

Intervention by
H.E. Cheryl Spencer
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United
Nations and Other International Organisations in Geneva
at the
113th Session of the IOM Council
29th November to 2nd December 2022

Agenda Item 12: General Debate

Thank you, Chair.

Jamaica congratulates you, once more, and other members of the IOM Bureau, on your election. We commit to supporting your leadership throughout your tenure in office. We wish to express our appreciation for the contribution of the outgoing members of the Bureau.

We also thank the Director General for his comprehensive report and our thanks to the DDGs and other members of the IOM Team, for their efforts on behalf of member states.

We also wish to reiterate our welcome of our fellow CARICOM member state of Barbados to the IOM family.

Chair,

Migration is treated as a cross-cutting issue in the formulation and implementation of development policies in Jamaica. As a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants, migration is firmly etched in Jamaica's National Development Plan, Vision 2030, which is aligned to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Jamaica prioritizes the issue of migration in the agendas of international and regional organizations or arrangements to which we are party. This includes the migration dimension of the Revised Treaty Establishing the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). Jamaica is taking steps to implement the GCM.

In this regard, we view positively the Director General's ***Champion Country Initiative*** and our stakeholders are undergoing internal consultations with a view to joining the initiative. Jamaica continues to welcome documented migrants to our shores with maximum hospitality, and we invest in effective protection and integration policies for migrants.

Additionally, Jamaica engages its diaspora through, *inter alia*, the convening of Diaspora Conferences, the drafting of a National Diaspora and Development Policy, the establishment of a Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and through the work of our overseas missions. These facilities provide Jamaicans overseas and friends of Jamaica with the ability to contribute their talent, ideas and resources to the Government's development programmes.

Migration has a positive correlation with employment opportunities, export performance and our investment promotion thrust, as the Jamaican diaspora is an important niche market for local products and services, as well as a spring board for entry of Jamaican entrepreneurs into host country markets. The Government has embarked on the Economic Diplomacy Programme, of which migration is an important element.

The IOM as a key development partner, as is manifested in our collaboration with the IOM on several projects, including on trafficking in persons, migration policy mainstreaming, labour migration, disaster risk management, and reduction in the costs of remittance transfers. Importantly, The IOM is a key partner in the formulation of Jamaica's first comprehensive Policy on International Migration and Development.

The IOM's leadership role in global displacement and migration affairs, including its central role in the UN Network on Migration, is essential in assisting member states to harness the full potential of migration.

The Global Diaspora Summit in Dublin earlier this year, in which we participated, is a perfect example of the relevance of the IOM in assisting its members to mainstream migration into development policies.

Jamaica is of the view that the IOM should further advance its focus on diaspora engagement and serving as a platform for members to exchange ideas, with a view to arriving at durable solutions related to pathways for safe, regular and orderly migration, in their host countries, and countries of origin, respectively. It is important that the IOM assists in building members' capacity to develop and streamline integration and re-integration policies for migrants. In this regard, partnership among governments, the IOM, civil society and the private sector is critical.

The IOM should further its assistance to developing positive narratives and perceptions to combat issues such as racism and xenophobia, faced by migrants, as well as addressing gaps faced by member states in migration data collection and research. The IOM should also continue to explore the relationship between climate change, natural disasters and food security, and migration flows with a view to assisting its members to develop and implement policies to address these emerging challenges.

The outcome of COP27 and ongoing work at the FAO are important reference points for these discussions.

In closing, Chair, Jamaica aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uruguay on behalf of GRULAC.