

## **COUNCIL**

### **Fifth Special Session**

#### **REPORT ON THE**

#### **FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL\***

Geneva

Monday, 31 May 2021

Rapporteur: Mr M. von Ungern-Sternberg (Germany)

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\* This report was approved by the Council at its 112th Session through the adoption of Resolution No. 1394 of 29 November 2021.



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## DRAFT REPORT ON THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL

### Introduction

1. Pursuant to Resolution No. 1385 of 28 October 2020, the Council convened for its Fifth Special Session on Monday, 31 May 2021. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was chaired from the Centre International de Conférences, Geneva, but the participants took part via remote connection. One meeting was held, chaired by Mr E.P. Garcia (Philippines).

### Attendance<sup>2</sup>

2. The following Member States were represented.

Afghanistan	Congo	Hungary	Morocco	South Africa
Albania	Costa Rica	India	Mozambique	Spain
Algeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Myanmar	Sri Lanka
Angola	Croatia	Ireland	Namibia	Sudan
Argentina	Cuba	Israel	Nepal	Sweden
Armenia	Cyprus	Italy	Netherlands	Switzerland
Australia	Czechia	Jamaica	Nicaragua	Thailand
Austria	Denmark	Japan	Niger	Togo
Azerbaijan	Djibouti	Jordan	Nigeria	Tunisia
Bahamas	Ecuador	Kazakhstan	North Macedonia	Turkey
Bangladesh	Egypt	Kenya	Norway	Turkmenistan
Belarus	El Salvador	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Pakistan	Uganda
Belgium	Estonia	Latvia	Panama	Ukraine
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Ethiopia	Lesotho	Peru	United Kingdom
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Fiji	Libya	Philippines	United States of America
Botswana	Finland	Lithuania	Poland	Uruguay
Brazil	France	Luxembourg	Portugal	Uzbekistan
Bulgaria	Gabon	Madagascar	Republic of Korea	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Burkina Faso	Gambia	Maldives	Republic of Moldova	Viet Nam
Burundi	Georgia	Mali	Romania	Yemen
Cabo Verde	Germany	Malta	Russian Federation	Zambia
Cambodia	Ghana	Marshall Islands	Rwanda	Zimbabwe
Cameroon	Greece	Mauritania	Serbia	
Canada	Guatemala	Mauritius	Sierra Leone	
Chile	Haiti	Mexico	Slovakia	
China	Holy See	Mongolia	Slovenia	
Colombia	Honduras	Montenegro		

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<sup>2</sup> The list of participants is contained in document C/Sp/5/5. Unless otherwise indicated, all documents are available on the Council section of the IOM website.

### **Credentials of representatives**

3. The Council noted that the Director General had examined the credentials of the representatives of the Member States listed in paragraph 2 and found them to be in order.

### **Adoption of the agenda**

4. The provisional agenda contained in document C/Sp/5/1 was adopted by the Council and subsequently issued as document C/Sp/5/4.

### **Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights**

5. The Administration, referring to document C/112/5, entitled Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights, reported that, as at 15 May 2021, the combined total of outstanding assessed contributions for 2020 and previous years and assessed contributions for 2021 still due was CHF 37,961,088. Of the 36 Member States subject to Article 4 of the IOM Constitution, 16 had lost their right to vote. Four Member States in arrears had negotiated payment plans with the Administration but three of them had lost their voting rights, having failed to meet their obligations.

6. The representatives of one regional group, noting the report, urged Member States in arrears to consider agreeing payment plans with the Administration to ensure that the Organization could count on the resources it needed, despite the financial and economic difficulties resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. The Council took note of document C/112/5.

### **Information on the Director General's selections for the positions of Deputy Director General**

8. The Chairperson introduced document C/Sp/5/3, entitled Report on the process for the appointment of the Deputy Director General for Operations and Deputy Director General for Management and Reform, in which the process leading to the selection of the two new Deputy Directors General was summarized.

9. The Chairperson of the ad hoc commission established pursuant to Resolution No. 1385 of 28 October 2020, on strengthening the senior leadership structure of the Organization, highlighted the key points of the process outlined in document C/Sp/5/3. The ad hoc commission had agreed to take decisions by consensus and to interview all 25 individual candidates, so as to ensure fairness and transparency. Following the interviews, the commission had prepared shortlists of three candidates for each position, which had then been submitted to the Director General. The ad hoc commission had agreed to write a "legacy letter" to assist the work of future similar ad hoc commissions, without prejudice to their mandates. She commended the members of the commission for their professionalism.

