

**114th Session of the IOM Council
General Debate - 29th November 2023**

Statement by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Madam Chair
Director General IOM
Excellencies

At the outset, let me congratulate Director General of the International Organization for Migration Ms Amy Pope and express my delegation's appreciation for the consultations she has had with Member States since assuming office in October, to identify organizational priorities for 2024 – 2028.

We welcome the importance attached by IOM to saving lives and protecting those forced to move, seeking solutions for displacement, particularly due to climate change and recognition of the need to facilitate and increase regular migration pathways.

We appreciate IOM's efforts to enhance the flexibility and accessibility of safe, orderly and regular migration pathways, as well as to support development and implementation of inter-state cooperation agreements to improve regular migration. We also appreciate the efforts to find solutions to the narrowing regular pathways for people from developing countries, through enhancing and matching of skills, training and education, private sector engagement and use of data to balance global labour shortages.

In 2023, temperatures hit record highs, with millions displaced due to storms, floods, wildfires and drought. The selection of *"Climate Impact on Human Mobility: A Global Call for Solutions"* as the theme for the High-Level Segment of this Council meeting was timely as it enabled discussion towards durable solutions at national and regional levels in the lead up to the 28th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28) this month.

While we welcome the signing of the expanded Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change at the Africa Climate Summit 2023 in September, as well as the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility at the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in November, more action is needed.

Sri Lanka is among the top ten climate affected countries, yet with a rich bio diversity, industries and services dependent on ecosystems. At COP 27, Sri Lanka proposed establishing an International Climate Change Research University in Sri Lanka to support "green and blue studies." This would provide the opportunity for research, policy and advocacy related to climate change to advance the capacity of vulnerable countries to address challenges and develop climate smart approaches to ensure sustainable development.

The IOM's work towards putting in place practical policy solutions to manage the impact of climate change is therefore welcome. The report by the IOM Global Data Institute on "Climate Change and Human Mobility: Quantitative evidence on global historical trends and future projections", further contributes towards achieving this objective. It is through collective action that we can reduce emissions and tackle the climate crisis to protect lives and livelihoods.

Thank you