

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE**

**Twenty-ninth Session**

**REPORT OF THE**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE**

**ON THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION**

Geneva  
26 and 27 October 2021  
Rapporteur: Ms Katharina Stasch (Germany)



## CONTENTS

Abbreviations .....	ii
Introduction.....	1
Adoption of the agenda .....	2
Statement by the Director General.....	2
Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021.....	3
Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights .....	4
Programme and Budget for 2022.....	4
Progress report on the implementation of the External Auditor’s recommendations .....	6
Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General.....	7
Report of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee .....	8
Internal Governance Framework: summary of progress to date.....	9
Update on human resources management .....	10
Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on Budget Reform .....	12
Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on IOM Partnerships, Governance and Organizational Priorities.....	13
Update on the IOM evaluation function: strategy, workplan and peer review.....	14
Provisional workplan for the IOM governing bodies during 2022 .....	15
Exchange of views on items proposed by the membership: .....	16
Update on the roll-out of IOM’s Policy on the Full Spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration.....	16
Report on the IOM Development Fund.....	18
Report on the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States .....	19
Closure of the session .....	19

## **Abbreviations**

COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
IGF	Internal Governance Framework
MIRAC	Migration Resource Allocation Committee
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
OECD DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSI	Operational Support Income

**REPORT OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE  
ON THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION**

**Introduction**

1. The Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance met at the Centre International de Conférences Genève for its Twenty-ninth Session on 26 and 27 October 2021. The Session was chaired by Mr E.P. Garcia (Philippines) and Ms E.G. Martínez Liévano (Mexico). Three meetings were held, with some participants following proceedings remotely.

2. The following Member States were represented:<sup>1</sup>

Algeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mozambique	South Sudan
Angola	Croatia		Myanmar	Spain
Argentina	Cuba	Ireland	Namibia	Sri Lanka
Armenia	Cyprus	Israel	Nepal	Sudan
Australia	Denmark	Italy	Netherlands	Sweden
Austria	Djibouti	Japan	Nicaragua	Switzerland
Azerbaijan	Ecuador	Jordan	Niger	Thailand
Bahamas	Egypt	Kazakhstan	Nigeria	Togo
Bangladesh	El Salvador	Kenya	Norway	Tunisia
Belarus	Estonia	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Pakistan	Turkey
Belgium	Ethiopia		Paraguay	Ukraine
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Fiji		Peru	United Kingdom
Botswana	Finland	Latvia	Philippines	United States of America
Brazil	France	Lesotho	Poland	Uruguay
Bulgaria	Gambia	Libya	Portugal	Venezuela
Burkina Faso	Georgia	Lithuania	Republic of Korea	(Bolivarian Republic of)
Cambodia	Germany	Luxembourg	Romania	
Cameroon	Ghana	Madagascar	Russian Federation	Viet Nam
Canada	Greece	Mali		Yemen
Chad	Guatemala	Malta	Serbia	Zambia
Chile	Holy See	Marshall Islands	Sierra Leone	Zimbabwe
China	Honduras	Mauritius	Slovakia	
Colombia	Hungary	Mexico	Slovenia	
Costa Rica	India	Montenegro	South Africa	

3. The Member States agreed to a request made by the Permanent Representatives of the Delegation of the European Union and of Slovenia, on behalf of the European Union rotating presidency, that a representative of the European Union participate as an expert in the consideration of the relevant items of the provisional agenda (S/29/1).

---

<sup>1</sup> The list of participants is contained in document S/29/9. Unless otherwise indicated, all documents and slide presentations are available on the [Standing Committee](#) section of the IOM website.

### **Adoption of the agenda**

4. The provisional agenda contained in document S/29/1 was adopted by the Standing Committee and subsequently issued as document S/29/10.

### **Statement by the Director General**

5. The Director General, welcoming participants to the Standing Committee's Twenty-ninth Session, delivered the statement contained in extenso in document S/29/12, highlighting the need for universal access to COVID-19 vaccines and the impact of increased displacement caused by conflict, natural disasters and food insecurity on the Organization's activities. In its seventieth year, IOM was in need of reform, including to its budget, in order to meet the needs of people on the move.

6. Member States welcomed the two newly appointed Deputy Directors General and wished them well in their posts. One regional group and one Member State expressed concern about recent developments in Afghanistan and called for strengthened cooperation with the United Nations family to respond to increasingly complex needs worldwide. The same regional group and two Member States noted the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The regional group commended IOM's advocacy for the inclusion of people on the move in vaccination plans and other measures to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and called for their inclusion in the post-pandemic recovery, with particular attention paid to the needs of women, children, victims of torture and trafficking, and persons with disabilities. More needed to be done to close the vaccination gap, as no one was safe until everyone was safe. One representative, welcoming the Organization's engagement with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Network and its work in the field to address the needs of persons with disabilities, sought further information in that regard and encouraged the Organization to continue its training and awareness-raising activities.

7. The regional group representative condemned attempts by States to exploit migrants for political purposes. IOM must build on lessons learned and good practices, including by building capacities in partner countries. As a major contributor to the IOM budget, the group called on other donors to continue supporting the Organization's work. Origin, transit and destination countries must live up to their political commitments, including by addressing the root causes of irregular migration and upholding migrants' human rights. One representative encouraged more Member States to provide flexible, multi-year funding to allow IOM to deliver on its full mandate. The priorities for that representative were strengthening migration management, addressing the incentives and root causes of migration, and enhancing international and regional cooperation on migration. For another representative, funding was the most pressing issue before IOM, in particular the use of IOM resources in conjunction with those that could be generated through partnerships between the non-profit, public and private sectors. Collective efforts were needed to overcome the challenges faced by small countries with regard to preserving their sovereignty in the face of migration. Since mobility was likely to continue increasing, people on the move should be supported through safe travel and access to medical care, including preventive health care.

8. The same representative noted the importance of budget reform and restructuring to make IOM fit to tackle current migration challenges, while the representative of the regional group welcomed efforts to reform the Organization by strengthening the core structure and improving synergies between the operational and strategic levels. Another representative expressed appreciation for the Director General's ambitious reform agenda, which would help shift the focus towards tackling the drivers of irregular and forced migration. The representative of the regional group encouraged IOM to continue ensuring full transparency and integrity and robust monitoring and reporting, while a fourth representative commended the commitment of IOM to improving accountability and ensuring efficiency and responsiveness.

9. Responding to the points raised, the Director General welcomed the willingness of the regional group to support vaccination against COVID-19. The key challenges to universal vaccination against COVID-19, and therefore to the progress achieved in some countries, were vaccine production shortages, lack of equity in access to vaccines and widespread vaccine hesitancy. The number of countries that had reported access to vaccination for all migrants, irrespective of legal status, was low.