10. The Director General, expressing appreciation to the chairperson and members of the ad hoc commission for greatly facilitating the selection process, said that all six shortlisted candidates were highly qualified and could have benefited the work of the Organization. He had personally interviewed

them all, focusing on the key issues that Member States had identified: pursuing a merit-based approach and ensuring gender and geographical diversity among staff at all levels. His selections had been communicated to Member States in a letter dated 21 May 2021. Ms Ugochi Daniels of Nigeria, chosen for the position of Deputy General for Operations, had a wealth of experience in various entities across the United Nations system and had worked both at United Nations Headquarters and in the field. Her outstanding record, recognized integrity and commitment to empowering women and girls would make her an invaluable asset, while her operational experience was ideally suited to her new role. To the position of Deputy Director General for Management and Reform, Ms Amy E. Pope of the United States of America would bring strong management and policy skills, in addition to her legal background. Her experience of change management, institutional reform and handling large-scale budgets would help to steer the Organization's budget reform process; moreover, she had displayed an impressive understanding of migration dynamics and IOM governance issues.

11. During the ensuing discussion, strong support was expressed for the Director General's selections for the two positions and both candidates were congratulated and wished well. Member States welcomed the culmination of the two-year process, under the stewardship of the current and previous Chairpersons of the Council, and expressed appreciation for the efficient, consensus-based work of the ad hoc commission. The transparent, consultative selection process, duly centred on a merit-based approach, had seen a pool of high-calibre candidates whittled down to two extremely well-qualified appointees. Their skills and expertise would benefit the Organization as it tackled growing migration challenges, especially in the post-COVID-19 world, and worked to implement its expanding and increasingly complex mandate while seeking efficiencies at Headquarters and in the field, and pursuing its reform agenda. Several Member States suggested that the process should serve as a model for similar exercises in the future. The appointment of two women would further the goal of ensuring gender parity at all levels of the Organization, including in senior management.

12. While many expressed satisfaction at the consideration given to geographical diversity in the selection of the two new Deputy Directors General, the representatives of one regional group and one Member State expressed disappointment that the opportunity had not been seized to redress the longstanding underrepresentation of that region at senior management level within the Organization, despite the region's significant interest in and contribution to the Organization's work. It was to be hoped that future appointments would remedy the situation.

13. The Director-General said that the process, while lengthy, had demonstrated the enormous advantages of the multilateral system in seeking a fair and balanced result in the face of divergent views. Member States were to be commended on their engagement and persistence. While the number of positions available had inevitably meant difficult choices, all regions should feel assured of the Organization's commitment to them and to the principle of regional diversity at all levels.

14. The Council took note of the Director General's selections for the positions of Deputy Director General.

### **Departure of the Deputy Director General**

15. The Director General, paying tribute to the outgoing Deputy Director General, said that, despite a potentially inauspicious start, they had forged a strong and fruitful working relationship and a close friendship. Accepting several extensions to her tenure, which had entailed uncertainty and personal sacrifice, was proof of her unstinting commitment to the Organization. She had displayed stamina, perseverance and tenacity in pursuing reform and her legacy would be long-lasting.

16. The Deputy Director General expressed sincere appreciation for the opportunities and experiences that her time with IOM had brought. The increased membership of the Organization, its entry into the United Nations system and the greater importance and political relevance of migration in the international arena had affected both the Organization's role and the expectations of those it worked with, including migrants themselves. The Organization and its staff had made heroic efforts to keep pace with the changes, often in the face of outdated technology, cumbersome procedures and ineffective controls. Staff well-being had often been affected, and she paid particular tribute to those who had lost their lives in the service of the Organization.

17. Despite some frustrations as she sought to tackle systemic problems within the Organization, progress had been made. The time was ripe for the reform process that she and colleagues had led to be taken even further. She would cherish her close friendship with the Director General and stood ready to assist the new Deputy Directors General as they took up their posts. The Organization would need the engagement and support of Member States to carry out its vital mandate in view of the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead.

18. Member States expressed warm gratitude to the outgoing Deputy Director General, whose tenure of almost 12 years had seen unprecedented changes and challenges for the Organization. Her openness, resilience and compassion had won her respect and appreciation, while her steadfast commitment to the Organization and, in particular, to the reform agenda would have a lasting impact on its work. In agreeing to extend her tenure several times, despite the personal cost, she had smoothed the way for her two successors. Member States wished her every success in her future endeavours.

19. The Chairperson added his personal thanks to the outgoing Deputy Director General for her tireless efforts to nurture multilateralism and her outstanding commitment to the Organization and its work.

#### **Closure of the session**

20. The Chairperson expressed the view that the Session should be seen as the beginning of a new phase in making the Organization a better exponent of the kind of multilateralism needed in the modern world. Despite their differences, Member States had pursued the process of selecting two new Deputy Directors General in an open, transparent and consensual manner, and had achieved positive results, reflecting their common commitment to moving the Organization forward.

21. He declared the Fifth Special Session of the Council closed on Monday, 31 May 2021, at 12.55 p.m.