

103rd Session IOM Council. 26-29 November 2013

Statement by Norway

Mr. Chair,

My heartfelt condolences to the Philippines. Once again we are witnessing a devastating natural disaster. The typhoon Haiyan has killed, ruined homes and destroyed living conditions. More than 13 million people have been affected. The consequences would have been even worse if not around 700.000 people had been evacuated. Local disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness saved lives.

IOM has a strong presence in the Philippines and where able to act immediately. The IOM Emergency Funding Mechanism was established as an instrument to assure that the organisation is able to act quickly and accordingly when crisis occur. Norway has recognized the need for this mechanism, in order to fill a gap in humanitarian emergency operations, and has contributed USD 1 million to the fund.

The use of funds, as a financing mechanism, is in line with Norwegian humanitarian policy focusing on emergency funds and less on earmarked contributions. Norway is one of the major contributors to the UN Emergency Response Fund (CERF). So far USD 25 million has been allocated from the CERF to the Philippines after the typhoon Haiyan. A considerable part of this (USD 5,5 million) has been channeled to IOM. This underlines the vital role of IOM in a crisis situation like the one in the Philippines.

Mr. Chair,

IOM has a role to play not only in natural disasters, but also regarding competence and capacity building of migration policies. Last month the second High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development took place in New York. It is our common responsibility to maximise the positive impact of international migration on development. To achieve this appropriate and coherent policies need to be implemented so that international migration can be a better tool for poverty reduction. These policies should include:

Measures to ensure safe, humane and orderly migration – in accordance with the Human Rights. For example; international, regional and national efforts to combat the exploitation of people victim to human trafficking should be scaled up. We know that women are forced into prostitution, children forced into slave labour.

Secondly; Mechanisms for protecting migrants during times of environmental disasters and crises. Climate change will lead to more migration in the future, both within and between nations. The Nansen Initiative gathers information on protection needs of people displaced by natural disasters and climate change.

And third; we need measures to help integrate migrants into their new host communities, with particular attention to women and children.

The World Migration Report 2013 on Migrant Well-Being and Development, presents for the first time a global picture of the well-being of migrants. This is timely and in line with the discussions under the High Level Dialogue. The report investigates how migration leads, or does not lead, to a better life. Improving the well-being of the individuals should be one of the key aims of development.

Norway has a close cooperation with IOM on refugee resettlement services and in voluntary assisted return. We have regular meetings and close contact with IOM Oslo, in addition to meetings with IOM field offices during resettlement missions. The services delivered by IOM in this field are highly appreciated.

Mr Chair,

Let me welcome the new members and observers. Let me also underline our appreciation for the director General's comprehensive report to the Council, and the continued effort to further increase the focus on gender.

We look forward to continued cooperation with IOM.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.