



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

IOM 113th Council (29 November – 2 December 2022)

**Item 12
General Debate**

Geneva, 30 November 2022

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

IOM 113th Council (29 November – 2 December 2022)

Draft EU Statement

Item 12 – General Debate

Chair, Director General, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova and the potential candidate countries Bosnia and Herzegovina* and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

1. We thank the Director-General for his statement and the update on IOM's current activities.
2. We highly value our partnership with IOM and appreciate this opportunity to discuss the organisation's work and priorities.
3. Yet another year has passed, and once again we stand here not to celebrate our achievements, but to express grave concern at the emergence of new humanitarian crises and the deterioration of many long-standing protracted crises.
4. On 24 February 2022, just as we were starting to recover from the pandemic, Russia's unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, which we condemn in the strongest possible terms, has caused the fastest-ever movement of forcibly displaced persons at the EU's doorstep. From the onset of the war, the EU and its Member States have been providing considerable financial and in-kind resources for the response in Ukraine and neighbouring countries.
5. We appreciate the excellent cooperation with IOM on several fronts, including supporting the protection, transit, and voluntary return and reintegration of Ukrainian citizens and third-country nationals affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The EU and its Member States recognise the essential work IOM is doing on the ground and will continue work with the organisation, also in light of Ukraine's accession process to the EU.

6. We are concerned to see that 2022 has again brought a spike in numbers of people embarking on dangerous routes managed by smugglers and traffickers. Regrettably their journeys often end fatally, especially on the Central Mediterranean Route.
7. The EU and its Member States remain strongly engaged with the AU, partner countries, and relevant stakeholders such as IOM, through comprehensive, tailor-made and mutually beneficial partnerships and by using synergies of multilateral, regional and bilateral work. Only through a comprehensive, whole-of-route approach, can we address all aspects of migration and mobility; including the root causes of forced and irregular migration, inter alia by contributing to poverty reduction and improving the living conditions of populations in the relevant countries, providing legal migratory pathways in line with national competences, ensuring return and sustainable reintegration, while at the same time ensuring the protection of the human rights of migrants, as well as addressing smuggling and trafficking, and consequently saving lives.
8. In line with this, we continue to support IOM as the lead UN agency on migration, whose role is better coordination of migration-related work within the UN, notably as the coordinator and secretariat for the United Nations Network on Migration.
9. In this vein we would like to thank IOM for its leadership in the preparation of the International Migration Review Forum and to take note of its result, which is an example of working together on migration in a functioning rules-based multilateralism.

10. Despite the war in Ukraine, the EU has demonstrated that our resources are not diverted or reduced from other important crises. The EU remains strongly engaged to support migrants and forcibly displaced people in other parts of the world, as foreseen in the establishment of Multiannual Indicative Programmes 2021-27 for the Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia-Pacific regions and bilateral programmes in key countries of origin, transit and destination. In 2021, over EUR 1.5 billion of EU development funding under the financial instrument “Global Europe” has been spent on migration and forced displacement.

Chair,

11. The extent of human suffering caused by natural disasters is a stark reminder of the devastating effects of climate change. In this respect we commend IOM’s work within its Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate Change 2021-2030. The EU has mobilised more than 35 per cent of the 100 billion global commitment for climate action, and will continue raising awareness and mainstreaming the topic in all suitable frameworks in line with its priorities and role as Chair of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD).

12. Reducing poverty goes hand in hand with food security. The impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine has come on top of the effects of the pandemic and of climate-change induced disasters, further destabilising the global food markets. The worst has been avoided thanks to international cooperation and efforts, such as under the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the Food and Agricultural Resilience Mission (FARM) and the “Save Crops” Initiative.

13. The EU is also responding to the current food crisis in a Team Europe approach, as part of Global Gateway investments in partner countries’ autonomy and resilience, with more than EUR 8 billion until 2024.

Chair,

14. As strong supporters of IOM and - collectively the EU and its Member States– the biggest contributors to IOM's budget, we welcome the adoption of the budget reform which will further strengthen IOM core budget and will contribute to making it fit for purpose to deliver on its multiple responsibilities. Here, we strongly call on senior management to prioritise the internal justice system when allocating the budget reform funds.

15. During the last years, the partnership between the EU and its Member States and IOM has strengthened even further, and we remain committed to support IOM in its important work.

Thank you.