

**COUNCIL**

**112th Session**

**DRAFT REPORT ON THE  
112TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL**

Geneva  
Monday, 29 November, to Wednesday, 1 December 2021  
Rapporteur: Mr T. Lee (Republic of Korea)



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List of abbreviations

COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
NGO	Non-governmental organization
WHO	World Health Organization

## DRAFT REPORT ON THE 112<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COUNCIL

### Introduction

1. Pursuant to Resolution No. 1393 of 24 November 2020, the Council convened for its 112th Session on Monday, 29 November 2021. Six meetings were held, with some participants taking part in the proceedings remotely. The meetings were chaired by Ms C. Devandas Aguilar (Costa Rica).

### Attendance<sup>1</sup>

2. The following Member States were represented:

Afghanistan	China	Hungary	Montenegro	Slovenia
Albania	Colombia	India	Morocco	South Africa
Algeria	Costa Rica	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mozambique	South Sudan
Angola	Côte d'Ivoire	Ireland	Myanmar	Spain
Argentina	Croatia	Israel	Namibia	Sri Lanka
Armenia	Cuba	Italy	Nepal	Sudan
Australia	Cyprus	Jamaica	Netherlands	Sweden
Austria	Czechia	Japan	Nicaragua	Switzerland
Azerbaijan	Denmark	Jordan	Niger	Thailand
Bahamas	Djibouti	Kenya	Nigeria	Timor-Leste
Bangladesh	Ecuador	Kyrgyzstan	North Macedonia	Togo
Belarus	Egypt	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Norway	Tunisia
Belgium	Estonia	Latvia	Pakistan	Turkey
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Eswatini	Lesotho	Panama	Uganda
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Finland	Libya	Paraguay	Ukraine
Botswana	France	Lithuania	Peru	United Kingdom
Brazil	Gabon	Luxembourg	Philippines	United Republic of Tanzania
Bulgaria	Gambia	Madagascar	Poland	United States of America
Burkina Faso	Georgia	Malawi	Portugal	Uruguay
Burundi	Germany	Maldives	Republic of Korea	Uzbekistan
Cabo Verde	Ghana	Mali	Republic of Moldova	Vanuatu
Cameroon	Greece	Malta	Romania	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Canada	Grenada	Mauritania	Russian Federation	Viet Nam
Chad	Guatemala	Mauritius	Rwanda	Yemen
Chile	Haiti	Mexico	Senegal	Zambia
	Holy See	Mongolia	Sierra Leone	Zimbabwe
	Honduras		Slovakia	

3. Bahrain, Indonesia, Qatar and Saudi Arabia were represented by an observer.

4. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the World Food Programme were represented by observers.

5. The African Union, the European Union, the International Anti-Corruption Academy, the International Commission on Missing Persons, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red

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<sup>1</sup> The list of participants is contained in document C/112/9. Unless otherwise indicated, all documents and slide presentations are available on the [Council](#) section of the IOM website.

Crescent Societies, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and the Sovereign Order of Malta were represented by observers, as were the following entities: the Friends World Committee for Consultation, the International Detention Coalition, the International Social Service, Migrant Help and Migrant Forum Asia

### **Opening of the session on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of IOM**

6. The outgoing Chairperson, Mr E.P. Garcia (Philippines), opened the 112th Session of the Council on Monday, 29 November 2021, at 10.15 a.m., noting that it marked the seventieth anniversary of IOM. Founded as a provisional committee to address the chaos in Europe after the Second World War, IOM had since become, at the behest of its Member States, the leading international agency tasked with advancing understanding of migration issues and safeguarding the dignity and well-being of migrants. Its entry into the United Nations system in 2016 as a related agency and its subsequent appointment as the coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration had confirmed its status as the reference point for migration management in the global debate on all the social, economic and political implications of migration.

7. The Council had before it a daunting but not impossible task, if all Member States worked in synergy to ensure the development of a better society. It should devote its 112th session not only to reflecting on IOM's many achievements, but also to strengthening its resolve to achieve the migration-related Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives set out in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

8. In commemorating the seventieth anniversary, the Member States would be remiss not to pay tribute to all IOM staff working in life-threatening situations to advance the Organization's credo that humane and orderly migration benefited migrants and society. That task had become increasingly difficult to perform in a world marked by multiple and complex crises; it had been further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic and frequent shortfalls in human and financial resources.

9. IOM, with its almost universal membership and widespread field presence, was uniquely qualified to contribute, through its Council and its principal forum for migration policy dialogue, the International Dialogue on Migration, to the global debate on migration-related issues such as development, labour, the environment and climate change, health and protection, the diaspora and finances, youth empowerment, and training and education. While much progress had been made towards mainstreaming migrants and migration concerns into national policies, it was a sad fact that pain and unfair treatment remained a reality for many migrants and their families. In that context, IOM played an indispensable role, supporting Member States' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact and to ensure that no one was left behind.

10. In a video message, the United Nations Secretary-General expressed appreciation for IOM's seven decades of work to help millions of migrants and displaced people, and to support its Member States' efforts to create the conditions for safe, orderly and regular migration. Record numbers of people were currently on the move, and the world had witnessed unique moments of compassion towards migrants stranded far from home; at the same time, migrants were often – and completely unacceptably – the object of discrimination, xenophobia, abuse and exploitation. Migrants must be treated with respect and dignity, and their rights protected, regardless of their status. All countries – whether of origin, transit or destination – must work to re-establish predictable and regular migration pathways.

