

UK Statement at the IOM Council, November 2010

Thank you Mr Chairman.

Director-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honour to take the floor at this 99th Session of the IOM Council on behalf of the UK. The UK fully aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union.

Let me begin by extending my thanks to the Director General for his leadership and direction of the organisation, and for his report to this Session of the Council. We welcome and continue to support his efforts to enhance the IOM's overall effectiveness. We join others in welcoming the countries who have just become members of the organisation.

Mr Chairman,

The UK believes that migration policy must be managed to benefit all parties, meeting the labour market needs of host countries while assisting the development of countries of origin, and ensuring mitigation of the adverse consequences of irregular migration.

Within this context the UK's migration policy is shaped by the commitments made by our government to reduce net migration to the UK to the levels of the 1990s.

These commitments are underpinned by a long and proud tradition in the UK of offering protection to those who need it and helping them fully integrate into our society. The new government has committed to implementing changes to speed up the processing of asylum applications. At the same time we aim to maintain the integrity of our asylum system. Those who have been found by an independent court to have no need for protection are expected to leave voluntarily, while we ensure that reintegration is as smooth and successful as possible and that such returns are sustainable and productive. We welcome our partnership with the IOM in this area.

Mr Chairman,

In the context of the global economic climate, the UK is taking tough measures to control and reduce public spending. The UK's lead agency on migration, the United Kingdom Border Agency, will be reducing its budget by up to 20% over the next four years, which will mean tough choices on expenditure affecting all parts of the agency, including a reduction in UKBA staff numbers. The UK will also expect the partners we work with to

be actively ensuring value for money and efficiency. In this context we welcome the decision of the IOM to put forward a Zero Nominal Growth administrative budget for 2011-12 and would encourage the organisation to actively prioritise and ensure efficient as well as effective delivery of its services.

The UK's Department for International Development has also launched a Multilateral Aid Review to ensure that the UK gets maximum value for money from contributions to multilateral organisations. The review includes an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of multilateral organisations to the UK's development objectives and their ability to deliver results on the ground. The outcomes of the review will be used to decide the overall shape of DFID's multilateral funding and the levels of funding to individual organisations in the future. The findings of this review will be published in February 2011.

Mr Chairman,

The UK has a close partnership with the IOM, covering a broad range of areas from returns projects to refugee resettlement in the UK, combating trafficking, and humanitarian work. We encourage IOM to continue efforts to mainstream its humanitarian cluster responsibilities; we believe this will help contribute to a more predictable and timely roll out of the cluster mechanism in crisis situations. The UK sees great importance in the IOM continuing to strengthen its ability to respond effectively, efficiently and swiftly, both to the requirements of member states, and to new challenges that arise in the wider global environment. In our view the IOM has an important contribution to make in the field of operational delivery, where your international network and experienced staff are making a real difference on the ground.

The UK has been a strong supporter of the changes undertaken in the organisation over the last year to strengthen its capacity to respond to migration challenges in the most effective way. We hope that the organisation will be able to report in due course on the results achieved through these structural reforms. The UK is participating fully in the discussions on budget reform. Our shared objective is to optimise the way the IOM uses its budgetary resources to allow the organisation to respond to migration challenges in an effective way. We fully endorse the proposals made by the Standing Committee on Programme and Finance that the IOM should continue to focus on the twelve points in its existing Strategy.

Mr Chairman,

We appreciate this opportunity to take part in the discussion of the current and future challenges faced both by the Organisation, and by its members. I would like to conclude by thanking IOM staff around the

world for their continued commitment to delivering for the organisation in often demanding conditions.

Thank you.