

DRAFT

**Remarks to be delivered by the Honourable Dr
Vindhya Persaud, Minister of Human Services and
Social Security, during the General Debate in the
114th Session of the Council of the International
Organisation for Migration (IOM)
November 27-29, 2023
Geneva, Switzerland**

Esteemed Colleagues

Director-General

Thank you Chair for the giving me the floor, and I congratulate you on your election to this new role.

I also wish to extend my congratulations to Ms. Amy Pope on her election as the first female Director General. I commend the Council for this historic decision and I am pleased to recognise the number of women seated at the head table.

This 114th session occurs against a world in crisis, wars in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, disproportionately impacting civilians and compounding the migration challenge at both the global and regional levels.

Closer to the Caribbean Region the situation within Haiti which has left the people of Haiti with migration being the most viable

option, which has been a challenge for many Caribbean countries. Similarly, the ongoing situation within Venezuela has also put pressure on many countries within our hemisphere, including Guyana, which shares a border with Venezuela. In this respect, I wish to personally, and on behalf of the Government of Guyana, commend the IOM for its continued collaboration with Guyana and other international partners as we continue to provide humanitarian assistance, comfort and relief to the migrants.

The Government of Guyana places high priority on the work of the IOM, and I note that Guyana has historically been a country of origin, destination, and transit for migrants. Our commitment is to address holistically the issues associated with migration and in that regard, Guyana participated in the IX Summit of the Americas held in 2022 and endorsed the “Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection”. It is our view that this document complements the 2018 UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which Guyana and other UN Member States adopted.

Chair, we note the increasing impact climate change and climate-related issues has and can have on migration issues. My own country, Guyana, has felt the impact of weather-related disasters. Unprecedented flooding in several areas in 2021 and

2022 has caused severe damages estimated at more than US\$ 465 million (60% of GDP). This has meant internal displacement for several hinterland communities. Guyana has been described as ‘particularly vulnerable’ to climate change because of high levels of exposure and sensitivity to climate risks.

It is against this backdrop and others, that Guyana has pioneered an overarching framework for planning and implementing climate resilience actions in several areas, including human mobility, through its Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030.

Since its membership within IOM in 2011, Guyana and IOM have collaborated on the engagement with the Guyanese Diaspora, strengthening of the security mechanisms for the enhancement of migration management in Guyana, migration and health promotion, and in the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes. We, look forward to building on this partnership and developing new areas for collaboration with the IOM, particularly as it relates to addressing the plight of women and children.

Chair, in closing I wish us a successful 114th Council.

I thank you.