

Statement by H.E. Hayong Moon
Deputy Minister and Ambassador for Overseas Koreans and Consular Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea
at the 100th Session of the Council of the IOM

Mr, Chairman, Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Korea joins others in congratulating IOM on its 60th anniversary. Since 1951, IOM has played an essential role in facilitating the orderly and humane management of international migration. I would also like to commend the contributions that IOM has made so far in assisting those suffering from natural or man-made disasters. At this juncture, I also wish to express the deep appreciation of the Republic of Korea for the strong leadership and hard work of Director-General, H.E.Ambassador William Lacy Swing, and his staff.

Mr. Chairman,

We live in an era of great human mobility. Migration has emerged as one of the key global issues and it is at the heart of all government policies these days. Even though there are some views pointing out negative effects of

international migration, we should keep in mind contributions that migrants bring to our societies and economies. In this regard, we welcome the launch of IOM's 2011 World Migration Report with its focus on "*Communicating Effectively about Migration.*"

My delegation welcomes IOM's ongoing reform initiatives led by the Director General. We welcome the completion of organization restructuring both at the headquarters and at the field, budget reforms, including the establishment of a migration emergency funding mechanism. I sincerely hope that these reforms will make IOM a more efficient and dynamic organization, thereby responding better to upcoming migration challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Korea has recently shifted from a country of origin to a country of destination of migration. 1.4 million foreigners and about 180 thousand multicultural married couples live in Korea. The numbers will further grow in coming years. The Korean government is now operating 'Multicultural Family Support Center' as well as 'Korea Immigration & Integration Program' in order to

provide language education and counseling for foreigners first settling in Korea. The Korean government will further expand its efforts to accommodate foreigners in friendly and warm manner.

At this juncture, I would like to raise the issue of North Korean defectors suffering so much in Northeast Asia. Since 2006, every year about two thousand North Korean defectors choose to come to the Republic of Korea and now totally 20 thousand North Koreans live in my country. The Korean government has been accepting all North Korean defectors wishing to come to South Korea. Herein I would like to emphasize once again that all States related to North Korean defectors should abide by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and other relevant international laws and principles. In particular, the fundamental principle of *non-refoulement* should be observed. North Korean defectors should not return against their will to countries of origin where their lives are seriously endangered.

In the year of 2009, the Korean government established the IOM Migration Research and Training Center (MRTC) in Seoul. This MRTC center provides research programs

and training courses on migration. And the IOM Mission in Seoul has worked to help trafficked persons and provide various research projects related to human trafficking. In Ukraine, the Korean Mission and IOM has signed an MOU related to the "Project for the Economic Development Action to Formalize Employment of Marginalized Ethnic Koreans of Ukraine." The MOU aims to integrate vulnerable ethnic Koreans in Ukraine into its main economy. Korea is immensely thankful to the works done by IOM and will further expand its cooperation with IOM in other areas, too.

Mr. Chairman,

IOM should strengthen its fundamental role of facilitating the orderly and humane management of international migration, as well as continue its important role of promoting dialogue and cooperation on migration, and supporting governments in understanding and coping with the complexities of modern migration. In particular, we hope that IOM continue to maintain its crucial role to provide humanitarian assistance to the displaced persons and migrants suffering from conflicts and disasters, and strengthen its collaboration with other humanitarian agencies.

In closing, my delegation wishes to reiterate the strong commitment of the Republic of Korea to work closely with IOM and all its member states on migration governance. And Korea will make its own contribution in ensuring that international migration would be beneficial for all parties concerned.

Thank you.