



PHILIPPINES

114TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM) COUNCIL

GENERAL DEBATE

27 November 2023
Centre International de Conférences Genève
Speaking time: 3 minutes

Madam Chair [*German PR Katharina Stasch*],
Director-General,
Excellencies and colleagues,

We would like to extend our warmest congratulations to you, on your election as Chair. We know we are in your good hands and please be assured of our full support. I also wish to thank Sierre Leone Ambassador Lansana Gberie for his able leadership this past year. We are grateful to the Director-General for her report.

Madam Chair,

Complex crisis situations around the world continue to trigger the movement of people. The Philippines felt it most deeply in the increasing number of Filipino migrants – over 10 million all over the world – many finding themselves in harm's way.

A crisis halfway around the world usually means Filipino migrants are affected, and our government will always be ready to be there to assist them and reunite them with their families back home.

These crisis situations place heavy demands on humanitarian organizations, including the IOM, each playing a critical role in preserving human life and dignity.

The Philippines has always resided its trust in IOM and its leadership as they work for the rights and welfare of migrants. Our trust in IOM's leadership also informs our commitment to the IOM Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism, the IOM Development Fund, and the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, thank you to all who have contributed and we urge others – traditional and non-traditional donors – to also extend support.

We stand firmly behind the Director-General and her priorities – including institutional reforms, advocating for regular and legal pathways, and continuing to explore the interlinkages between climate change and human mobility.

On the latter, at COP 28 in Dubai, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will chair a side-event entitled “Forging a Consensus on the Nexus between Climate Change and Migration”. We are pleased that the Director-General has agreed to be part of this event.

In addition to these priorities, an issue that demands attention is that of misleading narratives on migration, recognized by the GCM as a growing challenge.

How migrants are perceived, accepted or included by their communities, how they are used or misused in the political arena, the extent they are allowed to speak and participate in a society – can improve or detract from their welfare, well-being, and safety.

The Philippines and Canada, under the French Chairmanship of the GFMD, will be leading the discussions on the roundtable on narratives and culture during the GFMD Summit in January.

We also believe that the IOM can be one of the strong advocates in ensuring that this discussion on migration narratives and advocating for positive changes on the ground, continue in the multilateral space.

As we are in the midst of our international campaign to end violence against women and girls, we wish to spotlight the need to protect our women migrants, many of whom are victims of human trafficking, subjected to physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, or even simply lacking the adequate social and mental health support.

For this reason, the Philippines will continue to support gender mainstreaming, empowerment, and inclusion both internally in the IOM and as part of its operations and initiatives.

Thank you. **END**