



Statement by

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**Permanent Representation of the Kingdom
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Mr. Chairperson, Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

As you are probably aware, a new Government has recently taken office in the Netherlands which has identified asylum- and migration policy as one of its main priorities. Efficient migration management, effective immigration as well as return and reintegration will become even more important than before. The new Government is now in the process of translating its plans into concrete policies. We look forward to informing you further on our Government's policies at future meetings.

The Netherlands highly appreciates the important role that the IOM is playing in the field of migration management through the implementation of a large variety of projects. Also for the Netherlands the IOM is a valuable partner in this field.

One important programme in which we cooperate is the so-called Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals programme. This programme is carried out by the IOM office in the Netherlands, in cooperation with IOM offices in third countries. Its main objective is to facilitate the temporary return of migrants from Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Ethiopia, Georgia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to their countries of origin, in order to transfer their knowledge, skills and expertise to contribute to the reconstruction and development of their countries.

Another programme that is implemented by IOM and is of importance to the Netherlands is the so-called Reintegration Arrangement on Return ("Herintegratieregeling Terugkeer"). The primary goal of this programme is to financially assist asylum seekers or ex-asylum seekers to voluntarily return to and reintegrate in their countries of origin. It is expected that from 2010 to 2012 2600 persons will be assisted in returning to and reintegrating in their countries of origin.

Another project that we find worth mentioning is the preparation of a handbook on engaging diasporas in contributing to the development of their home and host countries. The development of this handbook, which is one of the outcomes of the GFMD in Athens, will be implemented by IOM in cooperation with the Migration Policy Institute. The result will be a user-friendly, practical handbook for policy makers and practitioners to help them reach out to their diasporas and develop meaningful partnerships with them. It is expected that the handbook will be finalised in the summer of 2011.

In addition to the abovementioned activities in the field of migration management as well as migration and development, the Netherlands sometimes financially supports humanitarian activities that IOM undertakes in the context of the cluster approach. One recent example is the funding provided to assist displaced civilians in Sri Lanka that wish to return to the North or East of the country.

Mr. Chairperson,

As the IOM is an important partner organisation for the Netherlands, we attach great importance to the organisation's professionalism and well-functioning.

We therefore welcome the restructuring of the organisation which the administration is currently undertaking to improve efficiency, accountability and the uniform implementation of policies and standards. We particularly welcome that instead of IOM's numerous missions with a regional function eight better resourced regional offices will be established that will exclusively focus on regional functions. We think that the uniform implementation of policies and standards will be a challenge with the delegation of project endorsement authority from Headquarters to the Regional Offices. However, we are confident that this challenge can be handled if, as planned, Headquarters sets the necessary policies and guidelines and invests in training, knowledge management, quality control and oversight. We look forward to receiving further regular reports on the implementation of the restructuring process in the year to come.

Given the current economic situation in the world and the budget deficits faced by many of IOM's member states, we commend IOM for not having proposed an increase in its administrative budget in 2011. We understand that this brings challenges to the organisation and welcome the way in which they are handled. We also appreciate that the administration in the Programme and Budget for 2011 indicates which aspects of the organisation's core structure are underfunded in its view. We consider the Working Group on Budget Reform the appropriate mechanism to identify possible solutions.

Given the restricted resources available for IOM's core structure, we think it's crucial that the organisation focuses on a limited number of different types of activities. IOM simply does not have the financial resources to sustain expertise at Headquarters in all fields in which the organisation is requested to undertake activities or has undertaken activities in the past. Three years ago, after a long negotiation process, member states reached agreement on the IOM Strategy which includes a list of 12 types of broadly formulated activities on which member states agreed the organisation should focus. We think that IOM should

strictly focus on these activities. In our view this is a responsibility of both the administration and member states.

Mr. Chairperson,

I am delighted that IOM will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2011. But there is more good news. This year in December the IOM office in the Netherlands will celebrate its 20th anniversary. I am pleased that the Director-General, Ambassador Swing, will attend the celebrations that will take place on that occasion in the Hague.

Let me conclude by saying that I look forward to a fruitful exchange of views during this Council meeting.

I thank you for your attention.