11. As coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration, IOM was doing invaluable work, bringing the entire United Nations system together to support migrants, based on the provisions of

the Global Compact. Together with the international community, it should seize the opportunity of the first International Migration Review Forum, in 2022, to reflect on the progress made and challenges yet to overcome, in order to foster global solidarity towards migrants and to build more resilient and inclusive societies.

12. The Council viewed a short video celebrating 70 years of IOM activities.

13. The Director General observed that, in the seven decades of its existence, IOM had undergone near constant metamorphoses, reflecting both its flexibility and the changing scope and complexity of migration as a major global phenomenon. The International Migration Conference convened by 19 States in Brussels on 5 December 1951, although modest in scope, had given hope to hundreds of thousands of Europeans in the aftermath of the Second World War. The committee it had founded, the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe, would prove to be of critical importance to the lives of those who had benefited from the international transportation services it organized, an area of activity that remained a key feature of IOM's work. By the time the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration had been established in 1980, in recognition of the Organization's increasingly global role, it had assisted three million migrants and was providing services in numerous other areas. In the years since 1989, when it had become the International Organization for Migration, it had expanded its reach and programme further still. It currently boasted nearly universal membership and the scope of its work and size of its operations continued to grow.

14. At present, IOM was the premier international organization focused exclusively on migration. The Organization had a global footprint and was highly operational and field-oriented. It worked in close partnership with its Member States, the United Nations and other intergovernmental agencies, international and national NGOs, and research and academic institutions worldwide. Its annual expenditures exceeded USD 2 billion and its workforce had doubled in ten years, to over 20,000 staff members, 95 per cent of whom were deployed around the globe, in the field.

15. IOM's role and responsibilities had also expanded considerably. The adoption of the Global Compact in 2018 had been a watershed moment in that regard. Then as now, IOM sought to accompany the international community in its deliberations, flexibly and responsively, while remaining as close to the people it served as possible, on the ground. He paid a heartfelt tribute to the IOM staff members, past and present, who had made that journey possible.

#### **Credentials of representatives and observers**

16. The Council noted that the Director General had examined the credentials of the representatives of the Member States listed in paragraph 2 and had found them to be in order, and that he had been advised of the names of the observers for the non-member States, international governmental organizations and NGOs listed in paragraphs 3 to 5.

#### **Report of the Chairperson of the Council**

17. The outgoing Chairperson expressed satisfaction that, even though its work had once again been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council had been able to adhere to the Administration's agenda of reform in 2021. It had played a critical role in the appointment of the two new Deputy Directors General and in the adoption by consensus of an IOM model of four regional groupings for nominating Member States to serve on the Council Bureau.

18. IOM faced steadily rising demands and expectations. The Member States must give it the tools, flexibility and core structure it needed to continue acting in their interests and those of migrants everywhere. Millions of his country's citizens having emigrated, he could attest to the importance of

effective migration governance. That in turn required a robust IOM with a deep presence in the field and a strong voice on the international scene, including at the United Nations.

### **Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights**

19. The Administration reported on the payments received since the publication of document C/112/5/Rev.1, thanks to which the total amount of outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget for 2020 and previous years had been reduced to just over CHF 9 million but remained higher than the amount reported twelve months previously for 2019 and earlier. Payments had been received from three Member States subject to Article 4 of the Constitution – Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea and Tajikistan – bringing the number of Member States subject to Article 4 down from 35 to 32; the number of Member States that had lost their voting rights remained unchanged at 16. In addition, China, Madagascar, Turkmenistan and Uruguay had paid their 2021 contributions in full, and Brazil had made a partial payment towards its arrears. Member States in arrears were encouraged to settle them or to contact the Administration to negotiate a payment plan.

20. The Council took note of and endorsed document C/112/5/Rev.1 and the additional information provided by the Administration.

### **Election of officers**

21. The Council elected the following officers:

Chairperson:	Ms Catalina Devandas Aguilar (Costa Rica)
First Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Lansana Alison Gberie (Sierra Leone)
Second Vice-Chairperson:	Ms Katharina Stasch (Germany)
Rapporteur:	Mr Taeho Lee (Republic of Korea)

### **Adoption of the agenda**

22. The provisional agenda contained in document C/112/1 was adopted by the Council and subsequently issued as document C/112/10.

### **Draft reports on the 111th Session and on the Fifth Special Session of the Council**

23. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1394 of 29 November 2021 approving the reports on its 111th Session (C/111/12) and its Fifth Special Session (C/Sp/5/7).

### **Report on matters discussed at the Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance**

#### **(a) Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021**

24. The Standing Committee Rapporteur said that, at its Twenty-ninth Session, the Standing Committee had examined the document entitled Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021 (C/112/7), in which it was reported that the Administrative Part of the Budget and the level of Operational Support Income remained unchanged at CHF 53,189,080 and USD 128 million, respectively, and that the Operational Part of the Budget had increased from USD 1.78 billion to USD 2.31 billion.



25. The Standing Committee had recommended that the Council take note of the Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021.

26. The Council took note of document C/112/7.

**(b) Programme and Budget for 2022**

27. The Standing Committee Rapporteur said that, at the Standing Committee's Twenty-ninth Session, the Administration had proposed that the Administrative Part of the Budget amount to CHF 53,586,816 in 2022. The Operational Part of the Budget had been projected at USD 1.2 billion, which was 30 per cent higher than the 2021 budget presented at the same time the previous year. The projected level of Operational Support Income – USD 136 million – had been calculated based on the previous year's results and current and expected trends. The budget proposal had been drawn up with an eye to making the Organization fit for purpose by updating the Headquarters structure to reflect the responsibilities of the two newly created Deputy Director General positions, aligning the Organization's structure with its strategic vision, implementing the Internal Governance Framework and advancing the Organization's core objectives, while maintaining a policy of zero nominal growth.

