

STATEMENT BY GHANA'S AMBASSADOR
AT THE 98TH SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL
23RD -26TH NOVEMBER 2009

Mr. Chairman,

It is a pleasure for us to see you presiding over our work, and we wish to congratulate you and the other Members of the Bureau on your election. We also extend our gratitude to the outgoing Chair for ably steering the affairs of the Bureau in the past year. We welcome Ambassador Thomson to her first Council as Deputy Director General and also convey our appreciation to the Director General whose vision has greatly revitalised the work of the organisation.

Mr. Chairman, the Director-General's report to the Council rightly describes our era as one of the greatest human mobility. The huge figures quoted in the report – 740 million internal migrants and 214 million international migrants – bring into sharper focus the objectives of the IOM, particularly those of meeting the operational challenges of migration, advancing understanding and encouraging development and the well-being of migrants.

These objectives are to be viewed against the backdrop of another reality facing us today – the fact that every country on the globe is a country of origin, transit or destination or a combination of two or all three. Indeed not only is migration affecting every country, it has also become a cross-cutting issue

which is impacting an important policy areas involving Inter alia security, labour standards, public health, human rights.

An analysis of these factors quickly bring us to the conclusion that in today's global village characterised by interdependence, proper management of migration can be ensured only if we work closely together, in co-operation and understanding. In this regard, we agree with the Director-General that we need to manage the migration process in a way that will enable all countries, communities and people to benefit from it.

Mr. Chairman, this is not impossible. It simply requires us to focus our energies on making migration work both for development and for human welfare. In adopting a holistic approach to the issue of migration we must direct the global dialogue on migration to address effectively the development angle and make it a win-win for all countries.

We also need to ensure the well-being of the migrant, and we welcome the increasing focus on respect for the human rights of migrants, whether they are regular or irregular. We therefore look forward to the session's discussions on the question of human rights and migration.

We are also meeting in the aftermath of the global economic/financial crises whose impact includes job losses, reduced remittances and rising xenophobia. We note with

appreciation the many activities undertaken by IOM in the course of the year in response to the impacts of the crisis. It is our hope that together we can all contribute to finding solutions to these problems.

Mr. Chairman, we welcome the Director-General's continued engagement with Member States including through the regular consultations with regional groups which enable us to bring up the peculiar problems of our regions. We appreciate the in-house reforms he has already undertaken, and the proposals submitted to Member States with regard to the structure review. We wish to endorse the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Sudan on behalf of the African Group and to reiterate our concern at the reduction in the number of regional offices in Africa. While appreciating the explanations provided by the Administration on this matter, we wish to stress the need to maintain the number of regional offices in Africa on the basis of the reasons provided by the Group on this matter, and we look forward to further consultations on this subject.

I thank you.