10. IOM had close to 700 members of staff and contracting partners working in Afghanistan, approximately 40 per cent of whom were women. The importance of their full participation in the Organization's activities, particularly in the delivery of health care, would be emphasized to the de facto authorities of Afghanistan on his visit to Kabul the following week. Women were the main beneficiaries of IOM's work on community stabilization, reintegration and assistance in Afghanistan. The worsening economic situation would have a serious impact on women who had been helped to set up small businesses; the international community could not afford economic collapse in the country.

### **Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021**

11. The Standing Committee had before it a document entitled Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021 (C/112/7) for consideration in conjunction with the Programme and Budget for 2021 (C/111/6) and the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2021 (S/28/6).

12. The Administration reported that the Administrative Part of the Budget remained unchanged at CHF 53,189,080, as approved in document S/28/6. Another record year was anticipated, with projected expenditure in the Operational Part of the Budget of USD 2.31 billion. The USD 531 million increase in that budget related to services delivered by IOM across all regions in response to the needs of Member States. Given the level of expenditure, it was anticipated that the projected level of USD 128 million of OSI would be met.

13. One regional group noted that neither the Administrative Part of the Budget nor projected OSI had changed, despite the increase in the Operational Part of the Budget. The group wished to know which factors were involved in the reduction in activities observed in certain fields, particularly dignified return and sustainable reintegration in the African region. The group encouraged donor countries to increase their voluntary contributions to the Operational Part of the Budget to help IOM better adapt to the contemporary challenges of migration.

14. One representative asked for details of the seven additional staff positions noted in the table on page 5 of the document. It would be useful if future summary updates contained information on OSI received to date, to better inform budget discussions. Another representative asked whether her Government's contributions for activities in Afghanistan and the surrounding region were already reflected in the figures provided in the document.

15. The Administration, responding to questions, said that the Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021 contained the original geographical breakdown of the Operational Part of the Budget issued in the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2021, alongside the overall summary for 2021, which showed an increase in the budget earmarked for activities in Africa, to USD 734,310,600. The additional positions referred to by a representative had been proposed by the Administration based on funding received from the Russian Federation, which had been admitted to the Organization in April 2021. The total number of international positions was the same as in the Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2021.

16. The Standing Committee recommended that the Council take note of the Summary update on the Programme and Budget for 2021 (C/112/7).

#### **Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights**

17. The Administration introduced the document entitled Status report on outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget and Member State voting rights (as at 30 September 2021) (C/112/5/Rev.1). The update reflected the additional contributions received since the Twenty-eighth Session of the Standing Committee. The total outstanding assessed contributions for 2020 and previous years and the assessed contributions not yet paid for 2021 amounted to CHF 23.9 million. As at 30 September 2021, 35 Member States had been subject to Article 4 of the IOM Constitution; of those, 16 had lost their voting rights. Since document C/112/5/Rev.1 had been issued, payments towards assessed contributions had been received from China, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Turkmenistan and Uruguay. The payment from Papua New Guinea had resulted in its removal from the list of Member States subject to Article 4. Although flexible repayment plans had been agreed with four Member States, three of them had not met their obligations under those plans and had lost their voting rights.

18. The Standing Committee took note of the contents of document C/112/5/Rev.1 and recommended that the Council endorse it; it also urged Member States whose contributions were in arrears to pay their contributions in full or, in consultation with the Administration, to agree to a payment plan and fully respect the payment conditions.

#### **Programme and Budget for 2022**

19. The Deputy Director General for Management and Reform gave a slide presentation outlining the main aims of the Programme and Budget for 2022, which was intended to further the task of making the Organization fit for purpose by updating the Headquarters structure to reflect the responsibilities of the two newly created Deputy Director General positions, aligning the Organization's structure with its strategic vision, implementing the IGF and advancing the Organization's core objectives while maintaining a policy of zero nominal growth in the budget. The proposed structural changes, which would entail the creation of a number of additional posts, were the most that could be achieved within the limited resources available. In preparing the Programme and Budget for 2022, the Administration had focused in particular on the 2017–2018 assessment of the Organization conducted by MOPAN. IOM would continue to build on the strengths and embrace the organizational challenges identified therein, but the issue of budget reform would remain a priority to ensure that the Organization could deliver what Member States expected of it.

20. The Administration gave a slide presentation highlighting the key points set out in the document entitled Programme and Budget for 2022 (C/112/6). The Administrative Part of the Budget had been prepared on the basis of zero nominal growth and amounted to CHF 53,586,816. The Operational Part of the Budget was based on anticipated funding and was estimated at USD 1.2 billion, which was 30.26 per cent higher than the 2021 budget of USD 913.4 million projected at the same time the previous year. The budget level would be updated in subsequent revisions to the budget as additional funding was secured for the Organization's activities. The projected level of OSI – USD 136 million – had been estimated based on the previous year's results and current and expected trends. Owing to the increase in statutory costs, the Organization proposed to move 15 positions from the Administrative Part of the Budget to OSI, as had been done in previous years.



21. During the ensuing discussion, support was expressed for the prudent approach taken to the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2022 in line with the priorities identified, though one representative suggested that certain areas, such as further strengthening the Office of the Inspector General and funding staff development and learning, should have been given greater priority. One representative particularly welcomed the fact that guidance had been taken from the MOPAN assessment; another, while welcoming certain of its conclusions, asked whether the assessment had been mandated by the Council. A third said that the proposed organizational changes would strengthen the strategic and knowledge-based management of IOM and its capacity for results- and risk-based management, along with its response to the challenges of climate and environmental change.

22. Numerous Member States highlighted the increasing importance of the Organization's role and responsibilities, especially in the context of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and other migration challenges. One representative asked how the comprehensive action plan for Afghanistan and the crisis response plan for the Americas, both of which displayed a commendable holistic approach, were reflected in the Programme and Budget for 2022.

23. Various representatives stressed the need for budget reform, with one emphasizing that Member States' assessed contributions made up only 2 per cent of the Organization's budget and highlighting the need for more adequate and predictable funding. A second, asking when reforms would be implemented, expressed the view that the policy of zero nominal growth should be abandoned so as to facilitate meaningful discussion of how best to adapt the Administrative Part of the Budget to the real needs of the Organization. Core functions should be funded from the Administrative Part of the Budget, as should the Office of the Inspector General, in order to ensure that the Organization could retain key personnel and build competence. Moreover, the fact that the Operational Part of the Budget included only those projects for which arrangements had been finalized made it an inadequate tool for planning. One representative of a regional group, while acknowledging the need for budget reform and welcoming the Organization's initiatives to strengthen its institutional capacity, emphasized that any increase in assessed contributions would present an additional burden for Member States in an already difficult financial climate. Another representative highlighted the impact of the economic downturn on Member States' ability to pay their assessed contributions promptly, despite their commitment to the Organization's aims and activities.

