



114th Session of IOM Council
Geneva, November 27 – 29, 2023
Agenda item 10) General Debate
Statement by Greece

Thank you Chair,
Madam Director General,
Distinguished delegates,

Greece aligns itself with the Statement made by the European Union.

The current Session of the IOM Council is being held at a critical international juncture. Geopolitical tensions and conflicts, particularly, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the tragic conflict in Gaza following the appalling terrorist attack by Hamas on 7 October, have aggravated the global humanitarian landscape, which is already facing the generational challenge of climate change.

Madame Director General,

Firstly, allow me to express our sincere congratulations since this is the first IOM Council of your mandate. We

believe that under your leadership, IOM will develop new impetus and strengthen its global footprint.

Greece fully supports the key priorities you presented to the Member States, particularly climate change and human mobility, legal pathways and promoting partnerships.

In 2022 and 2023, the number of displaced people due to climate – related disasters and environmental degradation has reached a record high. Our neighborhood, the broader Mediterranean area, is one of the most severely affected by the climate crisis and the increasingly savage natural disasters it entails.

The global climate crisis requires immediate action and response at all levels, global, regional and local. Greece is proud as a member of the EU to have undertaken a legally binding commitment to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. However, we should also focus urgently on climate mitigation and adaptation measures and resilience building in the most vulnerable regions and communities globally. Climate change is one of the six key priority areas of Greece in the framework of its candidacy as a non – permanent member of the UN Security Council for the period 2025 – 2026.

Key pillars of Greece's migration policy are preventing irregular migration, dismantling smuggling networks, and improving the effectiveness of return systems in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

This is underpinned by a policy, undertaken together with our EU partners, of support to the economic development and climate adaptation in the countries of origin. We need to reinforce this approach. More development, greater reliance, legal pathways and a whole of route approach are our primary tools for mitigating the humanitarian consequences of climate change.

We would like to particularly emphasize the need for «a whole – of route approach», by raising also awareness of the risks stemming from smuggling routes. However, we remain strong advocates of promoting legal pathways to mobility, including through bilateral labour agreements.

We will continue our long-standing and solid partnership with IOM, and will fully support the common efforts of the organization to face our common challenges in a spirit of solidarity.

Thank you for your attention.