



# SWEDEN

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STATEMENT

BY

SWEDEN

*ON BEHALF OF THE NORDIC  
COUNTRIES*

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Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ninetieth Session of the IOM Council of the United Nations

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## **Nordic Statement at IOM Council 2005**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Norway and my own country, Sweden.

First, we would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. We are looking forward to working with you in the coming year. We would also like to thank the Director General and the deputy Director General for their introductory statements.

We have followed this year's International Dialogue on Migration with great interest. The topic was well chosen, given that the report of the Global Commission on International Migration, that deals, inter alia, with policy coherence, was launched in October. The discussion we have had over the past two days is also very timely in preparation for next year's High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in the UN General Assembly. We believe that the GCIM report will be a most relevant element for the High Level Dialogue, and expect to discuss the recommendations from the report in this forum.

There are however concrete recommendations in the GCIM report that we can reflect on and react to already now. Firstly, the proposed Inter-Agency Global Migration Facility: The Nordic countries firmly believe that strengthened co-ordination is needed, not only at the global level, but indeed, and perhaps foremost, also at the regional and national levels, as was also stressed during the Dialogue yesterday and which is also

underlined in the GCIM's report. Any co-ordination mechanism should probably be less formal and smaller in size and in scope. However - and bearing in mind the recommendations related to the governance of international migration - further reflection is necessary before we can conclude this discussion.

We understand that the UN Secretary-General has asked the Heads of the Agencies that form the Geneva Migration Group (GMG), including the Director General of IOM, to look into the possibility of establishing such a facility, possibly transforming, and enhancing, the GMG itself. This is a reasonable and realistic suggestion and we would like to hear more from the IOM Administration on it. Any co-ordinating mechanism would, in our view, benefit from State involvement, even if it were only on an information sharing basis, and we would like to urge IOM as well as the other agencies in the GMG to take this into account when dealing with the Secretary-General's task.

Given that IOM is a key organisation in the field of migration, it would be very valuable to hear and discuss your views on the GCIM report, and the impact it might have on your work and on IOM as an organisation. We regret that the time allotted for this item tomorrow seems too short to allow for such a thorough discussion.

The Nordic countries welcome the initiative to establish a Business Advisory Board. Labour migration is a central driving force for increased international migration and a closer dialogue with the business sector would give a good opportunity to focus on corporate social responsibility, including decent work. We would however like to invite

IOM to hold discussions with its member states on the mandate and functioning of the Business Advisory Board.

Mr. Chairman,

The Nordic countries have on many occasions, in the Council as well as in other fora, urged IOM to concentrate its activities on a core mandate. This year is no exception. We remain concerned about the fragmentation of IOM's activities and operations.

The Nordic countries have therefore welcomed the initiative taken by the former chairman, Ambassador de Alba, to discuss the IOM strategy. We have taken active part in the informal discussions that he has so ably led. We understand that ambassador de Alba will present some ideas regarding IOM strategy and governance tomorrow, under agenda item IOM Strategy. We believe that these ideas will be a good basis for further discussions on both strategy and governance issues and we look forward to actively participate in those deliberations. We therefore invite the new chairman to continue these informal discussions with interested member states.

Mr Chairman,

The Nordic countries welcome IOM's efforts to rationalise and decentralise some of its administrative functions. We would however like to caution that the rapid growth of the organisation in activities and staff will lead to increased financial needs, most of which are met by voluntary contributions. Given that the Council has not been willing to

accept any growth in the administrative part of the budget, and that there are so many outstanding contributions to it, IOM will soon come to a crossroads. You will either have to slow down your expansion or take more radical action to deal with the problem of arrears and zero nominal growth.

The Nordic countries are prepared to accept zero real growth in the administrative part of the budget. But the biggest problem for IOM is the arrears and we can only – as we have repeatedly done – express our concerns about this chronic situation. We believe that the IOM Administration needs to make more concerted efforts in trying to solve this problem. We also believe that being member of an international organisation brings with it responsibilities towards the organisation, its beneficiaries and indeed towards the fellow members and not paying the assessed contributions is not fulfilling these responsibilities.

The Nordic countries are therefore looking forward to receiving feedback from the IOM Administration in due time on what extra measures and steps will be taken to come to terms with this situation.

Finally, the Nordic countries welcome IOM's resolve to affiliate to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, providing a secure and reliable social security scheme for all IOM staff. This step is something that the Staff Council has been asking for many times, and it is encouraging to see this responsiveness towards staff demands. The Staff Council has, however, also asked for a more regular and inclusive dialogue with the IOM Administration. The Nordic countries see merits in such closer

dialogue between staff and administration, since – after all – the staff is your most valuable asset.

Mr Chairman,

The fact that we are this year not making any specific reference to the importance of gender equality perspectives in your work does not mean that we do not think that is important. It is! But we wanted to focus our statement on a select number of other issues, believing that you are all already convinced about the Nordic countries' commitment to gender issues.

Thank you!

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