



**NATIONAL STATEMENT**  
**TO BE DELIVERED AT THE**  
**THE 114<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL**  
**ORGANISATION**  
**FOR MIGRATION (IOM)**

**GENERAL DEBATE**  
**AGENDA ITEM 10**

**27 NOVEMBER 2023**

**GENEVA**

Chairperson,

South Africa congratulates the Permanent Representative of Germany, Ambassador Katharina Stasch, on her election as Chairperson of the 114<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOM Council and wishes her well in facilitating the work of the Council. We further wish to congratulate Ambassador Dr. Lansana Gberie (**Bherie**) for his leadership in facilitating the work of the Council for the past year.

On behalf of the South African Government, I wish to congratulate you, Ms. Amy Pope, on your appointment as the new Director-General and becoming the first woman to occupy this position since the establishment of the IOM 74 years ago. We reassure you of South Africa's continued support.

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Rwanda on behalf of the African Group

Chairperson,

My delegation welcomes and supports the Director-General's report as it clearly outlines her vision and priorities for the IOM during her tenure, particularly its efforts to align with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

We further welcome all discussions aimed at addressing the adverse driving forces of migration including protracted and intensified conflicts, the adverse effects of climate change, and food insecurity, as underscored within the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. As such, we agree that migration requires, not only a comprehensive State-led approach as supported by the relevant UN-related organizations but must also be considered by academia, the private sector, and civil society.

Chairperson,

We support the Director-General's proposal to increase legal pathways given its alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Migration. South Africa has over the years created regular pathways for different nationalities within our country.

Notwithstanding, we maintain that responsibility-sharing should be equally carried by sending, transiting, and receiving states. In this regard, South Africa emphasizes the need to address the fundamental causes of migration by addressing challenges at local, national, regional, and international levels. This can be achieved through international cooperation.

Our principled position is that, collectively, we should urgently address adverse drivers of forced migration and displacement. This includes climate-induced migration, instability, inequality, poverty, and other related structural deficiencies that compel people to leave their countries of origin.

As part of developing adaptation and resilience strategies, and in order to give effect to the Disaster Management Act of 2002, South Africa has developed the Disaster Management Plans for implementation at the local government level that assess priority disaster areas. Through this assessment, measures to prevent, prepare and mitigate disaster risks (inclusive of climate change) are identified.

Madam Chairperson,

It is, therefore, the resolve of my delegation that if these and similar measures are to be consolidated, aligned, and resourced across regions we will make a significant impact in supporting states to develop standby capacities to respond to these emerging forms of disasters. The IOM together with UN bodies and agencies as well as other relevant stakeholders should play a significant role in supporting states to ensure purpose-built standby capacities to minimize the impact of displacement, damages to infrastructure and loss of life.

Similarly, partnerships with private sector who are the main beneficiary of migration through critical skills schemes amongst others should be encouraged to play a more meaningful role that should include contributions to the organisations. With this said, it would be appropriate to encourage the Director-General to establish a platform for dialogue with business on critical issues that would assist Member States to efficiently attend to migration challenges.

Madam Chairperson,

My country has taken a step to harmonize the various legislations on citizenship, immigration, and refugee protection into one policy framework called the “White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration, and Refugee Protection” as an attempt to strengthen the protection of those within, and those seeking to reside within the borders of the country. In this regard, the White Paper has been published for public comments and we encourage IOM to consider and where necessary provide their comments.

As part of our comprehensive efforts to regularise migration, we launched the Border Management Authority, in October 2023. Without any doubt, evidence has proven that regular migration can contribute to the development and prosperity of both sending and host nations.

Lastly, Chairperson, my delegation believes that Member States have responsibilities to ensure that nationals lead dignified lives by ensuring access to basic needs such as health, education, clean safe drinking water and sanitation, and employment. The element of push factors that force people to take unsafe and dangerous pathways in search of better livelihood should be a priority for the IOM. This can be realized amongst others by encouraging dialogue on issues of promotion, protection, and fulfilment of human rights of nationals so that we address challenges associated with irregular migration.

I thank you.