

## **UK statement at the IOM Council general debate 2022**

Let us be clear, it has been a difficult year and it is going to be another difficult year ahead. Displacement and humanitarian needs continue to rise and International Humanitarian Law, access and protection continue to be under threat.

Let me say again that we stand united with our Ukrainian friends and allies in condemning Putin's aggression against an independent, sovereign state and the bombardment of towns and cities has precipitated an unprecedented flow of people from Ukraine. We stand by Ukraine and we are pleased to have increased the UK's contribution to IOM's programmes in Ukraine to £12.5 million this year.

Russian aggression, as we all know, is exacerbating global food insecurity and instability. Let me urge you DG and your teams to respond to food insecurity through integrated, multisectoral approaches, but also to address the underlying causes and drivers of food insecurity, by working across the humanitarian and development nexus to build resilience of communities, and ensure longer term solutions.

One of the key strategic challenges for IOM remains bolstering central functions and controls, while retaining operational flexibility and efficiency. We therefore strongly welcome the budget reform, and underline our support for the Internal Governance Framework process. We thank you DG for the second annual report on the IGF – we note the progress being made and look forward to continued reporting on the implementation of outstanding items, particularly the introduction of the new Enterprise Resource Planning system in 2024. IOM is still on a journey – and we urge you DG and your team to

continue planning future governance improvements that are needed for IOM to be a world-class migration organisation.

Another issue that will always remain a priority for the UK is preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. We have seen significant investment and improvement in this area, and we welcome the strengthening of the Office of the Inspector General and the establishment of the PSEAH unit. We note, however, that OIG is operating at maximum capacity - this needs to be managed, as does dealing with cases efficiently across all relevant units, including the legal department.

We support IOM's leadership role on the Global Compact on Migration, and encourage an ambitious action plan with clear headline objectives for implementation, particularly in the area of human mobility and climate change.

In concluding, let me thank the Director General, his leadership team and all of IOM staff, particularly those working on the front line, for their dedication and commitment to the cause of migration.