28. The Deputy Director General for Management and Reform had explained that the proposed structural changes were the most that could be achieved with the limited resources available, and that the issue of budget reform would remain a priority. The Administration hoped to be able to prepare the budget for 2023 on the basis of the conclusions reached by the Working Group on Budget Reform.

29. During the ensuing discussion, three representatives, one speaking on behalf of a regional group, had expressed an objection to the wording of paragraph 117 of the document, which dealt with diversity and inclusion, and requested that any terminology in that sphere on which consensus had not been reached within the international community be removed from the text and not used in IOM documents. The Administration had responded that it would revise the document to reflect the proposed changes; it had subsequently issued document C/112/6/Rev.1.

30. The Standing Committee had taken note of the Programme and Budget for 2022, as set out in document C/112/6, and had recommended that the Council approve CHF 53,586,816 for the Administrative Part of the Budget and USD 1.2 billion for the Operational Part of the Budget.

31. One representative, acknowledging the challenge of balancing competing needs and priorities within the core budget, observed that the expertise of the two new Deputy Directors General would be invaluable in prioritizing areas for investment. IOM needed a strong foundation to become a more effective, transparent and accountable partner to Member States; her Government looked forward to further in-depth discussions regarding IOM's budget structure and organizational priorities by the Working Group on Budget Reform.

32. The Council approved document C/112/6/Rev.1 and adopted Resolution No. 1395 of 29 November 2021 on the Programme and Budget for 2022.

**(c) Reappointment of the External Auditor**

33. The Standing Committee Rapporteur said that, at its Twenty-eighth Session, the Standing Committee had examined the document entitled Reappointment of the External Auditor for the three-year period 2022–2024 (S/28/4), which included a draft Council resolution for the Standing Committee's consideration.

34. The Standing Committee had taken note of document S/28/4 and recommended that the Council adopt the proposed draft resolution reappointing the Auditor General of Ghana as the IOM External Auditor for the years 2022 to 2024, and further deciding that from 2025 onwards, External Auditors would be appointed for a three-year period, renewable for only one additional term of three years.

35. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1396 of 29 November 2021 on the reappointment of the External Auditor.

**(d) Report on the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States**

36. The Standing Committee Rapporteur, said that, at its Twenty-ninth Session, the Standing Committee had been presented with the eighth annual report of the Director General on improvements in the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States (document S/29/6). During the reporting period, four agreements on privileges and immunities had entered into force, bringing the total number of Member States, observer States and other places where the Organization had been granted full privileges and immunities that met the criteria contained in Council Resolution No. 1266 of 26 November 2013 to 101.

37. The Standing Committee had taken note of the report and recommended that the Council remain seized of the matter and reiterate its call to all States to grant the Organization privileges and immunities substantially similar to those of the United Nations specialized agencies.

38. The Council endorsed the Standing Committee's recommendation and reiterated its call to all States to grant the Organization privileges and immunities substantially similar to those of the United Nations specialized agencies.

**(e) Other items discussed at the Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance**

39. The Standing Committee Rapporteur briefed the Council on a number of other items discussed at the Standing Committee's Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Sessions.

**(i) Resolutions and decisions**

40. In pursuance of Council Resolution No. 1393 of 24 November 2020, the Standing Committee had adopted the following resolutions on 30 June 2021, at its Twenty-eighth Session: Resolution No. 25 taking note of the Annual Report for 2020, Resolution No. 26 approving the Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2020, and Resolution No. 27 approving the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2021.

41. During that session, the Standing Committee had also approved the IOM assessment scale for 2022, as illustrated in document S/28/3, and had agreed to review the assessment scale for 2023 during 2022.

**(ii) Exchange of views on items proposed by the membership**

42. At the Twenty-eighth Session of the Standing Committee, the Administration had introduced documents on the following topics that had been selected by the Member States:

- Migration Information and Data Analysis System: future scope and priorities

- Adopting a comprehensive approach to internal displacement: operationalizing the triple nexus

43. At the Twenty-ninth Session of the Standing Committee, the Administration had given a slide presentation on the roll-out of the IOM Policy on the Full Spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration.

44. The Standing Committee had taken note of the documents and presentations provided by the Administration and of the comments made by Member States.

**(iii) Statement by the Chairperson of the Global Staff Association Committee**

45. At its Twenty-eighth Session, the Standing Committee had taken note of a statement made by the Chairperson of the Global Staff Association Committee.

**(iv) Other reports and updates**

46. At its sessions, the Standing Committee had also examined and taken note of the following reports and updates:

- Status reports on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights
- Statement and report of the External Auditor
- Progress report on implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations
- Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General
- Report of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee
- IOM Headquarters organizational review
- Update on plans for the IOM Headquarters building
- Update on application of the Internal Governance Framework
- Update on human resources management
- Reports of the Chairperson of the Working Group on Budget Reform
- Reports of the Chairperson of the Working Group on IOM Partnerships, Governance and Organizational Priorities
- Update on the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate Change
- Report on the IOM response to migration crises
- Reports of the IOM Development Fund
- IOM partnerships with the private sector
- IOM global initiatives funding status
- Update on the IOM evaluation function
- Provisional workplan for the IOM governing bodies during 2022

47. The Council took note of and endorsed the decisions and documents referred to in paragraphs 39 to 46 above.

48. In conclusion, the Council adopted Resolution No. 1397 of 29 November 2021 taking note of and endorsing the reports on the Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance.

#### **Date and place of the next sessions**

49. The Council adopted Resolution No. 1398 of 29 November 2021, according to which its next regular session was tentatively scheduled for November 2022 and the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance was invited to meet at least twice during 2022.

