



ZIMBABWE

NATIONAL STATEMENT

BY THE

**MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL
WELFARE**

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AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE

115TH IOM COUNCIL

ON

Regular migration pathways: a global call for action

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CICG CONFERENCE CENTRE, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

**Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Heads of Delegation,
Distinguished delegates**

I wish to begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation for the opportunity to engage in this very important High-Level Segment under the theme "**Regular migration pathways: a call for global action**". We thank the Director General, Ms. Amy Pope for proposing this theme which comes at an opportune time for us globally.

I also wish to express my delegation's gratitude to the outgoing Chairperson of Council, Ambassador Katharina Stasch for the extensive work done under her leadership, including working visits to some countries in Africa, including Zimbabwe.

At the outset and addressing issues related to the existing mechanisms available for people seeking to migrate regularly across regional, continental and international contexts, it is our strong view that instituting robust legislative, policy, process and practice mechanisms creates an environment that ensures that emigration is voluntary, regular, orderly and safe.

In Zimbabwe, this framework of support is guided by the Zimbabwe National Development Strategy which supports a whole of government and whole of society approach to managing migration. An Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration (IMCM) was established in 2014 and has sustained a coordinated approach to migration governance.

Equally significant is our commitment to a rights-based approach as key to ensuring regular migration. The Zimbabwe Constitution guarantees the right to consular protection for all citizens, and this includes the right to travel and identity documents. It is noteworthy that these rights are extended to all regular migrants resident in Zimbabwe including refugees.

In order to ensure that citizens enjoy these rights, Zimbabwe has effectively decentralized its civil registry system to each of the country's ten provinces and has further established state-of-the-art Vital Civil Registration Centres beyond our borders in countries with relatively significant populations of Zimbabwean migrants, such as South Africa.

This is facilitating the processes for Zimbabweans in the diaspora to easily access important documents such as birth certificates, national identity cards and e-passports which serve as enablers for regular migration by allowing migrants to acquire permits, visas and rights of entry and exit across borders. This program is being rolled out to all countries hosting the Zimbabwe diaspora, a very critical investment and development constituency in our country.

In addition, Zimbabwe carried out mobile registration exercises throughout the country targeting remote communities and is implementing the Zimbabwe Population Registry System (ZPRS) which upon completion, will enable migrants from within and outside the country to access registration services online.

Chairperson,

With respect to the criteria prioritized by States when considering the facilitation of regular migration, it is our considered view that States should place a premium on the identification, protection, safety, accountability and security of citizens when facilitating regular migration. In Zimbabwe, this approach is embedded in all key migration policies already put in place by the Government, namely, the Zimbabwe National Labour Migration Policy, and the Zimbabwe National Diaspora Policy.

For Zimbabwe, this translates to identity through Vital Civil Registration, protection through enhanced consular services, safety through pre-

departure engagement, accountability through revised emigration policies and security through post-departure communication lines.

Regarding irregular migrants, Zimbabwe initiated the return, repatriation and reintegration Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and has put in place Cross Border Coordination Forums with neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana, to define procedures applicable when handling cases of Zimbabwean deportees and returnees. Let me underscore that in this process, migrant rights remain a priority in ensuring consular access, documentation and repatriation through Alternatives to Detention.

Thirdly Chairperson, in the context of information required by States to effectively support and facilitate regular migration, focus entails information on job profiles, areas of skills shortage, areas with excess skills and other labour market needs in countries of destination.

Migrant Resource Centres, Migrant Call Centres, Case Management System and National Migration Governance Focal Persons are essential cogs in the system. In Zimbabwe, the establishment of these institutional mechanisms has been effectively instrumental in responding to migrant needs and facilitating regular immigration and emigration.

Migrant Resource Centres have continued to serve as information hubs for migration-related activities while Migrant Call Centres are essential points of access for vulnerable migrants especially children.

National Migration Governance Focal Persons have also served as contact persons within the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration. They receive and profile migrant cases and appropriately refer to the competent Ministry, Department or Agency for applied intervention.

Chairperson, the fourth and final area relates to how IOM can support Member States in meeting the needs of vulnerable migrants that include

women, children and persons with disabilities. In this respect, we urge the IOM to:

- i. Support Member States in developing National Action Plans to guide the coordinated implementation of policies.
- ii. Facilitate the setting up of migrant resource centres which help to raise awareness on benefits of migration while also imparting information to potential migrants on the risks and dangers associated with irregular migration.
- iii. Support Governments in the interface with Cross Border Traders, and;
- iv. Assist Member States in building migration data management systems that inform policy formulation for the protection of vulnerable migrants.

Chairperson,

While applauding the funding partners for their continued support, my delegation wishes to stress the importance of increased and unearmarked funding to the IOM which would enable it to respond flexibly to the needs of Member States, and meet the demands associated with safe, orderly and regular migration.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe remains committed to working with the global community to expand regular migration pathways, synchronize social protection systems across borders and to enhance collaboration for a safer, fairer, and more prosperous future. Together, we can demonstrate that migration can be a formidable force for sustainable development and shared progress.

I thank you.