

**EIGHTY-THIRD (SPECIAL) SESSION  
OF THE COUNCIL**

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTIETH MEETING**

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva  
on Wednesday, 5 June 2002, at 10.20 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. M. P. KARIYAWASAM (Sri Lanka)

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Agenda item 1

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The CHAIRMAN declared open the Eighty-third (Special) Session of the Council and welcomed participants. He reminded delegates that the Council was meeting in special session to admit two new Members and three new observers.

(a) Credentials of representatives and observers

2. The CHAIRMAN requested the Council to take note that the Director General had examined the credentials of representatives of all Member States and found them to be in order and that he had been advised of the names of the observers for non-member States and governmental and non-governmental organizations attending the session.

3. The Council took note.

(b) Adoption of the agenda  
(MC/2061/Rev.2)

4. The agenda was adopted.

(c) Opening remarks by the Director General  
(MICEM/4/2002)

5. The DIRECTOR GENERAL referred delegates to his report on developments from November 2001 to June 2002, on which he was ready to answer any questions they might wish to raise.

6. He said that the purpose of the Council meeting was to admit new Members and observers, whom he would formally welcome once admitted. Delegates would then have the opportunity to make their comments.

7. In response to a longstanding request by Member States, there would also be a presentation and opportunity for discussion on IOM's emergency and post-conflict work, which constituted an important element of the Organization's overall activities, and on which feedback from the Council would be very useful.

8. In the afternoon, as part of the policy dialogue started at the November Council, there would be a Round Table discussion on inter-State cooperation in managing migration at the regional level, which would provide a useful preparation for the migration policy discussions at the Council session in December 2002.

9. A publication on the Eighty-second Session of the Council entitled "International Dialogue on Migration" had been distributed to the Council in English and French; the Spanish version would be available shortly.

10. He looked forward to hearing the Council's views and to a lively discussion at the Round Table.

Agenda item 2

NEW MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

(a) Applications for membership in the Organization

(i) Mexico

(MC/2062, MC/L/1024)

(ii) Ireland

(MC/2066, MC/L/1025)

11. The CHAIRMAN said that after the Council had considered items 2(a) and 2(b) he would give the floor to the new Members and observers. He suggested that any delegates wishing to welcome them should do so under item 2(c).

12. He drew attention to the applications for membership of Mexico and Ireland and invited the Council to consider the draft resolutions in documents MC/L/1024 and MC/L/1025 respectively.

13. The draft resolutions on the admission of Mexico (MC/L/1024) and Ireland (MC/L/1025) as Members of the Organization were adopted by acclamation.

14. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the Secretariat had informed him that the credentials for the representatives of Mexico and Ireland had been received and found to be in order, welcomed the new Members to the Organization.

(b) Applications for representation as an observer

(i) Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

(MC/2064, MC/L/1026)

(ii) Islamic Republic of Mauritania

(MC/2065, MC/L/1027)

(iii) Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) –  
Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime

(MC/2063, MC/L/1028)

15. The draft resolutions on granting the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (MC/L/1026), the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (MC/L/1027) and Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime (MC/L/1028) observer status at meetings of the Council were adopted by acclamation.

16. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the Secretariat had informed him that the credentials of the observers for the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) – Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime, had been received and found to be in order, welcomed them to the Organization.

17. Mr. MOCTEZUMA BARRAGÁN (Mexico) expressed gratitude to the Council on behalf of his Government for granting Mexico full membership in IOM, which would enable it to play a more active part in international migration processes. Mexico's admission to IOM was of particular significance as his country had long been one of origin, transit and destination for migrants, both within and outside the region. Along Mexico's 3,000 km border with the United States of America, every year there were some 300 million crossings, and about one million returnees. The three and a half million Mexicans working in the United States made a substantial contribution to that country's economy, yet many of them had not been issued with migration documents. In view of the scope of the migratory phenomenon in Mexico, it was essential for his country to participate more actively in IOM's work.

18. In his Government's view, the problem of undocumented migrants entailed shared responsibility between countries of origin, transit and destination, and a high-level dialogue between Mexico and the United States had been initiated to that end. After a year of diplomatic contacts, the United States Government had recognized the contribution made by Mexican workers to the increased productivity of its economy. In parallel, Mexico had conceded the need to redouble its efforts to create job opportunities, in order to avoid millions of nationals leaving their country in search of a better quality of life.

19. He stressed the importance of ensuring the physical safety and respect for the human rights of undocumented migrants who, despite legal obstacles, often risked their lives to cross to the United States in search of work. Their situation would be very different if agreements were reached to ensure their safe passage. Migrants deserved fair and equitable treatment and Mexico had firmly rejected any legislative or administrative provisions which disregarded the human rights of migrants; moreover, the Government was ready to defend those rights in international fora and had reacted to a recent case concerning an undocumented worker in which the decision taken by the United States Supreme Court had run counter to the basic principle of equality before the law.