#### **High-level segment – The impact of COVID-19 on borders, migration and mobility: learning lessons and preparing for the future<sup>2</sup>**

50. Statements were delivered by the following Member States listed in alphabetical order: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia (delivered by President Iván Duque Márquez), Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See (message from His Holiness, Pope Francis), Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lithuania, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines (delivered by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte), Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

51. Statements were also delivered by one observer State, Qatar, and by the African Union and the European Union.

52. In his introductory remarks, the Director General said that, as the focus shifted from protecting people and limiting the transmission of COVID-19 to a world beyond the pandemic, its deep impact on people on the move must be acknowledged. The sheer number of travel-related measures in place and frequent changes in their scope and application had had a chilling effect on cross-border mobility, particularly for those who were unvaccinated. The goal of the high-level segment was to reflect on how to work together to reinstate predictable and accessible cross-border mobility.

53. A better understanding was needed of how travel restrictions contributed to the effective management of COVID-19, including the development of a means to assess the relative value and risks of different measures. Cross-border mobility must be ensured while safeguarding public health and facilitating predictable travel at a reasonable cost and with entry criteria. The Organization was working in that regard to develop COVID-19 standard operating procedures for border officials and was assisting national authorities to conduct border health assessments.

54. The deepest inequities of the pandemic for migrants and displaced persons, in areas including access to vaccination and legal identity, must be urgently identified and addressed. Digital infrastructure support would be needed to manage new travel conditions. Given the erosion of well-established channels of entry for immigrants, particularly for individuals from countries with low levels of vaccination or high levels of risk, and difficulties travelling even within regions, deeper knowledge was also needed of the impact of travel conditions on socioeconomic development, the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and immigration needs. There could be no economic relaunch without global mobility.

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<sup>2</sup> Texts of statements, as and if received from Member States and observers, are available on the [Council](#) section of the IOM website.

55. The potential to establish common ground on travel restrictions, conditions and exceptions should be explored, in order to tackle the ad hoc nature of such measures, reduce their negative impact and avoid the emergence of a deeply uneven mobility landscape. Based on the assumption that there would be future health crises, the world needed to be prepared and ensure that any future curtailment of mobility was safe and predictable. Solutions were needed to link health, safety and border security in a fair and equal way.

56. In a video message, the Director-General of WHO noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had widened and exacerbated existing inequalities, as those with low incomes, including refugees and migrants, had felt the greatest impact of restrictions on access to health services and livelihoods. Refugees and migrants had also experienced high levels of xenophobia, racism and stigmatization; tolerance, respect and human rights must be upheld, even in a context of severe crisis. The need for a stronger foundation on which to build global pandemic preparedness and response, rooted in human rights, equality and health for all, had led to the convening of the current special session of the World Health Assembly to discuss a potential international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response. The right to health for all, especially refugees, migrants and other marginalized groups, must be protected.

57. Council members and observers described the significant economic and social effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its huge impact on global migration trends, drawing attention to the particularly vulnerable position of migrants. Many migrants had been stranded owing to travel restrictions, placing them at greater risk of trafficking or exploitation. Others had lost their jobs, with the resulting reduction in remittances having a severe impact on socioeconomic development in countries of origin. Many migrant workers had also served on the front line in the health-care sector, which had exposed them to serious health risks. Indeed, the pandemic had highlighted the valuable contribution of migrant workers to societies and the important role of regular migration in sustainable development.

58. Governments had introduced a range of measures in response to the pandemic, including stricter border controls incorporating screening or quarantine requirements, and many had expanded the use of digital technology in their migration management systems. In some cases, special provision had been made to extend the validity of visas and work permits granted to migrants or asylum seekers, while many Member States had taken steps to ensure migrants' access to health-care services. Several countries of origin and transit detailed their efforts to repatriate and reintegrate returning migrant workers, and thanked IOM for its support in that respect. More generally, it was widely recognized that IOM had been a valuable partner in addressing the challenges arising from the pandemic; in addition to assisting with migration management, health-care services and information campaigns, it had provided humanitarian relief to vulnerable populations.

59. The pandemic had demonstrated the need for global cooperation on the global phenomenon of migration. Several Member States emphasized the importance of dialogue at regional level, especially between countries of origin and destination. One representative said that the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration had already played a critical role in ensuring prompt action during the pandemic; many others joined her in calling for further implementation of the Global Compact as a tool to improve cooperation on international migration. However, another strongly objected to any promotion of migration, which was a dangerous phenomenon that posed risks to health and security, and urged all stakeholders to respect national sovereignty in that regard.

60. Given the positive contribution of migrants to economic development, it would be essential to include them in post-pandemic recovery efforts; they should likewise be considered when drawing up future preparedness and response plans. Several Member States stressed the importance of capitalizing on lessons learned, with one calling for research into the impact of cross-border mobility

on economies, and another for an analysis of how pandemic-related movement restrictions had affected migrants. There was also a clear need to enhance migration management at all levels; a number of speakers said that predictable, secure pathways were necessary for safer cross-border mobility, while others commented that digital technologies used during the pandemic should be further developed to improve the efficiency of migration systems.

61. Council members and observers also emphasized their commitment to the provision of vaccines for all, including migrants, regardless of their status. A number of Member States further expressed support for the COVAX Facility as a mechanism for the equitable distribution of vaccines. Indeed, vaccines could help safely reconnect the world; governments should therefore work together to harmonize health protection measures at borders, including the mutual recognition of COVID-19 vaccination certificates.

