



**STATEMENT BY THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO AT THE OCCASION OF
THE 114th SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL
27-29 NOVEMBER 2023**

THANK YOU CHAIRPERSON,

Lesotho aligns itself with the statement delivered by Rwanda on behalf of the African Group. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity, to congratulate you, Ambassador Stasch, and all the members of the Bureau, for your election to preside over this 114th session of the IOM Council. My delegation has great trust in your chairmanship and skillful leadership. We would like to assure you of Lesotho's support throughout the proceedings of this meeting. We also wish to appreciate H.E, the Ambassador of Sierra-Leone, the out-going Chair of the Council, for his sterling leadership during his tenure.

Now, turning to the state of play, Lesotho welcomes the insightful Report of the Director General. The invaluable work carried out by the IOM, could not be more timelier and befitting, taking into consideration, the persisting dire humanitarian challenges affecting migrants, refugees and displaced persons across the globe. The positive impact of the work of the Organisation cannot be overemphasised.

Lesotho further appreciates the new administration's inventiveness, to review internal structures and processes of the Organisation, with a view to supporting activities by Member States, aimed at saving lives and protecting people on the move; driving solutions to displacement, and facilitating regular migration pathways. My delegation views this as a vital action, as it accords with the mandate and vision of the Organisation.

Madam Chair,

The new and emerging humanitarian challenges resulting from the impact of climate change, are on the rise. Lesotho is also concerned with the escalating numbers of internal displacement from floods, storms, wildfires and other weather-related disasters, as alluded to in the Report of the Director General. As the impact of climate change leads to more frequent disasters, States and other actors need to intensify their strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change. It is in this context, that we welcome the efforts by the IOM in developing and scaling systems, that are able to efficiently

meet the additional humanitarian needs, especially those brought about by the adverse effects of climate change.

The IOM's critical role in addressing serious and complex humanitarian and migration related challenges and offering support to States, is commendable. To this end, we welcome the work done in implementing humanitarian border management activities at the Syrian and Ukrainian border, managing high numbers of internally displaced people in Somalia and delivering aid to earthquake victims in North-west Syrian Arab Republic, among other activities. Indeed, the IOM is sparing no effort in living up to its goal of being an Organisation that is fit for purpose.

We also recognise the role played by the IOM, in fostering partnerships with other intergovernmental organisations such as the UNHCR, FAO, UNDP and WFP among other organisations. This initiative will go a long way in forging more powerful synergies in terms of resources and expertise, and thereby avoiding duplication of efforts. The interconnectedness of these organizations, with different but complementary mandates in responding to humanitarian crisis is fundamental.

MADAM CHAIR,

My delegation appreciates the support that the IOM Office in Geneva extends to the Regional Office in Pretoria and the country office in Maseru, as this enables the two offices to support the migration management priorities of my country, Lesotho. These offices have over the years help address the subregional and national migration issues specific to Lesotho, including through policy development, resource mobilisation, and project implementation.

We thank the IOM for supporting an inter-Ministerial technical meeting, on the transition from the manual work permit system, to automated joint resident permit or work visa issuance. This initiative is part of IOM's Africa Regional Migration Program, whose mandate is to strengthen effective labour migration management in Southern Africa.

My delegation has the further honour to report of the support that the IOM extended to Lesotho in February this year, with regards to activities geared towards the fight against human trafficking. **Madam Chair**, Human trafficking is one of the prevailing menaces of our time. Even though it is not a new phenomenon, it requires new solutions over time. It is in this sense that we appreciate the IOM for supporting a coordination meeting between the Civil Society and the Government of Lesotho, with a view to enhancing coordination and cooperation among the Trafficking in Persons stakeholders, as they all have a critical role to play, in fighting against Trafficking in Persons, in Lesotho.

At this juncture, I would like to conclude by reiterating Lesotho`s support to the work and the mandate of the IOM. We strongly believe that if the Member States and other partners could adhere to their financial obligations, to the Organisation, this could continue to shine a spotlight, not only on the relevance and value of IOM`s work, but in terms of its capability, confidence, and its voice, as the leading United Nations agency on migration.

I thank you