24. One representative welcomed the record expenditure expected in 2021 and expressed satisfaction that the projected level of OSI for that year looked set to be secured. His Government hoped to begin providing unearmarked contributions to the Organization in the near future. Another representative observed that the amount of OSI projected for 2022 was testament to the value donors placed on IOM's activities and ability to deliver results.

25. One representative asked whether there were plans to transfer any projects from the Operational Part to the Administrative Part of the Budget and requested a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed changes to the Organization's structure and the creation of new posts. He also asked whether the proposed budget for 2022 made provision for the Organization to participate in mechanisms such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the International Civil Service Commission and the Joint Inspection Unit and whether funds had been allocated to implement all recommendations made by the External Auditor, a significant number of which remained outstanding. Another representative suggested that addressing such recommendations as soon as possible would attract more core funding, enhancing the Organization's ability to plan for the long term and to respond and adapt quickly to new challenges.

26. Three representatives, one speaking on behalf of a regional group, expressed an objection to the wording of paragraph 117 of the document, which dealt with diversity and inclusion, and requested

that any terminology in that sphere on which consensus had not been reached within the international community be removed from the text and not used in IOM documents. Another representative added that the wording of the paragraph was based on existing international standards.

27. The Director General said that the Administration stood ready to continue engaging with Member States to ensure that priority areas received appropriate attention, including in the creation of new posts. The investment already made in critical managerial and oversight positions had helped to bolster the credibility of the Organization and its internal justice system, but investment in operational capacity was also vital. As various projects, especially those enjoying significant European Union support, came to an end, ever greater efforts would need to be devoted to promoting cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination to ensure continuity of operations. Joint initiatives involving IOM, the European Union and African Member States were of particular importance, enhancing stability in Africa and benefiting large numbers of migrants.

28. A conservative approach to budgeting helped ensure stability in an organization that relied heavily on project funding; the zero nominal growth policy imposed further constraints. The Administration hoped to be in a position to prepare the budget for 2023 on the basis of the conclusions reached by the Working Group on Budget Reform. He welcomed all efforts to provide the Organization with unearmarked funding.

29. Replying to the specific questions asked, he said that MOPAN assessments were voluntary assessments organized by a group of donors; other donor countries conducted similar performance assessments, and the Administration always cooperated willingly. With regard to regional plans such as those for Afghanistan and the Americas, account was taken of existing donor commitments and projects already being implemented. The crisis in Afghanistan was expected to continue and funding for 2022 appeared insufficient and unstable; with regard to Central America, negotiations with the United States Government were showing positive signs. In terms of participation in United Nations system mechanisms, the Organization was not part of the International Civil Service Commission or the Joint Inspection Unit, though it worked closely with both. Its specific nature, history and budget structure must be taken into account when comparing it with other agencies within the United Nations system. As to the objection expressed to the wording of paragraph 117 of the document, it would be revised before being submitted to the Council. The Administration remained committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting diversity in its workforce.

30. The Standing Committee, taking into account the comments made by the Director General, took note of the Programme and Budget for 2022, as set out in document C/112/6, and recommended that the Council approve CHF 53,586,816 for the Administrative Part of the Budget and USD 1.2 billion for the Operational Part of the Budget.

### **Progress report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations**

31. The Administration gave a slide presentation introducing the document entitled Report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations (S/29/7), outlining the three types of audit – certification, performance and compliance – undertaken by the External Auditor. The COVID-19 pandemic had continued to affect auditing activities, but remote work had proved effective. Most of the 35 outstanding recommendations related to certification and performance audits and, as such, were strategic recommendations that required time and resources to implement. Indeed, many were being addressed through the continued application of the IGF, including the Business Transformation initiative, which would place IOM in a much stronger position from 2022 onwards. Some of the challenges in country offices related to acquisition and disposal of local assets, tax exemptions, procurement and immunities and privileges, which all took time to negotiate. The Organization was committed to acting on all recommendations and planned to implement the majority of them by 2022.

32. Several Member States welcomed the progress made in implementing the External Auditor's recommendations, highlighting the importance of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization and calling for additional efforts to complete work on outstanding recommendations in a timely manner. Two of those Member States asked for additional information to be provided in future progress reports regarding the level of priority given to recommendations and the costs associated with implementation. One urged the Administration to find an appropriate balance between its use of core funding to strengthen oversight and management, and investments to fulfil the Organization's mandate as a leader in broader international migration management discussions.

33. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/7.

### **Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General**

34. The Inspector General gave a presentation introducing the document entitled Report on the work of the Office of the Inspector General (S/29/3). A record number of cases had been handled by the investigation function during the reporting period, while the backlog reported in previous periods had been significantly reduced. Although there had been an increase in the number of allegations received, that was commensurate with the scale of IOM's operations and indicated greater confidence in the reporting system. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present challenges, notably for the internal audit function, but they had been partly addressed through remote and agile auditing protocols, and the number of outstanding internal audit recommendations had been cut substantially. The systemic findings identified during internal audits were similar to those reported by the External Auditor; it was likely that many of them would be resolved following the application of the IGF.

35. Representatives of several Member States stressed the important role played by the Office and welcomed the scheduling of the item earlier in the session. The Office was a critical component of effective oversight and should receive adequate funding and support. Two representatives further specified that additional funding should be provided from core resources, with one stating that such a move would lay a strong foundation for an independent Office. The same representative also asked for more information about changes to the Charter of the Office of the Inspector General.

36. Many speakers commended the work done to improve case management and address the backlog within the investigation function, with several noting in particular the positive impact of additional resources. They agreed that the increase in allegations was probably due to the greater visibility of the Office and the "We are all in" reporting system. However, two speakers requested a more detailed breakdown of the types of case handled and the usual timeline for managing them. Another stressed the need to address known organizational risks behind cases of fraud, waste and abuse, and asked whether the Office had noted any particular trends during its investigations. She also asked how the findings of both the investigation and audit teams were used to inform ongoing reform processes within the Organization, and more specifically whether any policy recommendations had been implemented on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse following the investigations into allegations of that nature in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

37. Several other Member States also highlighted the importance of combating sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. While it was positive that the Office contributed to work on the issue within both the Organization and the wider United Nations system, and provided support to IOM's newly appointed Senior Coordinator for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment, it was vital to have clear policies, a supportive organizational culture and suitable training. One representative requested further information on the implementation of the new strategy of the IOM Headquarters Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, especially regarding the protection of victims.