62. The Director General, responding to the statements made, said that the recent emergence of a new variant of the virus responsible for COVID-19 had made the choice of subject for the high-level segment particularly relevant. It was important to be prepared for unpredicted and unexpected events, and to preserve fundamental values in terms of mobility and the functioning of the world's economies.

63. A number of conclusions could be drawn from the statements made. Noting that many speakers had described the efforts made to include migrants in the response and recovery phases, he said that a key issue was the protection of migrants and their access to health care, irrespective of their legal status. The right to health was a fundamental human right and should include access to vaccination, not just in the interest of migrants themselves but in the global collective interest. The uneven distribution of vaccines was allowing variants to proliferate and was therefore undermining the safety of all host communities. It was clear that migration was deeply intertwined with economic development and recovery, not only for those countries whose economies were heavily dependent on travel or tourism, but for societies in general, not least because many countries of origin relied on remittances to balance their economies and provide for families.

64. Another key issue was the importance of international cooperation in addressing the challenges of the pandemic. The variety of examples given, both in geographical and socioeconomic terms, had shown that no one was safe until everyone was safe, and that it was important to build back better together; that was the message contained in the report of the United Nations Secretary-General, *Our Common Agenda*, to which IOM was fully committed. A further lesson to take away was the usefulness of digital technology in managing migratory flows and border controls. The key challenge was how Member States could combine the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness in addressing health concerns with maintaining open labour and regular migration pathways. It was therefore important to start discussions on a possible platform integrating health and border security needs. Standard common principles could be identified for use by Member States as a toolbox to address the challenges of future pandemics in terms of guaranteeing the integrity of their border control systems. An integrated approach was needed, covering air, maritime and land borders. IOM was prepared to contribute by identifying the core common principles for endorsement by the international community and coordinating initiatives under the proposed agreement to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response that was being discussed by the special session of the World Health Assembly.

65. In practical terms, IOM would, as coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration, plan for a debate at the 2022 International Migration Review Forum on the crucial subject of how to be better prepared and more resilient to pandemics, while guaranteeing global mobility and migration.

## Report of the Director General

66. The Director General complemented his report to the Council (document C/112/8) with a slide presentation.

67. The Council took note of document C/112/8.

### General debate<sup>3</sup>

68. Statements were made or provided in writing by the following Member States listed in alphabetical order: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt (also on behalf of the Arab Group), Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Libya, Maldives, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands (also on behalf of the Geneva Group of Friends to Eliminate Sexual Harassment), Niger (on behalf of the African Group), Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and Zimbabwe.

69. The Permanent Observer for the European Union delivered a statement on behalf of the Union's members.

70. Statements were made or provided in writing by seven observers: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Sovereign Order of Malta, the Friends World Committee for Consultation, the International Anti-Corruption Academy and the International Commission on Missing Persons.

71. Council members and observers congratulated IOM on the seventieth anniversary of its founding, which provided an excellent opportunity to reflect and draw on the Organization's accomplishments with a view to enhancing protection of migrants' rights. Over the past 70 years, IOM had focused on promoting orderly, regular and safe migration, working closely with governments and stakeholders to respond effectively to migration issues while upholding the dignity and well-being of migrants. At 70, it had a broader mandate than had initially been envisioned and enjoyed almost universal recognition as the leading voice in the migration discourse. At a time when migrants were being demonized and weaponized, it was more important than ever to celebrate IOM and the overarching value that it advocated: that migrants were to be treated as human beings with rights.

72. Delegates also paid tribute to all IOM staff for their tireless commitment and hard work to protect migrants, often in remote areas, and their efforts to ensure that the Organization remained effective, operational and fit for purpose at such a challenging time.

73. The Administration was commended for having organized the high-level segment on the impact of COVID-19 on borders, migration and mobility, which had allowed Member States to share the lessons learned from the pandemic in terms of migration and mobility, with a view to their preparedness for the next. Representatives who had been unable to participate in the segment confirmed that no State should discriminate on the basis of migration status when tackling COVID-19;

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<sup>3</sup> Texts of statements, as and if received from Member States and observers, are available on the [Council](#) section of the IOM website.

governments should arrange for people to be tested and treated at medical facilities free of charge, regardless of their migratory status and without risk of detection, and refugees and asylum seekers should be given equal access to vaccines. Given the impact of the pandemic on migrant workers, who were bearing the brunt in terms of job losses, reduced earnings and limited access to health-care services, the crisis was an opportunity to reinvent human mobility to make it more inclusive and compliant with international humanitarian and human rights law.

74. Council members thanked the Director General for his report and welcomed the analytical updates it contained on current humanitarian challenges relating to migrants. They appreciated in particular IOM's work, in connection with the Displacement Tracking Matrix, to collect specific data on disabilities and encouraged the Organization to pursue those efforts. They also welcomed the Organization's action to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, in particular the establishment of the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment Unit, and to promote gender equality and diversity. Ongoing efforts in all those areas should be reflected in reports to the Council.

75. A number of Member States, referring to the tension between the Organization's current funding model and the demands placed on it by its Member States and as a result of its admission to the United Nations family, stressed that they were committed to engaging constructively with the Working Group on Budget Reform. In order to react quickly to crises, IOM had to have adequate and sustainable core funding from dependable and predictable sources. Together with the Member States, it should explore new ways of more equitably sharing costs, for example by revising assessed contributions or increasing the amount of flexible funding it received from a broader base of donors – the time had come to abandon the zero nominal growth policy. In that respect, the Internal Governance Framework had an important part to play in reassuring Member States that their financial contributions were being spent wisely; its implementation should remain a top priority for the Administration.

