



NEW ZEALAND

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INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION COUNCIL

STATEMENT BY
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Chairperson, I would like to commence by congratulating you on your election and also offer our congratulations to the Vice Chairs on their election.

New Zealand also extends its congratulations to Ambassador Swing on his recent appointment as Director General, following the election earlier this year. Whilst we recognise that he has only been in the role for a few months he has already identified many of the challenges facing the organisation, and has commenced work that will lead to a strengthened administration and closer accountability to Member States. At previous Council meetings we have expressed unease at the effects the growth in project work is having on the administration and the staff working in the field. We are pleased to see that in his early days in office the Director General initiated a review to examine the structure and the rotation of staff in the field. We welcome these initiatives and look forward to seeing the results from this work.

Immigration is the subject of discussion and debate in an ever increasing range of international forums. The issues covered now extend beyond the traditional security and economic aspects to include the impact on areas such as health, development and the environment. The increasing globalisation and interdependence of countries means that very few countries are not affected in some way by the increasing movement of people, especially those moving for employment. However we have seen the rapid deterioration in the economies of a widening number of countries following the credit crunch first felt in August. The impacts of this have now spread to the broader economies and while the future impacts remain uncertain, debate has already started in many countries on the level of migration and its effect on national labour markets. Any response that effects migration will

impact on both receiving and sending countries with possible consequences for both international development and the irregular movement of people, especially where the opportunities under regular migration schemes evaporate. New Zealand has seen the levels of unemployment rise slightly. However there remains demand for highly skilled workers in a range of sectors and for unskilled workers in the horticultural and agricultural areas.

We welcome the presentation of the World Migration Report 2008 on Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy at this council meeting. This report demonstrates the strength and value the research work within the IOM provides. We look forward to the discussions later this week which we hope will provide the opportunity to explore the impact of the economic downturn faced by so many countries. We also encourage the IOM to continue to provide leadership in this area by building on the work of this report and helping Members better understand the complex challenges faced by countries tackling the expected downturn.

New Zealand was pleased to be able to participate in the two workshops as part of the International Dialogue on Migration earlier this year and we were grateful for the opportunity to have the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme included in the presentations at the workshop on "Enhancing the Role of Return Migration". The first year of the scheme has seen us strengthen our partnerships with Pacific countries in the region and has helped employers in New Zealand address seasonal shortages. It has also highlighted the need for cooperative arrangements between source and destination countries with responsibilities for managing wider aspects such as stimulating job creation and providing access to decent work as well as protecting foreign nationals from exploitation in destination countries.

We will shortly be undertaking an evaluation of the scheme in conjunction with the World Bank and the University of Waikato. This will provide us with an external assessment on the outcome of the scheme both from an economic and development perspective. The results will provide the opportunity to strengthen the scheme and improve the benefits for all those that participate.

Finally I would like to congratulate the Philippines for the successful hosting of the second meeting of the Global Forum for Migration and Development in Manila. The theme was one that is very important in the area of labour migration and its flow on to development. We are pleased to see that these meetings remain State led and we look forward to the momentum being continued by Greece as Chair for the next meeting in Athens.

Thank you Chair