

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR AHMET ÜZÜMCÜ
TURKISH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
AT THE 98th IOM COUNCIL MEETING
(23 November 2009)**

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin my remarks by congratulating you on your election as the Chairman of the Council and through you the other members of the bureau. I am confident that we shall have a fruitful session under your able leadership.

I welcome Ambassador Laura Thompson to her first regular Council session as the Deputy Director General and wish all the success during her tenure.

I would like to express our appreciation to the Director General for his comprehensive briefing which summarized the current migration trends, the impact of the global financial crisis on migrants as well as the Organization's response to these challenges. Taking this opportunity, I wish to commend the Director General and his team for their efforts to bring in more efficiency, clarity and transparency to the organization. The review of the organizational structure is indeed an important process. Mainstreaming the field presence, creating clearer reporting lines, refreshing the organization through staff rotation and pursuing a methodology which keeps member states in the process will definitely be beneficial for the organization. We observe that the sense of ownership among the member states towards the work of the IOM has been already enhanced. Mr. Director General, let me assure you that you have our full support in this reform process.

Mr. Chairman,

Migration is a very complex social phenomenon and it must be addressed in a global manner, with a holistic approach. Migration should not be seen as an issue between the developed countries and the developing ones. Today, more and more states are becoming countries of origin, transit and destination at the same time.

At this session we will be discussing under the IDM, human rights and migration which are closely interlinked. We are looking forward to the

debate on these two cross-cutting issues. Human rights is an important aspect in all phases of different types of migration. It is essential that human rights of migrants are respected during the integration of migrants in host societies, in accordance with different international or regional instruments.

In the process of integration, countries should avoid imposing on migrants certain measures which might be counter-productive and hinder smooth progress. A policy of dialogue with migrants with a view to defining a programme of integration might be more effective. During this process close cooperation between countries of origin and destination would also be useful.

Irregular migration is another issue which deserves comprehensive cooperation among countries of origin, destination as well as transit. Opening legal migration channels would greatly contribute to the efforts aimed at addressing mixed flows. Furthermore, the concerns of countries of transit should not be ignored and their burden must be shared. We fully support the work of the IOM in addressing irregular migration. With the assistance of the IOM Office in Ankara, important progress has been achieved in the implementation of measures aimed at countering irregular migration. The interagency high level task force in my country continues its efforts towards prevention of human trafficking and smuggling. The legislation against human trafficking is being reviewed. An amendment to the Penal Code has been drafted and submitted to the Parliament in order to fight impunity. According to the new provisions: "Even if the crime has not gone further than an attempt, it will be punished as though it has been fully committed" and "If the crime constitutes a threat to the lives of the aggrieved or is committed in a manner which degrades them, the punishment can be increased from one half to two thirds."

The second IDM panel focusing on global and regional migration dialogues is of great importance. We believe that exchange of best practices among different mechanisms is essential. The interagency cooperation must be carried out with a view to strengthening coordination while avoiding unnecessary duplication.

Mr. Chairman,

The impact of the financial crisis on international endeavours has been increasingly felt. States are inclined to cut expenditures to the extent possible. IOM is also affected by this situation. As we go through these

difficult times, it is more a necessity rather than a choice, to maintain the functions of the organizations without increasing the budget. In that sense, we count on the administration's abilities to keep a low-cost approach through the crisis period.

Mr. Chairman,

As the DG said during the presentation of his report, "there are more people on the move today than ever before". In the short term due to the financial crisis, and in the long run as a consequence of globalisation, this trend could be expected to continue. This would gradually move the migration issue at a higher place on our agenda. Simultaneously this will require a stronger level of cooperation among all states.

Let me conclude by reiterating our commitment to cooperate closely with the IOM and other relevant international organizations on migration related issues.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.