76. A number of Member States also expressed support for the ongoing structural reform process, notably to strengthen the core structure and improve synergies between the operational and strategic levels; IOM should continue to ensure full transparency, integrity, robust monitoring and reporting. In that respect, the appointment of the two new Deputy Directors General was widely hailed; their diverse and complementary experiences would enhance the already effective and efficient oversight of the Organization, and the creation of their posts showed that IOM was determined to respond to the new challenges it faced.

77. Several representatives said that their governments planned to increase their unearmarked voluntary contributions to IOM or contributions to specific core budget or operational projects; they called on other Member States to make or increase such contributions.

78. Many speakers underlined the importance of constructive engagement and dialogue in respect of implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, in line with the principle of State sovereignty and bearing in mind respective national conditions. They looked forward to the first International Migration Review Forum, in 2022, at which Member States would take stock of Global Compact implementation in terms of the progress made and best practices applied, but also of the challenges encountered. The Review Forum should serve to draw up a road map for the coming four years and all countries – regardless of their views on the Global Compact – should participate in the process of regional reviews leading up to it. One speaker added that his government was organizing, together with IOM, a ministerial meeting for the “champion countries” of the United Nations Network on Migration ahead of the Review Forum, for the purpose of improving coordination on Global Compact implementation. Another said that her government had recently



increased its contribution to the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, to support collective action on migration.

79. The Council also addressed several more operational issues. For example, it expressed deep concern at the situation in Afghanistan and commended IOM for staying and delivering in the country, providing assistance to displaced persons and migrants, and working to reunite children with their families. Other situations of concern involved the plight of migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and in Ethiopia. In both cases, the migrants concerned – internal or external – were in need of protection and access to health-care services; donors should provide further support for those purposes.

80. Climate change was another serious issue for the global community. Its harmful effects, when considered in the light of the multilateral approach to migration management, heightened the relevance of the Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate Change 2021–2023, which covered issues such as water, environmental and livelihood security. It was to be hoped that those themes would be discussed at the 2022 International Migration Review Forum. Indeed, climate-induced disasters were an underlying driver of migration that threatened to reverse development gains and contributed to instability; a multisectoral approach to environmental change, migration and displacement was required.

81. Several Member States voiced condemnation of situations that had seen the orchestrated instrumentalization and politicization of migrants, including women and children, in breach of international law and with disregard for fundamental human rights. As in any other situation, international organizations had to be provided with immediate and unhindered access to the migrants concerned, so that they could deliver humanitarian assistance and assist with voluntary, safe and dignified returns. One Member State noted the Organization's efforts to address such crises, which could only be resolved through cooperation between the States concerned.

82. Several other Member States welcomed the *World Migration Report 2022* and its evidence-based analysis of complex and emerging migration issues that were having a direct impact on mobility worldwide. The Report constituted a major contribution to improved diagnosis of migration issues and contained data that served to inform the related public and political narratives.

83. Four Member States exercised their right of reply in response to the statements of five other Member States and one regional group during the high-level segment and the general debate. Three Member States thereafter also exercised their right to respond to the right of reply.

84. The Director General, responding to the statements made, thanked the participants for their support, in particular Member States that had made voluntary unearmarked contributions, contributed to the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund and/or become Migration Network champion countries. The first International Migration Review Forum would provide an opportunity not only to evaluate implementation of the Global Compact, but also to identify priority areas in terms of migrants' needs. The meeting of champion countries should advance preparations for the Review Forum, which should provide an opportunity for frank dialogue about responsibility-sharing.

85. He agreed with the comments made on IOM's internal reform process. The Administration would continue to engage with Member States to identify core priorities for reform of the IOM funding model, the main concern being to guarantee the Organization's financial stability in the face of the risks posed by the current model's overreliance on project-based funding in the long run.

86. Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, he shared the Council's concerns about unequal access to COVID-19 vaccines and agreed that capacity should be strengthened through support from the

international community, including through the COVAX Facility. The “shadow” pandemic of a rise in violence against women and children was also troubling; IOM would adopt a gendered approach in that regard. Migrants should be included in recovery plans, and to that end he encouraged countries to mainstream migration into common country analyses undertaken in relation to United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. IOM stood ready to provide support in the form of data and identification of the skills required to enhance national capacities for recovery.

87. In his view, the changes in the United Nations system resulting from the pandemic, especially with regard to the role of resident coordinators, were very effective. The system had never had such a unified approach to a global issue. It must now look to the economic recovery – and IOM was well placed to help it do so. It was present in 131 United Nations country teams and, as coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration, it supported over 50 issue-based coalitions. In his view, the international community had to address two priorities. First, it had to clarify the role of the United Nations system in building lasting solutions for internal displacement (i.e. in translating the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Internal Displacement into action). Here, too, IOM had a remarkable track record, having assisted 37 million internally displaced persons in 2020. Second, it had to make sure that migration was fully mainstreamed into United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, a step that would require the Member States’ advocacy and support.

88. He welcomed the growing international focus on the role of climate change in migration; his Special Envoy for Migration and Climate Action would work to draw attention to the increasingly clear link between climate change and displacement. IOM would, for example, engage with African Member States on issues of adaptation, loss and damage, and the associated financing; it would continue to support small island developing States with climate change advocacy and concrete projects aimed at building resilience.

89. Diversity and gender were other important issues for the Organization, which had a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse. All the relevant units had been reinforced and would henceforth operate under the Deputy Director General for Management and Reform.

90. Turning to more operational matters, he assured the Council that IOM would continue to help register migrants everywhere, giving them a legal identity and thus enabling them to access basic services. In any situation involving massive outflows, a comprehensive action plan had to be drawn up that covered the need for support of all countries in the region concerned, for when a major humanitarian crisis could not be avoided in one country, its neighbours were often the first to be affected. The IOM Comprehensive Action Plan for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, for example, focused on the situation not just in Afghanistan, but in the entire region.

