



**STATEMENT MADE BY NIGERIA ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN
GROUP AT THE 96TH COUNCIL**
2 – 5 DECEMBER 2008

Mr. Chairman

Please permit me, from the outset, on behalf of the African Group to congratulate you and members of your team on your election to the offices of this important organisation at this Council. We are confident that you would use your expertise to guide our deliberations during this Council to a successful conclusion as we support you. We also welcome Ambassador William Lacy Swing, the new Director General to his first Council today since he was elected into the office in June this year.

2. We acknowledge and appreciate the good work that IOM had performed in the past and we are confident that the good work would continue under the able leadership of the new DG of this esteem organisation in the area of migration and development. The African Group, therefore, pledges our full support and cooperation through out your tenure.

Mr. Chairman,

3. We welcome the proposed 2009 budget based on Zero Real Growth (ZRG) prepared by the Administration of IOM. We note its inclusion as item 14 in the list of items on the Provisional Agenda of the Council. We fully support the budget. Our support for the budget has been borne out of the fact that, the 2009 budget would be the first of its kind to consider the implementation of the establishment of two important projects for Africa namely, the Mission with Regional

Function (MRF) in Central Africa and the Centre for Capacity Building in Africa.

4. We particularly, note that the budget has proposed certain level of funding for these two projects even though their locations are yet undecided. There is no doubt that the ZRG based budget would impact positively on core structures expected to be accomplished both at Headquarters and field offices by IOM. Budget proposals based on Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG), would not only impact negatively on the implementation of some core structures, including, the establishment of these two projects – MRF and Capacity Building Centre in Africa but had not taken cognisance of them before now.

Mr. Chairman,

5. On the issue of outstanding contributions, the African Group are genuinely concerned about it and call on the organisation to continue in its effort to dialogue with Member States affected to enter to a proper repayment plan. We also support that IOM through its regional offices encourage Member States, to make payment of their outstanding contributions in local currencies as a better approach.

6. It is in the spirit of membership and ownership of the organisation which has become the slogan the DG intends to work for the organisation, that the African Group feels strongly to support the adoption of the Zero Real Growth (ZRG) based budget for the year 2009.

7. I thank you Mr. Chairman.