Chairman, the engagement by Vanuatu with the IOM remains unabated and we wish to acknowledge and place on record that the valuable assistance the IOM has provided in the past and continues to this day.

In times like this – the global ramifications and the negative impacts of Covid-19 pandemic is real and for small and far off countries like Vanuatu, we are experiencing more negative effects, on our economy, imports and exports, international travels, movement of persons across borders, stress on income levels and to the welfare of our peoples. The people-centered focus must remain unchanged. How peoples and communities in Vanuatu are reacting to these challenges is key to a country that must remain stable, caring of its population, protecting the environment that must sustain itself, supporting a resilient country and being cognizant of our cultures and human understanding of one another.

Vanuatu's reality of the impacts of climate change, increasing sea level rise, climate extremes and climate suffering cannot be underestimated. In addition, Vanuatu is constantly experiencing and being affected by other non climate change related phenomena such as natural disasters : volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis. Vanuatu acknowledges the partnership and support whenever the help by the IOM was needed as a result of these events. We are extremely grateful.

At this IOM 112th Council Session, Vanuatu reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of the IOM as a multilateral agency and we must acknowledge and affirm our commitments to the objectives of the organisation and the past work, programmes and activities of the IOM which are much valued by many countries.

Although Vanuatu does not encounter international migrations as much as other nations, when we do, we are a responsible country - to protect and safeguard the rights of migrants to the extent possible, within the resources available and within our cultural and human interactions.

Our own citizens working and residing abroad or returning home are being challenged with new rules on Covid-19 travel restrictions, on their ability to go into isolation and quarantine and the effects on their mental health. So there are new experiences and conversations for Vanuatu and we ask that the IOM consider these as part of their new programmes in the coming years.

We thank you Chairman.