

## IOM Council General Debate – 3 Min Speech

Thank you, Chair, Director General.

I want to take the opportunity to congratulate you on your first year as DG. The drive you bring to reform, effectiveness, and transparency – while maintaining agility and responsiveness - is enormously impressive. We look forward to strengthening further our close partnership. I would also like to express our gratitude to your staff, and IOM's partners, for their efforts to find solutions for people on the move.

The depth and number of humanitarian crises today is a collective tragedy – and demands collective response. The UK will provide humanitarian assistance – over £1 billion this year – wherever needed. But three crises perhaps more than any other bring home the scale of the challenge.

The death and destruction in Gaza is intolerable, and unacceptable. We need an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, and an end to Israeli restrictions on aid. The UN, including UNRWA, needs to be able to deliver its mandate - and humanitarians must be able to do their jobs safely. Yesterday's ceasefire in Lebanon offers hope, but the humanitarian situation there remains dire.

In Ukraine, Russia's unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric assault violated international law and the UN Charter, and the UK aligns itself with the joint statement delivered by our Ukrainian friends and partners. Alongside our leading humanitarian response, the UK has offered sanctuary to more than 283,000 Ukrainians in need.

And Sudan is perhaps the world's most severe humanitarian crisis. We will not allow Sudan to be forgotten, and last week Foreign Secretary Lammy announced that we will double our humanitarian assistance.

Director-General, Excellencies, more people are on the move today than ever before. We will work in solidarity and in unity with IOM and the international community to provide protection and comprehensive, sustainable solutions, including for the internally-displaced.

The UK is steadfast in its commitment to safe, orderly, and regular migration. The Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund is a vital mechanism for delivering results – and we encourage others to consider additional support.

We must also tackle irregular migration. More people are making dangerous journeys; many lose their lives. At the UK border, we are investing £150m to ensure smugglers and trafficking gangs can no longer take advantage of the vulnerable.

But we have to consider why people take such risks, and support vulnerable people to improve their lives. And the UK is providing £84m to boost education, employment and resilience across the Middle East and North Africa.

As the Minister for Development said in her message on Tuesday, the UK will double down on these efforts to address root causes – and we look forward to close cooperation with IOM as we do so.

Thank you.