

**103RD SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR
MIGRATION GENERAL STATEMENT BY GHANA**

The Ghanaian delegation, would first of all like to congratulate the Chair and members of his Bureau on their election. We welcome the new Members and Observers to the IOM as a demonstration of the growing importance of the Organization. As a Member country, the forging of a closer ECOWAS/IOM partnership, through an ECOWAS Observer status is a strategic one for Ghana.

The re-election of Ambassador Swing at the helm of this very important organization is an expression of the confidence of IOM constituents have in him and his work and we extend our warm congratulations to him.

Ghana would like to identify with the statement presented by Angola on behalf of the African Group, noting that Africa constitutes a very important constituency of this organization.

While migration has been established as a clear propeller of socio-economic development, current demographic trends show that Africa could lead the way to future global economic prosperity, since it has the most youthful population, against the backdrop of aging population in advanced countries.

However, this potential needs to be harnessed properly with the appropriate migration policies. A well-managed migration will mitigate casualties and prevent a repeat of what I term the 'vicious and unfortunate cycle of Lampedusa', as witnessed many times and in different forms.

Recent trends and statistics show that migration is no longer only a South-North occurrence. The incidence of South-South and North-South migration has become a growing and equally important phenomenon. We therefore, welcome the call for the need to improve migration policies and foster migrant rights, recognising that migrant workers play a key role in the global economy and are valuable contributors to the growth of their countries of origin.

In Africa, overseas remittance is known to outweigh total ODA received. For instance, in 2012, over 400 billion dollars was reported to have been transferred to developing countries in remittances. Out of this amount, 60 billion was remitted to Africa by its diasporans, out of which 4 billion represented transfer costs alone. This illustration underscores the importance of migration which, if managed well with the appropriate policy mix, could contribute significantly to the development of the Region. We also commend plans by the IOM to assist reduce transfer costs.

The IOM has been a very important partner of Ghana in the management of migration issues. IOM support has been mainly in the areas of Refugee Resettlement; Repatriation and Migrant Services, including support to address the humanitarian and emergency needs of those affected by natural and man-made disasters. In this respect, I wish to place on record, the critical role played by the IOM during the Libyan crisis, which led to the evacuation of over 18,000 Ghanaians back to Ghana.

My delegation appreciates the establishment, recently of the Diaspora Support Unit (DSU), With IOM assistance, We equally appreciate IOM's role in formulation of the National Migration Policy. We also welcome the launch in 2013, of the Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals III (TRQN) project, intended to engage overseas migrant communities in improving institutional capacity in Ghana.

Indeed, my country bears ample testimony to the positive role of migration in national development. That is why we welcome the outcome of the 2nd UN High Level Dialogue on Migration, which presents a unique opportunity to mainstream migration issues into the Post 2015 and Sustainable Development Agenda. We appreciate the leadership role and efforts of the IOM in that direction.

We support the Director General's programme of continuity in the strategies that have worked well for the Administration. We equally believe that the coherence and reform agenda will improve the pace and quality of IOM delivery to its constituents in its pursuance of a dignified, safe and humane approach to the management of migration.

We note, with appreciation, the interim measures already taken, which include the addition of contributions of new Member States to the Administrative Part of the Budget and the reduction in the balance of the Operational Support Income projection and reserve mechanism from USD 10 million to USD 5 million, as part of ongoing efforts to address the issue of limited funding for the core structure.

My delegation acknowledges the stance of some delegations, to maintain the principle of zero nominal growth under the administrative part of the budget but we also believe in the need for some flexibility to be exercised at this important juncture in migration governance. We perceive that the risks associated with an overstretched core structure and restrictive budget policy over the last 18 years, and other attendant risks will negatively impact the service delivery capacity of the Organization.

That is why we welcome the budget strengthening model proposal and applaud the work done by the Working Group, led by the Ambassador of Belgium.

In conclusion, we lend our full support to the budget reform, to enable the organization accomplish its goals, and my Government looks forward to a continued fruitful collaboration with the IOM. I thank you for your kind attention.