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**Republic of Korea**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would first like to congratulate you on your appointment as the chairperson of this Council and assure you that my delegation will continue to support your work. I would also like to express my warm appreciation to Ambassador Mundarain for his able leadership during his incumbency.

As crisply captured in the Director General's report, IOM is undergoing a watershed moment. The extensive reform process, timely initiated and thoroughly being prepared, is expected to enable IOM to meet the ever growing demand for managing the complex migratory flows.

I am fully confident that the dedication and professionalism of Director General Swing, new deputy Director General Laura Thompson and the entire staff of IOM will provide the best guidance in this crucial period. Throughout the whole reform process, my delegation will remain constructively engaged in the in-depth consultation with IOM and other member states.

At this point, Mr. Chair, I would like to share my views on the structure review and the budget reform, which will have far-reaching ramifications.

First, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the result of the structure review conducted by the SRT (Structure Review Team) reflects well on the need to strengthen field activities. We view the consolidation of resources into the regional offices as the right direction in which IOM should proceed.

However, we are of the view that the regional offices' new authority to endorse projects needs to be balanced by the headquarters' strengthened coordination and quality control. We would be interested to hear more about IOM's idea to improve the oversight of regional offices' activities. [In this regard, we know that similar concerns have been addressed in other organizations by strengthening the performance appraisal of the regional and field offices' staff and allocating resources strictly based upon the results of the appraisals.]

Second, we fully understand the IOM's concern about the chronic deficiency of the operational budget. We have consistently expressed our view that this issue needs to be addressed in a structural manner so as not to repeat unproductive debates over the ZNG and ZRG. However, while appreciating IOM's efforts to address this issue, we remain skeptical that either Scenario 1 or 2 proposed by IOM could provide a solution to the recurring demand for piecemeal increase of the operational budget. This is even more so given that the proposal does not seem to reflect the budgetary implication of the structure reform in the field yet. My delegation anticipates a productive debate over the budget reform at this session.

Mr. Chair,

In tandem with the rapid growth of IOM's role, the partnership between IOM and the Korean government has grown stronger. As stated in the Director General's report, the Korean government reached an agreement with IOM on the establishment of the IOM Migration Research and Training Center, the MRTC, in Korea. I am pleased to inform the Council that the MRTC will hold its opening ceremony on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December this year. My delegation sincerely hopes that the MRTC will play a pivotal role in Asia in enhancing the quality of research and training in the field of migration. The government of the Republic of Korea will spare no effort to help the MRTC up and running as smoothly as possible in close cooperation with IOM and other member states.

I thank you. /end/