

REMARKS

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INTRODUCTION

Good morning, Mr. Chair,

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to congratulate the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on its 70th Anniversary.

Since 1951, the IOM has worked with governments and civil society to advance the understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and defend the dignity and well-being of migrants, and refugees.

MILESTONES

Il y a cinq ans, lors de la commémoration du 65^e anniversaire du conseil de l'OIM, le Canada s'est joint à d'autres États membres pour discuter de l'avenir de la migration dans un monde où les frontières sont devenues de plus en plus floues – sur les plans social, économique et physique.

Five years ago, at the commemoration of the 65th anniversary of the IOM Council, Canada joined other member states to discuss the future of migration in a world where borders had become increasingly blurred - socially, economically and physically.

Cette même année, la Déclaration de New York pour les réfugiés et les migrants a contribué à unifier la réponse internationale au phénomène grandissant de vastes déplacements de migrants et de réfugiés.

That same year, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants helped unify the international response to the growing phenomenon of large movements of migrants and refugees.

This fast-tracked the IOM's position within the United Nations and amplified its voice in global migration policy discourse.

The Global Compacts for Migration and Refugees, endorsed by UN member states, came two years later. It reaffirmed an international commitment to manage large movements of migrants and refugees in a humane and people-centered manner, *in addition* to our obligations under international law.

The value of these commitments has been plain to see over the last few months, as countries have shifted their immigration operations to respond to the urgent situation in Afghanistan.

LARGE-SCALE OPS

Canada has welcomed more than 3,300 Afghan refugees so far. To help address the growing humanitarian crisis, Canada will resettle 40,000 vulnerable Afghans.

As with previous large-scale resettlement efforts, we will lean heavily on our trusted international partners to support our commitments.

En 2015, le gouvernement du Canada a accueilli 25 000 réfugiés syriens. Ce nombre s'élève maintenant à 74 000. C'était un objectif ambitieux, et l'OIM a offert un soutien inestimable en déployant du personnel de logistique et opérationnel de partout dans le monde pour aider à l'opération humanitaire.

In 2015, the Government of Canada admitted 25,000 Syrian refugees, a figure that has now grown to 74,000. It was an ambitious goal, and the IOM provided invaluable support, deploying logistics and operational staff from around the globe to assist the humanitarian operation.

L'Opération visant les réfugiés syriens a été grandement reconnue comme un exploit historique et est un exemple clé de l'engagement du Canada à l'égard des plus vulnérables en déplacement.

Operation Syrian Refugees has been widely recognized as an historic feat and is a key example of Canada's commitment to the most vulnerable on the move.

We could not have achieved this without the help of the IOM and our other partners.

Over the years, Canada has consistently relied on the IOM to deliver needs-based, timely and gender-responsive humanitarian assistance and migration programming.

In both the Syria humanitarian response and when addressing the needs of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, the IOM and Canada have worked together to protect some of the world's most vulnerable populations from sexual exploitation and abuse.

They have done so while working with the international community and multilateral institutions to strengthen our collective approach to migration management and governance.

Canada deeply values this truly meaningful and effective collaboration.

COVID-19

Of course, all of these urgent, complex operations are now set against the backdrop of an ongoing health crisis. COVID-19 has had massive consequences for global immigration trends.

It is the most severe pandemic in a century and has fundamentally changed how people, countries, and businesses interact with one another. It has made governments reconsider how to balance public health, trade and mobility.

CANADA/IRCC RESPONSE

Canada's international response to the COVID-19 pandemic has focused on supporting the most vulnerable, including women, girls and others, by addressing both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development impacts.

At the working level, the pandemic has also changed the way Canada's immigration system operates.

Throughout the pandemic, Canada has intensified previous efforts to transform the technology that underpins our well-managed immigration system.

All of these technological shifts will anchor our efforts to position migration as a key contributor to Canada's recovery, and ward against any future health threats.

VACCINES

With the roll-out of vaccines, Canada has joined other nations in finding ways to safely re-connect our world.

We are part of a number of ongoing international multilateral discussions, namely with the G7, Five Country Ministerial, and the International Civil Aviation Organization to coordinate on managing borders in the face of the pandemic.

Canada is also committed to supporting the COVAX Facility as the primary global platform for equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

Recently, at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rome, our Prime Minister announced that Canada would donate the equivalent of at least 200 million doses to the COVAX Facility by the end of 2022, including an immediate contribution of up to 10 million Moderna vaccine doses.

C'était remarquable de voir la découverte, le développement et la distribution des vaccins. La peur et la confusion qui régnaient au printemps ont fait place à une détermination collective de rétablir la situation.

The discovery, development and distribution of vaccines has been remarkable to see. The fear and confusion of spring 2020 has been replaced with a collective determination to put things right again.

CONCLUSION

Pour terminer, Monsieur le Président, le Canada tient à réitérer sa reconnaissance et sa gratitude pour le travail accompli par l'OIM depuis sa création.

In closing Mr. Chair, Canada would like to reiterate its appreciation and gratitude for the work the IOM has conducted since its inception.

For seven decades, the organization has worked in close collaboration with the Government of Canada and Canadian organizations to facilitate safe, regular and orderly migration.

Looking ahead to the first International Migration Review Forum in 2022, we are eager to discuss how we have advanced the Global Compact for Migration and how we might continue to highlight the benefits of migration, while addressing the challenges of irregular migration.

Moving forward, it will be particularly important to champion strategies that balance migration narratives and encourage global discussions on how we can positively influence public understanding. The International Organization for Migration will be a leading voice in these discussions for years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Council today.