91. Regarding the politicization of migrants, he recalled that IOM’s most urgent concern in all situations was to obtain access to migrants who were stranded or otherwise affected, in order to provide much-needed humanitarian assistance and allow them to return to their countries of origin should they choose to do so. He encouraged the parties currently concerned by such situations to engage in dialogue and find solutions.

## Launch of the World Migration Report 2022

### Speakers

**Mr António Vitorino**, Director General, IOM

**Mr Selmo Cikotić**, Minister of Security, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Mr Simon Geissbühler**, Head of the Peace and Human Rights Division of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

**Ms Sandra Breka**, Chief Executive Officer of the Robert Bosch Stiftung

**Mr Jason Wood**, Assistant Minister for Customs, Community Safety and Multicultural Affairs, Australia (video message)

### Moderator

**Ms Ugochi Daniels**, Deputy Director General for Operations, IOM

92. The Deputy Director General for Operations said that the 2022 edition of IOM's flagship report series was being issued in the context of considerable uncertainty triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, which had led to alarming levels of misinformation and politicization, with false information circulating that migrants were spreaders of the virus.

93. The COVID-19 pandemic had triggered worldwide immobility to an extent unseen in recent history, slowing the pace of human mobility and migration and causing many thousands of migrants globally to become stranded and in need of assistance. At the same time, migrants had been on the front line in destination countries around the world, delivering essential services and supporting their families back home to cope with the economic impacts of the pandemic by sending international remittances. The resilience of international remittances had defied predictions, remaining high in 2020, with just a 2.4 per cent decline globally – much less dire than the 20 per cent drop initially projected.

94. The central aim of the series was to set out in clear and accurate terms the changes occurring in migration and mobility globally, so that readers could better situate their own work. Thanks to its quality and ease of access, the World Migration Report was highly relevant and useful for various target groups. Member States, for example, draw on it to develop evidence-based policy, enabling government officials to leverage the positive impacts of migration and best policy practices for the benefit of sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination.

95. As the United Nations migration agency, IOM had an obligation to demystify the complexity and diversity of human mobility and an ongoing duty to uphold fundamental rights and support migrants most in need; its Constitution reflected migration research as an integral part of the Organization's functions. On both grounds, it remained committed to supporting Member States as they drew on data, research and analysis to formulate policy and review processes. The World Migration Report series was a prime component of that important area of work.

96. The 2022 edition, like previous versions, had been produced in line with IOM's environmental policy: the fact that no hard copies had been printed reduced the environmental impact and costs. The report was available free of charge online and would be made available via USB keys in regions with connectivity issues.

97. As IOM celebrated its seventieth anniversary and reflected on the ongoing need for its work, it was worth recalling that it was also one of the longest-standing supporters and producers of

migration research and analysis. It had started publishing the first scientific journal on international migration in 1961 and had launched the World Migration Report series at the turn of the millennium.

98. The Director General noted that the *World Migration Report 2022* was divided into two parts: Part I contained key information and data on migration and migrants; Part 2 presented balanced, evidence-based analyses of complex and emerging migration issues. The Report remained IOM's most frequently downloaded publication and attracted increasing amounts of funding for translation into various languages.

99. The COVID-19 pandemic had provided an opportunity to rethink the value that societies placed on each individual; it had raised the visibility of migrants as essential to the functioning of societies worldwide. At the same time, the pandemic had heightened the hostile rhetoric about migrants that had emerged in recent decades. The Report therefore contained a chapter on disinformation about migration and on research showing that debunking myths and adopting pre-bunking strategies could help mitigate or prevent the harm caused by those seeking to undermine balanced discussions on migration.

100. The Report also outlined analysis of long-term empirical data on global migration patterns to critically examine trends over the previous two decades in particular. Rather than country income data, the report used data from the United Nations Human Development Index, which took into account not only economic factors but also key indicators such as health, education and other social services. It showed that, increasingly, migration flows were between highly developed countries, rather than from least developed to highly developed countries. Of the top 20 countries of origin in 2020 – excluding refugee populations – 18 ranked high or very high on the Human Development Index, compared to just 7 in 1995.

101. The research provided a new perspective, using empirical global migration and development data to show how migration patterns had changed and highlighting the link between those patterns and regional free movement agreements. It also made clear that safety and security were drivers of migration: people moved between countries in search of better economic prospects but also safer lives. They contributed in multiple ways to their destination countries and the remittances they sent home helped alleviate poverty, support their families and communities, and boost economic growth in their countries of origin. Often, migrants returned home with new skills that helped foster peace, stability and development. Those long-term trends on who migrated globally nevertheless also showed that there was a risk of an international “mobility divide”, with potential consequences for global inequality.

102. The Report also highlighted that some regional labour migration corridors were heavily gendered toward male migration. At the global level, the data also clearly showed that it was no longer accurate to say that the “feminization” of migration was occurring. The gender gap was growing and IOM was committed to further research to unpack and explore those dynamics in order to inform effective and sustainable policy and programmatic responses, including through current research commissioned by the Government of Canada.

103. It was a source of satisfaction that both the online interactive and electronic versions of the *World Migration Report 2022* had won International Annual Report Design Awards in 2021 and that the Report's new interactive platform had won two 2021 International iNova Awards for Excellence in Corporate Websites, in the microsite and non-profit sector categories. Such international recognition validated IOM's approach in expanding the array of report materials for a digital age.