38. The Inspector General, responding to points raised, explained that IOM was required to report all allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse within 48 hours. The information was made available on a public website documenting all allegations made against United Nations system personnel. Regarding the breakdown of cases more broadly, fraud was the most frequent allegation among the 266 current IOM investigations, accounting for almost 40 per cent of cases, followed by harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, which represented around 20 per cent of cases. With respect to the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, extensive investigations had failed to uncover any evidence implicating IOM staff, but the Office would continue to monitor the case. In terms of other trends, it was unfortunate to note that cases of harassment had risen despite the increase in remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

39. In relation to the general structure of the Office and its capacity to manage the caseload, he observed that needs would vary across the range of environments in which IOM worked. Having established a 12-month benchmark period, the Office would monitor its workload over the coming year and provide further feedback on the adequacy of its resources. The Charter of the Office of the Inspector General had been updated to reflect the focus on the internal audit and investigation functions.

40. The Director General underlined the hard work done to improve the efficiency of the Office and address the backlog of cases. The increased number of allegations demonstrated confidence in the internal justice system; complainants believed that their case would be handled fairly. Drawing attention to IOM's transparent approach, he reminded Member States that the Office regularly provided integrity briefings for donors, including details about the types of case under investigation and their status. However, it should be recalled that the allegations themselves did not give the whole picture within the Organization.

41. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/3.

#### **Report of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee**

42. The Chairperson of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee gave a presentation introducing the document entitled Report of the IOM Audit and Oversight Advisory Committee — Activities from January 2021 to August 2021 (S/29/4). The newly reconstituted Committee had made several recommendations on areas requiring improvement, notably reaffirming its view that the Chief Risk Officer should report to the Director General. It also wished to see the development of comprehensive corporate risk registers for all regional and country offices. A workplan was under development to guide the future activities of the Committee in supporting the Organization.

43. The Director General expressed appreciation for the work of the newly reconstituted Advisory Committee, stressing the valuable role it played within the Organization.

44. Several representatives asked for more information on the work of the Committee, including a clearer account of the recommendations made and details of the workplan. One suggested in particular that future reports should cover a wider range of subjects, including financial reporting, information assurance and security, human resources management, business continuity management, the implementation of recommendations, ethics, and investment policy. The Committee should also organize information sessions for Member States in line with best practice within the United Nations system.

45. Two representatives requested further details on the recommendation regarding the Chief Risk Officer, with one highlighting the close collaboration of the latter with the previous Deputy

Director General in the development of the IGF. The other asked what was being done to address the lack of regional and country risk registers, while a third stressed the importance of peer-reviewed risk registers and clear guidance on risk appetite to ensure responsible risk management.

46. The Chairperson of the Advisory Committee, responding to the points raised, said that it was good practice for an organization's chief risk officer to report directly to its most senior official to ensure that risks could be assessed comprehensively. Ideally, the chief risk officer would also work with champions responsible for managing risk registers in regional and country offices, who would have a greater understanding of specific challenges in the field. He noted the request for greater detail in future reports and undertook to share the Committee's workplan with Member States once it had been finalized.

47. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/4.

### **Internal Governance Framework: summary of progress to date**

48. The Deputy Director General for Management and Reform, introducing the document entitled Fifth update on the application of the Internal Governance Framework (S/29/INF/1), gave a slide presentation outlining the progress made in the application of the Framework, which was a key pillar of the IOM's reform agenda. By the end of 2021, close to 70 per cent of activities under workstreams 1, 2 and 4 were expected to be completed, with activities under workstream 3 continuing until 2024.

49. Under workstream 1, the Strategic Results Framework would increase the impact and accountability of IOM and ensure that Member States' investments were wisely used, while the new delegation of authority policy and structure would result in greater responsiveness and agility. Results under workstream 2 included the development of a Human Resources Handbook, which 95 per cent of staff said had had a positive impact on the way they worked, and the roll-out of training on the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation, which had been given to over 5,500 staff members so far. Work on the Business Transformation, under workstream 3, was continuing; the technical evaluation phase had been completed and the design phase would be conducted in the first half of 2022. Under workstream 4, the backlog of cases in the internal justice system had been eradicated and processing times for new cases were shorter.

50. In 2022 the focus would be on a number of issues highlighted in the MOPAN assessment, including results-based management, risk management, accountability framework systems and monitoring and evaluation. The IGF was not just another IOM project: it was changing the way business was done within the Organization. The progress made to date had relied on – and would continue to rely on – the support received from Member States, including their unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions.

51. One Member State requested more information on the Organization's due diligence policy. The representative of one regional group commended IOM on the IGF reforms, welcoming in particular the development of the change management strategy and the roll-out of the SAP Analytics Cloud tool. Another representative welcomed efforts to improve coherence and efficiency and expressed support for the forthcoming enterprise resource planning system. Another representative commended the steps taken towards reinforcing IOM's results-based management and looked forward to seeing a shift to results-based budgeting. She stressed the need to continuously monitor and evaluate progress made in addressing the MOPAN recommendations and encouraged more Member States to consider providing IOM with flexible core funding.

52. One delegate said that application of the IGF was critical to improving IOM's accountability, responsiveness and impact, and that successful implementation of the Business Transformation initiative would enable the Organization to increase Member State oversight of expenditure and active contract management, and ensure that projects delivered robust and tangible outcomes.

53. Another delegate, after expressing support for IOM's reform efforts, requested that in future, a comprehensive list of all the actions contained in the IGF Workplan should be provided, with information on the status of each action, identifying the efficiencies or cost savings achieved. It would be useful to have more detail on Business Transformation activities, including on which were a priority.

54. One Member State said that it would be helpful if the Administration could prepare annual audit opinions on governance, risk management and internal controls. Another Member State requested a more detailed update on efforts to improve the IOM procurement system, as well as further information on the findings of the assessment of the IOM risk management functions conducted by the Office of the Inspector General. It would also be useful to receive information on current financial commitments and the outstanding financial requirements for implementation of the IGF, which could be included in the regular summary reports provided to Member States.

55. Responding to the points raised, the Deputy Director General for Management and Reform said that the due diligence policy was part of a plan to increase engagement with private sector partners in order to amplify IOM's work; additional steps were needed to ensure that those partners reflected the Organization's values and were not in conflict with IOM in any other way. The due diligence policy had been finalized and rolled out across the Organization and its implementation and effectiveness would be monitored. Information on the status of implementation of all the actions in the IGF Workplan would be provided to Member States in November 2021 as part of a comprehensive update.

56. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/INF/1.

