

## GSAC 2024 SCPF Speech

T. Pacifico

Dear Chair,

Dear Ambassadors, representatives of the IOM member states and observers,

Dear Director General,

Dear Deputy Directors General,

Dear colleagues,

Today I have the pleasure to address you highlighting the key achievements that the IOM Global Staff Association Committee has made so far, representing and advocating for the rights and well-being of over 17,000 national and international staff members globally.

The first critical achievement has been securing full membership of IOM's GSAC into the Federation of International Civil Servants Associations - FICSA. FICSA is an organization that brings together staff associations of international organizations to collectively represent and advocate for the rights and interests of international civil servants, raising issues directly with the UN leadership. The IOM GSAC's membership in FICSA signifies recognition of the Global Staff Association's efforts and contributions to the international civil service community, ensuring that the concerns and perspectives of IOM staff are heard and considered in global dialogues including the UN General Assembly, the International Civil Servants Commission, and the UN Chief Executives Board.

The Staff Association recognizes that staff members are the Organization's most important asset and any progress and achievements presented to you today are possible solely through the hard work of a large and committed workforce. Any organizational progress and reform must first and foremost take into account the impact on the personnel. Employment conditions and job security are essential for the well-being of our staff and their families, and as a consequence to the effectiveness of the Organization. As highlighted in the latest MOPAN report, many IOM staff members are on temporary contracts or in positions graded lower in comparison to other UN agencies. The current GSAC has collaborated with the IOM Administration to improve the new contractual framework and modalities. The new policy greatly simplifies and improves IOM's contract architecture, leading to better all-round employment conditions. This collaboration fosters our aspiration for better job security and improvement of work-life balance.

The Global Staff Association also reiterates the importance of staff welfare as a core aspect of IOM's duty of care as an employer. It is imperative that staff welfare services are made available to all staff in offices worldwide, however remote, and that staff welfare is an integral part of decision-making on working conditions and policies. The Staff Association commends the progress made in this regard and encourages further investment in staff well-being initiatives and structures.

The GSAC has also actively advocated for the strengthening and improvement of the internal justice system. While progress has been made, substantial reform is still needed in this area. The focus should be on implementing practical solutions, having a proactive, independent and appropriately resourced

structure, such as enhanced conflict prevention mechanisms and fostering a respectful working environment, empowering staff with information, as well as advocating for measures that safeguard the well-being of members involved in often lengthy investigation procedures. Ensuring a fair, transparent, and effective internal justice system is essential.

As we go through an increasingly dynamic and changing organizational environment, the role of the Staff Association has become more critical than ever. The Organization is undergoing significant restructuring at Headquarters and at the regional level. This has posed numerous challenges for staff as they navigate the transitions. Such changes lead to uncertainty and anxiety regarding roles, responsibilities, and job security.

On this front, the Staff Association has played a vital role in providing guidance, and support to staff members and raised key concerns with the IOM Administration. By addressing these concerns, facilitating communication between staff and management, and advocating for fair treatment and transparency, the GSAC ensures that employees are heard. We continue to advocate for the Administration to listen and invest in communication, share the rationale for the changes and assess the individual impact.

The GSAC also wishes to commend the efforts made to improve diversity and inclusion. These efforts should be part of a long-term strategy that embraces all aspects of diversity and fosters a balanced approach, leading to sustainable change in organizational culture beyond mere numbers and statistics. While these changes require time and a thoughtful approach, we trust the results will be meaningful and lasting, if the plan remains balanced and sensitive to the highly complex environment we operate in.

IOM has one of the largest staff associations in the UN. I would like to emphasize the essential role of staff representation, especially in a complex and diverse framework such as the United Nations common system. IOM staff who work across the globe are the backbone of our organization, interacting with migrants and member states, and making IOM what it is today even in the most challenging contexts.

The work of GSAC is not just addressing grievances; it is about ensuring that all voices are heard, and their contributions recognized, promoting positive change and preemptively addressing critical issues. It is about building a fair environment where each staff member can thrive to the best of their abilities. The ability to perform this role of staff representation, giving a voice to those who cannot speak up and being able to address critical, sensitive issues, without fear of individual retaliation remains an important foundation for a healthy and fair organization. The Global Staff Association has enjoyed an open and honest dialogue with the current IOM Administration during its current mandate, and we are grateful for this approach.

In light of this, as the Global Staff Association we reaffirm our commitment to fostering an organizational culture where every voice feels heard, every perspective valued, and every individual knows that they can work with confidence, focus and peace of mind, because the organization is taking care of them.

On behalf of the gGlobal Staff Association elected staff representatives, I would like to thank the global staff association members who entrusted us with the role of relaying their voices and messages. On behalf of the global staff association members that I have the honor to represent today, I would like

to thank the IOM Director General and Administration for having listened and engaged with the feedback and recommendations we provided. By continuing to listen and engage with the workforce, the organization will be stronger, resilient and more effective. We share the same objectives, and we wish to achieve them together, striving for excellence internally and externally. We also wish to thank the Member States represented today for their continued support to IOM.

Lastly, the IOM Global Staff Association wishes to thank the entire IOM workforce all over the world. We are proud to represent you. Without you, IOM would not be what it is today.

(13.06.2024)