

Statement by Jamaica

100th Session of the IOM Council, 5-7 December 2011

Thank you Chair,

This meeting is timely as it is being held against the background of the increasing importance of the IOM as the leading organization concerned with the myriad aspects of migration. The IOM is truly striving to achieve 'Migration for the Benefit of All' and we wish to commend the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General their sterling leadership of the Organization and for having implemented numerous initiatives aimed at enhancing the IOM's efficiency and responsiveness to the new challenges in the area of migration.

Migration is an important issue for my country. Jamaica is a country of net emigration flows with more persons emigrating abroad than persons immigrating to Jamaica. We are among the top 10 emigration countries in Latin America and the Caribbean with migrants going not only to the more traditional destinations of North America and the United Kingdom but there is now a growing trend for migrants, including skilled migrants, to go further afield to mainland Europe and Asia. Over half of our migrants are women attesting to the 'feminization' of migration from Jamaica which has had a negative impact on family structures and networks. One of the positive spin-offs of migration has been the high level of receipts in remittances to Jamaica. In 2010, Jamaica received US\$1.9 million in remittances amounting to 14.2% of GDP. The main sources of these remittances are the US, the UK and Canada in that order.

The importance that Jamaica attaches to the issue of migration is reflected in its evolving relationship with the IOM. Jamaica joined the IOM in 2005. However, since 1997 we have benefited from a number of IOM-sponsored programmes and activities, including with other CARICOM countries, on a range of issues relating to migration and health, voluntary return, human trafficking and regulating migration. The activities in the last category have been aimed at enhancing migration management systems, particularly through the strengthening of institutional capacity and enacting relevant legislation and regulations. Jamaica recognises the invaluable work that the IOM is conducting under its main pillars of service areas.

Given the multidimensional nature of migration, the decision has been taken nationally that migration policies must be approached in a holistic and comprehensive manner. In this respect, one area of importance to Jamaica is the IOM's work on migration and development. Attention is now being paid to how to mainstream migration into development planning. Jamaica is in the process of developing a National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development with funding secured from the IOM and UNDP. The development of a migration profile for Jamaica will be one of the elements of the project. Another programme based on the Global Migration Group document entitled '*Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning*' will serve to complement the development of the National Migration Policy and Plan of Action. A national working group comprising representatives of the public and private sectors and NGOs will be responsible for monitoring the Policy and Plan of Action. Taken together, these projects will have the effect of, *inter alia*, strengthening migration management at the national level; facilitating better research and data capture and analysis; and allowing coordinated policymaking and implementation, including through engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Migration and climate change is another area of attention and priority. Most commentators agree that climate change will have a profound effect on migration. As a small island, developing country susceptible to natural disasters, Jamaica will undoubtedly be affected by climate change. We would therefore commend to the IOM the conclusions of the second report of the Ramphal Commission on Migration and Development which contains recommendations on how to address increased risks of environmentally-induced migration. On Monday member states adopted the draft resolution on a Migration Emergency Funding Mechanism which will facilitate and enhance the IOM's ability to be among the first to assist countries in crisis situations, including those caused by natural and man-made disasters.

Chair,

Jamaica is interested in strengthening and expanding its relationship with the IOM, including as part of the CARICOM framework. Jamaica would wish to continue to benefit from any technical assistance activities that would harness the full potential of the Jamaican diaspora in support of our development objectives; discuss co-development partnerships to deal with the movement of skilled migrants; enhance the developmental impact of remittances; counter trafficking and address the feminization of migration and its impact just to highlight a few areas.

We are pleased with the recent IOM institutional strengthening in the region under the IOM Structure Review. We welcome the establishment of the IOM Regional Office in Costa Rica and an office with coordination functions for the Caribbean in Guyana but would continue to urge further consideration of a regional office for the English-speaking Caribbean given the migration dynamics specific to the sub-region and as more Caribbean countries become members of the Organization. At this point, we welcome the 14 new members of the IOM, particularly Antigua and Barbuda and Guyana. Jamaica also remains interested in a Regional Consultative Process for the Caribbean as part of the activities of the IOM. The partnerships struck between the IOM and regional and sub-regional organizations including the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the CARICOM Secretariat and the IOM will provide the bases for increased dialogue and expanded activities in the sub-region.

Jamaica applauds the IOM for its work worldwide. The Organization continues to play an increasingly important role on migration issues in conjunction with the UN and other specialized agencies and should further strengthen these alliances and partnerships. We thank the IOM for its contribution to the GFMD-sponsored workshop on Domestic Care Workers held in Kingston in September 2011.

We congratulate the IOM on its 60th anniversary and assure the Organization of Jamaica's firm support in the coming years.

On a final note, Chair, we wish to express support for the statement made earlier by Panama on behalf of GRULAC.

Thank you, Chair.

PRUN, Geneva
December 2011