

101st Session of the IOM Council

Austrian Statement

Ambassador Christian Strohal

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, congratulations to you and the Bureau. We welcome the new Members St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Myanmar joining at this Council.

I am delighted to speak in my national capacity again, even if this does not make much difference.

At the outset let me express Austria's sincere **appreciation for the leadership of the Director General and the Deputy Director General**, as well as for the dedicated work of IOM staff in the field and at Headquarters.

2012 has been an important year for IOM, building on the successful 60th Anniversary Council of last year, where Member States expressed broad support for the role of IOM as the globally leading Organisation for Migration. Last year's Council also called on IOM to engage actively in the debate leading up to the second **High-Level Dialogue in 2013**.

Austria commends IOM for the substantive preparations it has started with regard to the High-Level Dialogue, and we welcome that IOM,

together with UNFPA, has been preparing input on migration issues for the UN High-level Committee on Programmes. Austria equally welcomes IOM's outreach activities in NY and in the framework of the IDM, which was again a very successful exercise this year here in Geneva. We encourage the Organisation to continue these activities in NY and to update Member States on a regular basis.

Austria believes that the **High-Level Dialogue** will be a unique opportunity for IOM to assert itself as the world's leading Organisation dealing with Migration. Due to its longstanding experience IOM clearly has a comparative advantage in the area of migration management, which in our view must be made visible at the High-Level Dialogue. The Resolution adopted at this Council meeting is an important signal Member States of IOM are sending to the discussions in the GA.

In 2012 we have seen major developments in **IOM's response to crisis management**. Austria commends IOM for the elaboration of the Migration Crisis Operational Framework, which was timely after last year's events in Libya. We appreciate that the Resolution was adopted by consensus.

Austria encourages IOM to promote this framework in discussions with other humanitarian partners, in part within the framework of the IASC. We believe that it is a substantial and valuable contribution to the

humanitarian debate in general. In addition, Austria believes that this Operational Framework is an important contribution IOM should make to the HLD2013.

Let me turn to the **budget discussions** we have had over the year. The consolidation of the budget resolutions and the reduction of the Operational Income Reserve have been important steps in the budget reform process. Yet, we have to be aware that the reform is far from being finalised, as key questions remain unresolved, in particular with a view to creating a more sustainable administrative budget. Austria encourages the Administration to enhance outreach to new and non-traditional donors and to present the feasibility study as soon as possible.

A comprehensive budget reform has to be a joint endeavour both by Member States and the Administration. We thus ask the Administration for continued guidance with regard to the budget reform process. While Member States remain committed to building on the progress achieved so far, we believe that reforming the budget in a sustainable and long-term perspective can be achieved only by a joint effort.

Finally, let me briefly turn to an upcoming conference in Austria with regard to integration of migrants and fundamental rights. The

participation of migrants in our societies constitutes a benefit not only for migrants themselves, but for all members of society. Living together in harmony means building on shared rules and common values. In this context, a high-level Conference entitled “Integration, Fundamental Rights and European Values” is being organised in cooperation with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency in December 2012 in Vienna. With the valuable support of IOM, this expert conference aims at discussing how integration efforts based on respect for fundamental rights can improve social cohesion in the diverse European societies. We look forward to welcoming DG Swing at this Conference.

In conclusion, let me express Austria’s full support for IOM’s work for the benefit of migrants worldwide. We are confident that IOM will live up to current and future challenges and play the central role Member States expect it to play in the field of migration.