#### **Update on human resources management**

57. The Administration gave a slide presentation illustrating key developments in human resources management in 2020–2021. IOM's global workforce consisted of almost 17,000 staff members, representing an increase of 7,000 staff over the previous five years. Some 173 nationalities were represented, and almost 80 per cent of staff were from non-OECD DAC countries. At the P-4 level and above, however, the figure was only 37 per cent – a ratio that needed to increase.

58. While a broad balance had been achieved in terms of gender equality of international professional staff up to P-4 level, at higher grades – particularly D-1 and D-2– that was not the case, and a greater balance would be sought in the coming years. Since 2015 there had been an improvement in gender representation, nonetheless; 51 per cent of all international staff were women, while the figure stood at 43 per cent at grade P-4 and above.

59. Key activities in 2020 and 2021 had included developing policies to respond to the challenges of COVID-19, focused on staff welfare and retention; the outsourcing of health claims processing, as a result of which average processing times had dropped from six weeks to 3.7 days; recalibrating the performance management system; the launch of the Human Resources Handbook; and the introduction of the first gender-neutral parental leave policy in the United Nations system. Challenges in the area of human resources included embracing the IGF and the Business Transformation process, assisting with the implementation of structural reform, and engaging with United Nations reforms.

60. The second global staff survey, conducted in April 2021, had shown many positive findings, especially in the areas of staff engagement in IOM's mandate and work and their perception of the Organization's leadership. Lower scores had been obtained, however, in areas including performance management and the impact of COVID-19 on staff members' living and working environments. Nonetheless, the trend overall was positive compared to the 2019 survey.

61. Looking ahead, the Human Resources Management Division would soon be launching a people strategy for 2022–2027. The strategy was informed by a number of factors – including lessons learned from COVID-19 – and aimed to attract a world-class workforce to deliver on global migration needs, build capable leadership in the face of a changing migration landscape and improve staff welfare. In terms of staffing, there would be a shift from rotation towards mobility, and a formal distinction would be made between rotational, tenured and time-bound positions. At the same time, policies would be revised to improve and simplify employment contracts. Increased work flexibility would remain after COVID-19; staff were being consulted on the issue, and best practices in other United Nations agencies were being considered. The Division intended to pay particular attention to performance management and to improving diversity, especially with regard to non-represented Member States.

62. Improving human resources, however, required greater investment. IOM had 57 professional human resources staff – compared to approximately 200 for other similar-sized United Nations agencies – and only 23 of those were funded from the core budget. The dramatic increase in IOM's workforce over the previous five years – while human resources funding had remained static – had translated into decreased relative investment in staff learning and development. A strengthened, centrally funded human resources structure was therefore needed.

63. Several Member States expressed appreciation for the detailed information provided. One Member State asked whether equitable geographical representation would be reflected in the people strategy, given the importance of the issue both at Headquarters and in the field. The same Member State said that conditions of service for staff should be guided by the United Nations common system standards established by the International Civil Service Commission. Another Member State, enquiring about possible structural obstacles to equal opportunities for all IOM staff, asked whether there was any provision of day care for staff with young children. Several representatives expressed the hope that greater gender diversity would be achieved in higher-level posts; one asked whether specific measures were being taken to ensure not just geographical but other forms of diversity in the Organization's staffing. Two others welcomed the forthcoming update to the gender equality policy and the encouraging assessment of the inclusion of gender in IOM evaluations, but called for further work in those areas.

64. The Administration, replying to the points raised, said that diversity would be a key element in the people strategy. IOM followed the United Nations salary scales established by the International Civil Service Commission. While there were no structural obstacles to equal opportunities at IOM itself, Member States in the broader United Nations system had not been in favour of allowing the education grant to cover preschool education when the matter had been considered five years previously. The issue contributed to the number of women with young families who left international organizations. Achieving gender parity for higher-level posts was one of the Organization's main priorities.

65. The Deputy Director General for Management and Reform drew attention to the lack of resources available to the Human Resources Management Division to carry out its important work.

66. The Standing Committee took note of the presentation made by the Administration.

## **Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on Budget Reform**

67. The Chairperson of the Working Group on Budget Reform reported on the Group's recent meeting, which had been attended by Member States from all regions. The Administration had provided the Working Group with additional information on various scenarios proposed by IOM to strengthen its regular budget. The Director General had reiterated that IOM's operating model, based on projectized funding and the policy of zero nominal growth, made it difficult for the Organization to finance some of its core functions and could compromise IOM's ability to respond to increasingly complex migration challenges in a timely and effective manner. Member States had taken note of the additional information provided. While there was general agreement on the need to increase and strengthen the current core budget, some delegations had been in favour of having more time, in order to continue to analyse the different options before reaching a decision.

68. During the ensuing discussion, several countries expressed support for the budget reforms under way and acknowledged the importance of having reliable funding for essential core functions. It was necessary to proceed systematically, however, on the basis of detailed information; to that end, figures quantifying the Organization's needs, and a table reflecting financial costs and benefits from reforms implemented, would be useful. Two Member States endorsed the three-step approach that had been proposed by a Member State during the meeting of the Working Group. Regardless of the reforms that were decided upon, the core structure should be regularly reviewed in line with changing tasks and resources.

69. One Member State said that the only sustainable solution to address the strain on IOM's funding model was to ensure that all core functions of the Organization were included in a core budget financed from a reliable source – namely, assessed contributions. For core positions, the priority should be on institutional support functions over policy functions. Another Member State added that raising assessed contributions was a good way to spread the cost fairly; her country was willing to increase its core contribution. While voluntary contributions could also be a useful source of funding, they did not offer predictability or sustainability, and were therefore of a complementary nature only. She encouraged IOM to consider broadening its funding support base and to reach out to new non-traditional donors.

70. The representative of one Member State said that it was premature to discuss funding options before reaching agreement on what should be funded through the core budget. It would be useful for funding proposals to include more information on activities that could be discontinued, along with a risk-based analysis of three funding scenarios: no change to the current budget structure; an increase of less than 50 per cent; and a 50 per cent increase with no commitment by Member States to provide a predictable level of unearmarked funding. She expressed support for the suggestion that any agreement should include a review structure to take stock of how new investments were addressing the Organization's existing gaps, and for the Administration's proposal to transfer Chief of Mission and Resource Management Officer positions to the core budget.

71. The representative of Belgium announced that her country would give IOM EUR 4 million in unearmarked contributions over the following four years and encouraged other Member States to donate unearmarked funds.

72. The Director General thanked the representative of Belgium for the country's pledge of an unearmarked contribution. It was necessary to build on the common shared agreement on the need to reassess IOM's funding model; the Organization's field-oriented approach required a core funding structure that allowed it to scale up or down at field level. Other options were for IOM to reduce its footprint worldwide or to reassess, in conjunction with Member States, what the Organization's core functions should be.



