



NEW ZEALAND

**105th SESSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION COUNCIL**

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMANDA ELLIS**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

New Zealand Government



Statement to the IOM Council

Geneva

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Tena koutou, Tena koutou katoa

Greetings to you, greetings to you all

Director General, fellow delegates and colleagues

We would like to warmly welcome Samoa to and all new observers to the IOM. *We would like to offer our sincere congratulations to you chair on your election, and also to the recent elections of others.*

We acknowledge and applaud the Director General for his continued sound management of the IOM during his second term. We recognise the positive and constructive progress the IOM has made as an organisation over the course of this year. We welcomed the participation of the Director General at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Samoa in September of this year.

We also acknowledge the difficult environment in which the IOM is operating. We appreciate in particular the contribution the IOM is making in crisis affected communities, demonstrated by IOM's response to the challenges posed by the large numbers of people movements around the world. We recognise that the IOM is

continuing to respond to these international challenges, while working to ensure it continues to operate effectively.

We would particularly like to congratulate the IOM on the success of the “Migrants Contribute” campaign. This is an important topic given increasing global labour mobility and the importance of evidence-based migration policies and programmes. New Zealand supports the IOM’s efforts to improve public perceptions of migrants, and the positive contributions that they bring to societies around the world.

New Zealand has a long tradition of welcoming and supporting migrants. We are a country whose history is built on migration. This year New Zealand has gained a net 47, 684 migrants, our largest on record. New Zealand is a trading nation with a small population base, located geographically distant from its offshore markets, so like many other countries, we rely on migration to supplement our skilled labour force. Immigration helps to build a stronger economy and create jobs by encouraging innovation, deepening our links with international markets and providing the skills and capital we need for growth. As migrant labour becomes more mobile efforts to recognise workers’ contribution becomes more important for social cohesion.

While we are tailoring our immigration settings to optimise its contribution to the economy, New Zealand is mindful of meeting our humanitarian responsibilities and to recognising the beneficial social contribution migrants and refugees make to the communities in which they settle and to our country.

In parallel with this, we recognise that migrants and refugees can be vulnerable to exploitation within the workforce as they may be less likely to be aware of their rights and entitlements. They have the same employment rights as all other workers in New Zealand. The New Zealand Government is committed to preventing workplace exploitation of migrants, and protecting the victims of this crime.

To address this, New Zealand's Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has developed an approach for encouraging migrants to come forward to relevant agencies with any claims of workplace exploitation. The new policy means that in cases of serious workplace exploitation, migrants who come forward will be allowed to remain in New Zealand while they apply for a new visa.

New Zealand is also continuing to stand firm against people smuggling; a practice which preys on the vulnerable and puts lives at risk. New Zealand continues to work closely with our Asia-Pacific neighbours in anti-people smuggling efforts as an active participant in the Bali Process and other regional forums related to the movement of people. We also treat human trafficking very seriously and follow up cases with thorough investigation, as demonstrated by the first people trafficking charges laid in New Zealand this year.

Director General, I will conclude by reinforcing New Zealand's support for the IOM's work, and offering sincere thanks for its efforts. We look forward to a strong, continued relationship for many years to come.

Nga mihi rawa atu

Many thanks.

Thank you