104. The Administration was well aware that many Member State officials needed outputs and materials in their own official languages, and donors agreed that producing the Report in various languages was a meaningful, practical and cost-effective way of supporting development and technical

capacity-building for those working in migration around the world. The 2020 edition of the Report was the first to be made available in all six United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), and key chapters had also been translated into German, Portuguese, Swahili and Turkish.

105. In conclusion, he thanked the Governments of Australia, Canada and Ireland, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Geneva Science–Policy Interface for their donor support for the World Migration Report.

106. Mr Cikotić said that the *World Migration Report 2022* brought home the critical need for correct facts and demonstrated how they could shape public opinion on migration, which was generally perceived as a controversial issue. It provided a comprehensive overview that helped to dispel misconceptions and misinformation.

107. Bosnia and Herzegovina had long been a country of outward migration. The emigration of some 2.5 million of its citizens over the years (compared to the arrival of an estimated 3,500 migrants from other countries) had forced discussion of how to resolve the resulting labour gap. In addition, the country was ramping up its disaster risk reduction efforts in the face of climate change and other external factors leading to increased internal displacement.

108. The *World Migration Report 2022* underscored the importance of international cooperation when dealing with migration. For his country, that meant successful cooperation with other nations in the Western Balkans but also with other European nations and with non-European countries such as Bangladesh, Egypt, Morocco and Pakistan. That cooperation had taken on particular significance during the COVID-19 pandemic, when border closures had prevented migrants from returning to their countries of origin. One of the measures adopted by his country had been to include migrants in its vaccination scheme, with the result that about 40 per cent of all migrants had been vaccinated – no mean feat given the extreme mobility of that population.

109. Mr Geissbühler congratulated IOM on its timely publication of the *World Migration Report 2022*, which contributed to the fact-based discourse that was critical for the design of evidence-based policies. Coinciding as it did with IOM's seventieth anniversary, the Report afforded an opportunity to take stock and critically assess and refine policies in the light of the new realities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. It explored the interlinkages between migration and key global trends such as climate change and accelerated digitalization. He particularly welcomed the new toolkit for policy advisors, it being critical to translate research findings into effective policies in order to maximize the positive impact of migration while reducing human suffering and saving lives.

110. In terms of his Government's priorities, he welcomed the Report's analyses of the major protection challenges – combating human trafficking, protecting human rights at international borders, addressing the plight of relatives of missing migrants – that would only be surmounted through greater international cooperation. He expressed special interest in the chapter exploring the nexus between migration, on the one hand, and humanitarian, development and peace policy, on the other. Switzerland was working to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; forced displacement should be taken into account when considering conflict transformation. Together with partners from the academic world and NGOs, it had recently developed an online toolbox for leveraging the potential of migration in peacebuilding efforts, to help peacebuilding practitioners on the ground translate research findings into policy.

111. He applauded the Report's forward-looking insights into the implications of digital technologies for migration governance and the related impact on the human rights of migrants. His Government was convinced that such technologies offered tremendous opportunities for international cooperation. They had the potential, for instance, to make up for the deficiencies of traditional

remittance markets, by lowering the costs of transfers and providing financial inclusion for all, in particular women and marginalized communities, and thereby to advance achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They also, obviously, came with risks related to privacy, data security and even protection.

112. In conclusion, he commended IOM's Global Migration Data Portal, a useful repository of the migration-related data collected by the entire United Nations system. Indeed, robust data were needed to measure the international community's progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda, including outcomes for refugees and migrants.

113. Ms Breka highlighted the political environment surrounding the findings of the *World Migration Report 2022*, as the global pandemic and geopolitical competition were accompanied by a decline in international cooperation and the impact of climate change and technological developments. Increasing displacement was only one impact of that environment on migration and human mobility. The links and interdependencies between migration, climate change, inequality, peace and democracy should be taken into account when assessing global developments. Climate-induced mobility, technological change, the future of international protection and the role of mayors and cities would all be key factors of future human mobility. The Report provided a foundation for evidence-based policymaking and discussions on working together on migration. The challenge would be to combine data and analysis with the human face of migration; data should not be abused to weaponize migrants and migration or to instrumentalize public opinion.

114. In terms of the future of mobility and migration beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, the opposing trends of restricted travel and increased displacement needed to be reconciled. Norms for border crossing were vanishing while digitalization standards were yet to be introduced. The Report set out common ground for stakeholders from all sectors working towards a human mobility and migration system based on human rights and dignity. Collaboration was needed from all those involved, from international organizations and governments to the media, civil society, the private sector and academia.

115. Mr Wood said that, since 29 per cent of Australia's population had been born overseas, his Government recognized the importance of global migration and the work of IOM. Its support for the World Migration Report reflected its broad interest in incorporating migration perspectives into the analysis of key migration issues and supporting informal and non-binding regional migration mechanisms. Given the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, a comprehensive analysis and understanding of migration trends was more important than ever.

116. The Report should be used to inform decision makers and policy debate, contribute to education and public discourse, and debunk persistent myths on migration through its verifiable data. The development of an interactive platform to view that data was to be commended. The publication of the Report in ten languages would complement work on migration toolkits for teachers, fact checkers, policy officials and the media, and efforts to broaden the Report's potential audience.

117. In his concluding remarks, the Director General said that the World Migration Report was more than an academic exercise; it needed to be translated into action, and he called on Member States to join IOM in that endeavour. The best possible use should be made of the Report and its interactive platform, not just to access data and research, but to provide feedback on which areas required more detailed assessment and on research priorities for the 2024 edition.

#### **Closure of the session**

118. There being no other business, the Chairperson declared the 112th Session of the Council closed on Wednesday, 1 December 2021, at 6 p.m.