73. Responding to a question from a Member State, he gave examples of how the project-related overhead income was used, including the transfer of over 40 essential positions from the Administrative of the Budget to OSI; however, such solutions were not sustainable in the long term.

74. Chiefs of Mission and Resource Management Officers should be included in the core structure of the Organization, as they were key to the success of IOM's operations; one Chief of Mission could also be assigned to three or four countries. The Administration's vision of the core structure was on the table for discussion with Member States; once agreement had been reached on the core structure and on which resources were to be funded through the core budget, discussion of a specific funding model could follow.

75. The Standing Committee took note of the report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on Budget Reform and of the comments made by Member States and the Administration.

### **Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on IOM Partnerships, Governance and Organizational Priorities**

76. The Chairperson of the Working Group on IOM Partnerships, Governance and Organizational Priorities noted that the Working Group had met three times during 2021 to discuss several issues, notably the procedure for setting the agenda of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance and the regional groupings in order to allow for the equitable access of all Member States to the IOM Council Bureau. On the latter subject, Member States appeared close to reaching consensus regarding an "IOM model" of four regional groupings: the Africa Group, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries, the Asia-Pacific Group and the Expanded Europe Group. Throughout discussions on the issue, Member States had made it clear that consensus was the only way forward; that the regional groupings concerned would serve only for the purpose of nominating candidates for election to the IOM Council Bureau, remaining informal in nature; and that the issue should be resolved as soon as possible in the interests of inclusiveness. A welcome spirit of multilateralism, compromise and flexibility had been shown.

77. During the ensuing discussion, speakers reaffirmed the importance of finalizing the regional groupings in order to guarantee the equitable access of all Member States to the Council Bureau. A large number of representatives supported the model proposed and the process by which it had been arrived at, observing that it was a fair compromise which effectively addressed the concerns expressed during previous discussions.

78. The representatives of two Member States expressed their willingness to support the consensus position outlined by the Chairperson, despite their initial preference for the alternative model based on the United Nations General Assembly. One further commented that in his view the process had not been sufficiently transparent and called for a more inclusive approach in the future; the other said that his country reserved the right to revisit the issue if the solution proved unsatisfactory.

79. The Standing Committee recommended that the Council endorse the proposed IOM model of informal regional groupings for the equitable access of all Member States to the Council Bureau, as described in Annex I of the Chairperson's letter dated 7 October 2021 and presented in the Annex to the present report. With the agreement of the Council, the election of the Council Bureau for the November 2021 session would take place according to the IOM model.

### **Update on the IOM evaluation function: strategy, workplan and peer review**

80. The Deputy Director General for Management and Reform highlighted the importance of the evaluation function, which was essential to maximize the impact of funding entrusted to IOM. It had therefore been made a standalone function, as reflected in the September 2021 update to the Charter of the Office of the Inspector General, and would have a direct reporting line to the Director General through the Executive Office following the restructuring of the Organization. However, Member States needed to support evaluation work by ensuring that it was adequately funded. One of the proposed new positions in the Programme and Budget for 2022 was allocated to evaluation, while the function would also continue to be supported through MIRAC funding. She therefore urged Member States to consider contributing to evaluation activities in their future donations.

81. The Administration gave a slide presentation outlining efforts to develop the robust evaluation systems required to strengthen organizational effectiveness and move towards more evidence-based programming. Evaluation played an important institutional role, notably by fostering a learning culture in which knowledge from IOM operations could be analysed and shared, and by improving decision-making and accountability at the country, regional and global levels.

82. The primary objective of the *OIG Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy 2021–2023* was to contribute to strengthening IOM's assessment of evidence and achievements, institutional learning and performance. Recent work towards achieving the outcomes of the Strategy included the launch of a feasibility study on establishing a quality control mechanism for both central and decentralized evaluations. In terms of learning initiatives, there had been a briefing for staff on the recently published *IOM Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines*, while work had continued on the roll-out of an e-learning course on monitoring and evaluation and the expansion of the monitoring and evaluation network. The proposed positioning of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit within the Department of Strategic Planning and Organizational Performance would strengthen synergies across evaluation, risk, compliance and results-based management. IOM also intended to boost its presence within evaluation bodies such as the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group.

83. The biennial evaluation workplan 2021–2022 had been drawn up following a consultative process based on specific topics highlighted by Member States, debates within the United Nations Evaluation Group, commitments undertaken by IOM through policies or Council resolutions, and emerging needs. The peer review of the IOM evaluation function completed by the United Nations Evaluation Group and the OECD DAC Evaluation Network contained 10 recommendations for IOM's consideration, three of which had been identified as requiring input from the Standing Committee. Regarding the recommendation to strengthen the relationship between the evaluation function and the governing bodies, the Administration agreed that evaluation should be given greater visibility. The restructuring of the Organization would provide a good opportunity to reconsider how the function should report to the governing bodies.

84. Another recommendation was to allocate an agreed percentage of the value of all projects to the evaluation function, with a gradual increase to allow the growth and professionalization of its services. Although the feasibility of that proposal would be examined, the project-based nature of IOM's operating model made it difficult to allocate predictable, long-term funding to the evaluation function. Where possible, missions sought to secure a budget line for evaluation in project proposals, but that was not supported by all donors; an exception were IOM Development Fund projects, for which IOM had control of the budget and could make evaluation a mandatory element. The issue of financing would, however, feed into the broader discussion on budget reform and the strengthening of the core structure.

85. Lastly, the Administration agreed with the recommendation to update the IOM Evaluation Policy to enhance the independence, credibility and integrity of the evaluation function, and to submit it to the governing bodies for approval. Such an update would also provide the chance to specify that the evaluation function should be fully independent.

86. The Standing Committee took note of the presentation made by the Administration.

### **Provisional workplan for the IOM governing bodies during 2022**

87. The Director General, introducing the document entitled Provisional workplan for the IOM governing bodies during 2022 (S/29/5), said that in response to a request by Member States for greater predictability regarding the substantive issues to be addressed by IOM governing bodies, a proposed list of subjects would be prepared in consultation with Member States ahead of the relevant 2022 meetings.

88. One Member State and the representative of one regional group welcomed the proposed workplan and requested that summaries of the proposed discussion themes, and other relevant documents, should be sent out in good time.

89. The Director General drew attention to the fact that the Organization's seventieth anniversary would be celebrated at the upcoming 112th Session of the Council. In addition to a specific commemoration at the first meeting, a high-level segment would be held. The proposed theme for the high-level debate was the impact of COVID-19 on the migratory landscape and its future implications in terms of migration management, but it could be extended to include the impact of the pandemic on mobility in general.

