

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, and Distinguished Colleagues:

To begin, I would like to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Hannan and the Council Bureau on their election. IOM member states will undertake an extensive agenda over the coming year as we continue to address organizational challenges – such as the continued efforts on budget reform, the selection of the Director General for the next five years, and various international discussions on migration. The United States looks forward to working with you and with our fellow member states to carry out this agenda and move the organization forward. In this context I would like to welcome the new member states. I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to Ambassador Strohol of Austria for his leadership as Chair of the Council this past year, keeping us all on task and on target, leading to the successful passage of a consolidated budget resolution this summer and the resolutions put before this Council.

Over the course of the last sixty years, member states have seen IOM grow and evolve as it responds to changes in membership, programming, and migration itself. But the core of IOM remains the same – an organization which seeks to promote safe, regular migration for the benefit of all.

We commend the IOM administration for taking the initiative to take a critical look at its operations and seek to adapt to new migration trends and realities in order to better serve this core mission. In 2012 the IOM administration evaluated its emergency response systems and developed a comprehensive framework to guide its engagement in migration emergencies. We believe this framework will serve as an invaluable roadmap for IOM staff, guiding IOM engagement with the international community, states, and beneficiaries during migration emergencies. It will also serve as an important tool for IOM member states, helping us better understand IOM's role in humanitarian response even when we are not directly affected by the migration crisis.

The IOM administration has also challenged itself to evaluate and revise the International Dialogue on Migration, focusing on a practical theme to promote a more meaningful discussion among the participants. The series of international dialogues this year helped inform the IOM Migration Crisis Operational

Framework, creating a tangible, actionable document. IOM also considered locations for the dialogue, and for the first time chose to hold an IDM session in New York, bringing their migration expertise to delegations in New York, building the foundation for informed migration discussions in 2013.

Over the next year, we as member states must similarly challenge ourselves and carefully consider our role and what we can do to strengthen the organization.

First, the organization needs strong and sustained leadership. Next June, Member States will select the leader of the organization for the next five years, and we have no doubt Director General Swing is the right person for this job. IOM is a complex, dynamic organization which requires diplomacy, management skills, patience, and perseverance. Under the Director General's leadership, IOM has become more professional, more organized, more transparent, and more responsive. IOM's donor base has expanded, with a wide range of countries making contributions to the Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism as well as increased funding from the UN; IOM membership has grown, and the IOM Development Fund has increased. As we know, there is still work to be done. Many of the initiatives undertaken – the structural reform, the human resource reform and implementation of the new human resource strategy – are still in process. The Director General has the vision and the understanding to help IOM further evolve and develop, and we believe the organization will flourish under his continued leadership.

Second, as highlighted in the Director General's report – and as we know from our discussions in the budget reform working group – the lack of growth in the administrative budget – though music to many ears – carries with it real risk and lost opportunity. The IOM administration has put forward a comprehensive human resources strategy, but implementation will hinge on the availability of financial resources. IOM has also proposed a three-year program to strengthen its emergency response capacity – but again, strengthening this capacity is dependent on financial resources. We have made commendable progress, but as member states we have an obligation to continue to look at how we can better support IOM, whether through financial contributions, ratification of the IOM Council

amendments to the IOM constitution, ongoing engagement in the IOM budget reform working group, or a combination of all activities.

Finally, most – if not all – of us will participate in the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in 2013. The Director General has outlined the IOM administration's efforts to contribute to robust discussions in New York. As IOM member states and UN members, we need to help IOM build upon this foundation. A meaningful High Level Dialogue requires not only the active participation of IOM – the sole international organization with an exclusive mandate for international migration – but also its leadership in the HLD itself and in whatever results ensue. For this reason, the U.S. strongly supported the efforts of outgoing Council Chairman Ambassador Strohol to adopt a resolution recognizing IOM's role and promoting IOM engagement in all aspects of the High Level Dialogue in 2013. In addition, as individual member states we need to reach out to our counterparts in New York, to encourage ongoing engagement with IOM in preparation for the High Level Dialogue and related events.

By focusing efforts on these three areas – leadership, budget engagement, and the global discourse on migration, member states can chart a bright and meaningful future for IOM that will have positive impact on the lives of millions of migrants.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has been a strong supporter of IOM – we value IOM as a strategic partner in advancing our goals of legal, orderly, and humane migration. We have made progress, and should be proud of that progress. As member states, we must work together as responsible stewards of the organization. There is, as ever, much to be done. We look forward to working closely with our colleagues in the room as we continue to strengthen the organization and support its role in the international community.