90. He urged those Member States wishing to take part in the high-level debate to propose the highest possible level of participants for inclusion on the list of speakers for the event.

91. One Member State said that it would be useful to have more information pertaining to the high-level segment, in order to convince high-level delegates to attend at such short notice.

92. One representative, welcoming the proposed high-level debate, said that he hoped the debate would address substantive issues and be conducted in such a way as to achieve real commitment in the area of migration and mobility challenges.

93. The Director General said that building back better would require the relaunch of both global trade and global mobility – the two were intertwined. However, while migrants and migration had a role to play in tackling that challenge, COVID-19 had brought global mobility to a standstill, which was unprecedented. As migration gradually began to resume, it was important for the international community to avoid mobility becoming two-tier or even three-tier in nature. The high-level debate should therefore include representatives from all regions of the world – and from countries of origin, transit and destination – in order to identify the main challenges and shape guidelines for the work ahead.

94. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/5.

**Exchange of views on items proposed by the membership:**

**Update on the roll-out of IOM's Policy on the Full Spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration**

95. The Deputy Director General for Operations said that IOM's Policy on the Full Spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration addressed the need for a reliable and trustworthy system in order to minimize the ethical and operational dilemmas of work in that field.

96. The Administration, introducing the Policy in a slide presentation, said that it had been developed through global internal consultation and sought to bring together the different elements of assisted voluntary return and reintegration, in order to promote a holistic organizational approach to return migration and make lessons learned available to governments. As an overarching framework for the Organization's work in that field, the Policy's 10 guiding principles were aligned with IOM's mandate and provided a comprehensive, rights-based vision for the standardization of work. The guiding principles would also help protect the credibility of assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes, which had often been misrepresented. The Administration would continue to hold consultations and briefings on the operationalization of the Policy with governments and civil society organizations. The next step was to consider, together with countries, how to implement the policy and assess vulnerabilities in a way that protected migrants and facilitated safe and dignified return. Some of the countries involved in discussions had tested a potential due diligence model for assessing vulnerability and had made suggestions on changes and the use of other tools. The Administration sought feedback that could inform future iterations of the Policy.

97. A number of Member States welcomed the Policy presented by the Administration, with some highlighting the human rights-based approach. One regional group drew the attention of stakeholders to the policy aim of providing capacity-building as a key element of good governance. Recalling objective 21 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the regional group called for IOM to further the development of the policy with a focus on coherence, inclusion, the individual, resilience, human rights and the promotion of partnerships and cooperation. One Member State, welcoming that IOM had developed a clear policy for its staff and to advise countries and the importance afforded to reintegration therein, observed that the development of the policy provided an opportunity for IOM to act as a convener and to support States through capacity-building. Another Member State called for IOM to play a central role in supporting European and African Member States on return, readmission and sustainable reintegration, since implementation of the Global Compact would help achieve safe, regular and orderly migration for the benefit of all, provided that a common approach was embraced by all Member States.

98. A different regional group recognized the need for collaboration among countries of origin, transit and destination and international organizations on return, readmission and sustainable reintegration, and recalled States' international legal obligation to accept the return of their nationals. The group supported the whole-of-government approach to ensuring horizontal and vertical policy coherence and noted that the guiding principles offered a practical framework for aligning standards with good practices. Lessons learned from joint projects with IOM had helped develop the region's strategy on voluntary return and reintegration, which underlined the importance of an effective legal and operational framework and echoed many of the Policy's elements.

99. One representative appealed for greater support on assisted voluntary return, noting the difference between integrating voluntary and forced returnees. The Organization could play a role in supporting forced returnees in their reintegration and through advocacy for a realistic approach in that regard.

100. One speaker noted the issues of capacity raised by the Policy, which gave IOM multiple roles. Another speaker noted that not all Member States had been given the opportunity to air their views on the Policy prior to its release, but expressed appreciation for briefings held on the Policy and its inclusion on the agenda of the Standing Committee, as well as for plans to adjust the Policy as necessary. Although concerns about the extended vulnerability assessment remained, the Administration's assurance of cooperation with Member States on the Policy's implementation was welcome.

101. One delegate particularly welcomed the provision of clear guidance for IOM staff and their counterparts and the focus on partnerships. While fuller consultation prior to the release of the Policy would have been appreciated, the discussions held by country offices were welcome. The rights-based approach should not lead to delays in the returns currently facilitated by IOM, and individual vulnerability screening should not replace assessment under the principle of non-refoulement, which remained the preserve of national authorities and regional courts. IOM should play its role in return initiatives led by the European Union and increase cooperation with Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. The use of digital tools in IOM's operations in the European Union should be considered.

102. One Member State said that effective return, readmission and reintegration required greater coordination between destination and origin countries and stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector. Another welcomed the effort to ensure a consistent approach across operations concerning return, noting the guiding principles in particular.

103. The Deputy Director General for Operations welcomed Member States' engagement in the development of the Policy. Responding to comments, the Administration clarified that post-arrival reintegration assistance would continue to be provided to voluntary and forced returnees; the new Policy would also allow IOM to provide support in the pre-departure stage, without involvement in the movement aspect of forced return. The Administration was assessing the interoperability of digital tools.

104. The Director General, responding to comments, said that, as an internal policy, the Policy on the Full Spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration had been developed through inclusive discussion within the Organization. Its operationalization would be discussed with Member States, since the success of voluntary return and reintegration depended on partnership and cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination. Solutions would be tailored to each situation, which would be addressed under the common framework. There was also a need to prevent further court disputes over voluntary return and reintegration programmes that could undermine the Policy. While the Administration had put forward ideas on effective reintegration, countries of origin could take greater ownership of that process and a broader scope for cooperation in those countries, including with civil society, would help ensure success. The role of IOM in that regard was to bring together stakeholders and engage them in the reintegration process. The two main challenges in reintegration were its sustainability and the distinct needs of forced returnees. Although IOM did not participate in forced return, the Organization cooperated with countries of origin to foster the reintegration of forced returnees. The Administration remained open to discussion with Member States on how to improve reintegration prospects in countries of origin.

105. The Standing Committee took note of the presentation by the Administration and of the comments by Member States.

## Report on the IOM Development Fund

106. The Administration introduced the document entitled IOM Development Fund – Status report: 1 January to 30 September 2021 (S/29/8) and gave a short slide presentation. Over USD 16 million had been made available in 2021 to support developing Member States. It thanked the Governments of Austria and Belgium for their generous earmarked contributions to the Fund and the Government of Italy for supporting a Junior Professional Officer position, to be shared with the Immigration and Border Management Division.

107. Document S/29/8 listed projects approved until the end of September 2021, which covered various thematic areas with the aim of furthering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The COVID-19 pandemic had caused some delays in project implementation, but creative approaches had enabled many activities to continue. Two reviews of past projects had been carried out. The first had focused on the IOM Gender Marker in 27 projects funded between 2017 and 2020, demonstrating the Organization’s commitment to promoting and achieving gender equality. The second had reviewed 18 completed and 34 active projects involving diaspora engagement, funded between 2015 and 2020, with the aim of identifying positive findings and best practices that could be replicated. A booklet had also been produced to serve as an internal and external resource on the Fund as a seed funding mechanism while featuring selected Fund projects which exemplified the power of seed funding. Each of the selected projects had successfully grown and been scaled up into larger initiatives leading towards more impactful change.

108. The Administration gave a second slide presentation, which included a short video, describing a project on strengthening national capacities in applying international standards to improve labour migration management in the Middle East and North Africa. The project had initially benefited Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, but represented a good example of seed funding with the potential to support larger-scale initiatives on labour migration in the region, such as the “Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa (THAMM)” programme jointly launched by Egypt, the European Union and Germany. In addition to Sustainable Development Goals 8 and 10, it was relevant to objectives 1, 5 and 23 of the Global Compact. The project had focused heavily on analysing legal frameworks, generating policy evidence for consultations with governments and other stakeholders, conducting research and promoting dialogue on common approaches to labour migration management. From an operational perspective, investing in research had proven indispensable, and the Administration encouraged Member States to support further investment.

109. General appreciation was expressed to the Fund and its donors for the projects it supported and to the Administration for the effective and transparent manner in which the Fund was administered, and several representatives expressed specific appreciation for projects carried out in their countries and regions, including the project described in the second slide presentation. In that regard, one representative echoed the call for more investment in research and encouraged more donations to the Fund. Another representative, welcoming the allocation of USD 15 million to the Fund annually in line with Council Resolution No. 1390 of 24 November 2020 on budget regulations and practices, said that the increase in requests for support from the Fund demonstrated its success. A third pointed to the innovation sparked by the Fund as a catalyst for sustainable, long-term efforts. Noting the increase in requests for projects linked to migration, the environment and climate change, she sought further information on the number, themes and substance of such projects. She also welcomed the project review focused on the IOM Gender Marker, which had revealed that 70 per cent of projects reviewed included measures to promote the equal participation of women.

110. One representative, speaking on behalf of a regional group, highlighted the growing need for the Fund to help Member States in addressing the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mobility, especially in view of persistent vaccine inequity, trade distortions and uneven economic

recovery. The scaling-up of seed-funded projects allowed for continuity and expansion. Another representative asked how Member States could contribute to scaling up the project described in the second slide presentation given by the Administration.

111. The Administration said that 54 projects financed since 2010 had focused on capacity-building related to disaster risk reduction and migration, the environment, and climate change, to a total of USD 11 million. Further information could be provided in due course. The interest shown in the specific project described was welcome; key target countries would certainly be involved as the initiative was further scaled up.

112. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/8.

### **Report on the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States**

113. The Acting Legal Counsel introduced the document entitled Eighth annual report of the Director General on improvements in the privileges and immunities granted to the Organization by States (S/29/6), which covered the period from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021. During that time, agreements in line with Council Resolution No. 1266 of 26 November 2013 with three Member States had entered into force, as had an additional agreement concerning IOM's presence in the United Nations Information and Communications Technology Facility in Valencia, Spain. The total number of Member States, observer States and other places where the Organization had been granted full privileges and immunities that met the criteria contained in Council Resolution No. 1266 stood at 101; however, the fact that a further 84 had yet to grant such privileges and immunities was of particular concern.

114. The Director General, acknowledging that the granting of privileges and immunities was a complex internal issue for many countries, underscored the urgent need to align the legal status of IOM with that of other United Nations agencies. Operating without such privileges and immunities exposed IOM to significant risks.

115. The Standing Committee took note of document S/29/6 and recommended that the Council remain seized of the matter and reiterate its call to all States to grant the Organization privileges and immunities substantially similar to those of the United Nations specialized agencies.

### **Closure of the session**

116. The Chairperson declared the Twenty-ninth Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance closed on Wednesday, 27 October 2021, at 12.20 p.m.





**Annex**

**IOM model for regional groups**

**Africa Group**

Algeria  
Angola  
Benin  
Botswana  
Burkina Faso  
Burundi  
Cabo Verde  
Cameroon  
Central African Republic  
Chad  
Comoros  
Congo  
Côte d'Ivoire  
Democratic Republic of the Congo  
Djibouti  
Egypt  
Eritrea  
Eswatini  
Ethiopia  
Gabon  
Gambia  
Ghana  
Guinea  
Guinea-Bissau  
Kenya  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Libya  
Madagascar  
Malawi  
Mali  
Mauritania  
Mauritius  
Morocco  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Rwanda  
Sao Tome and Principe  
Senegal  
Seychelles  
Sierra Leone  
Somalia  
South Africa  
South Sudan  
Sudan  
Togo  
Tunisia  
Uganda

United Republic of Tanzania  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

**Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries**

Antigua and Barbuda  
Argentina  
Bahamas  
Belize  
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)  
Brazil  
Chile  
Colombia  
Costa Rica  
Cuba  
Dominica  
Dominican Republic  
Ecuador  
El Salvador  
Grenada  
Guatemala  
Guyana  
Haiti  
Honduras  
Jamaica  
Mexico  
Nicaragua  
Panama  
Paraguay  
Peru  
Saint Kitts and Nevis  
Saint Lucia  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
Suriname  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Uruguay  
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

**Asia-Pacific Group**

Afghanistan  
Australia  
Bangladesh  
Cambodia  
China  
Cook Islands  
Fiji  
India  
Iran (Islamic Republic of)  
Japan  
Jordan  
Kazakhstan  
Kiribati  
Kyrgyzstan  
Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Maldives  
Marshall Islands  
Micronesia (Federated States of)  
Mongolia  
Myanmar  
Nauru  
Nepal  
New Zealand  
Pakistan  
Palau  
Papua New Guinea  
Philippines  
Republic of Korea  
Samoa  
Solomon Islands  
Sri Lanka  
Tajikistan  
Thailand  
Timor-Leste  
Tonga  
Turkmenistan  
Tuvalu  
Uzbekistan  
Vanuatu  
Viet Nam  
Yemen

**Expanded Europe Group**

Albania  
Armenia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Belarus  
Belgium  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Canada  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czechia  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Greece  
Holy See  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Israel  
Italy  
Latvia  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
North Macedonia  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Republic of Moldova  
Romania  
Russian Federation  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom  
United States of America