20. The search for consensus on topics of national interest such as migration was a basic aim of the Mexican Government. Consequently there had been a unanimous cross-party decision by the Mexican Senate to apply for membership in IOM. His Government recognized IOM's worldwide role and 50 years of experience, in particular its significant participation in return programmes respecting the dignity of migrants and its contribution to the Regional Conference on Migration in various American countries, which had been vital to the consolidation of the Puebla Process initiated in his country. Furthermore, he welcomed the decision by the Mexican national human rights commission to establish offices in frontier zones in the north and south of the country.

21. Historically Mexican society had been enriched by cultural features introduced by various nationalities. In the recent past, it had continued to be a host country, receiving, for example, Spanish and Chilean migrants, persecuted for their political convictions, as well as thousands of Guatemalan refugees who had found a new home in Mexico. At the end of the twentieth century, the migratory phenomenon had become one of the most important topics on the global agenda as well as playing a fundamental role in the internal policy of many countries. Migration ought not to be considered primarily as a problem, but as a positive opportunity for progress in countries of origin and destination. The migration policy of the current Government was in line with his country's humanist tradition. At the multilateral level, it was important for IOM to find ways of managing migratory flows in order to prevent xenophobic and racist attitudes, which were

becoming more threatening in some parts of the world. Although it was vital to strengthen measures to combat terrorism, it must be made absolutely clear that undocumented migrants *per se* did not constitute a threat to State security. They were human beings with legitimate aspirations, seeking to improve their quality of life.

22. In conclusion, his Government committed itself to participating actively in IOM's efforts to achieve the Organization's objectives. Mexico welcomed the fact that it was joining at the same time as Ireland, a country with great experience in migration and with which it had a special relationship of friendship and cooperation.

23. Mr. BENNETT (Ireland), speaking on behalf of Ms. O'Donnell, Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Overseas Development Assistance and Human Rights, who had conveyed her deepest apologies for her absence from the Council session, voiced the satisfaction of his Government at joining IOM. He thanked the Organization for its advice and assistance, which had facilitated his country's smooth passage to official membership, following a period of increasing cooperation with IOM. Although Ireland had a long history of emigration, it had recently experienced immigration, with a consequent need for expert and professional advice on how to deal with a completely new situation. His Government welcomed its growing involvement with IOM and the relationship had taken a further step forward with the opening of an IOM office in Ireland in November 2001, attended by the Director General, on the occasion of the Organization's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. That event had also seen the launch of a national pilot voluntary return programme, which IOM was undertaking on behalf of the Irish Government. In addition, the Organization had recently completed a consultancy study for his Government on international immigration legislation and practice.

24. His country had also benefited from rewarding collaboration with IOM in bringing Kosovar refugees to Ireland. In addition, IOM was undertaking work supported by Ireland in the areas of counter-trafficking and the return of trafficked persons in the Balkans. Ireland Aid had also been a strong supporter of IOM's activities in many difficult regions and situations, dealing with the most vulnerable members of society, and had given significant financial support over the years to the Organization's activities in a number of countries, including Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. In 2001, Ireland had concluded agreements with IOM worth over EUR 1 million. So far in 2002, Ireland Aid had announced contributions of EUR 600,000.

25. The Irish Government was committed to strengthening its relationship with IOM, and its membership marked an important milestone in that process. It looked forward to playing an active role in the Organization in the future.

26. Ms. AL-HAJJAJI (Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) expressed her Government's gratitude to IOM for conferring observer status on her country which appreciated IOM's hard work in the projects it operated around the world, as well as its consistent efforts to enlarge its membership. In anticipation that IOM would continue to expand, her Government looked forward to a closer relationship with the Organization.

27. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's migratory situation differed from many others in one important respect: it did not have large emigrant communities abroad, although it was a significant country of transit and destination for migrants. As a rich country with a small population, undergoing steady development, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had attracted many migrants seeking to improve their economic situation. Moreover, its close proximity to Europe drew large groups of transiting migrants. By presenting a request for observer status, her country

was seeking IOM's expertise to help in handling its unique situation. Furthermore, it wished to ensure that the human rights and fundamental freedoms – whether civil, economic, social or cultural – of those migrants were protected. In her delegation's view, three factors were influencing the global migratory phenomenon: the vast economic gap between the developed and the developing world; internal State conflicts of a political, ethnic, religious or other nature; and globalization, which had played a considerable role in neutralizing ideological borders.

28. It was her country's belief, however, that current restrictions concerning immigration and legislation on citizenship had led to an increase in irregular migration and trafficking networks, which made an already vulnerable population more defenceless and often resulted in death. Her Government hoped that increased international cooperation and solidarity would help to safeguard the human rights of such migrants, enabling them to be perceived not as a threat, but as an asset to the new community that they were joining.

29. Mr. OULD MOHAMED LEMINE (Islamic Republic of Mauritania) said that it was the first time a representative of his country had taken the floor at a meeting of IOM's governing bodies, subsequent to several years of contacts with the Organization. He expressed appreciation for the significant role played by IOM in international relations, which had been enhanced as a result of fundamental political changes during the past decade, as well as the increasing gap between developed and developing countries. The migratory flows prompted by political and economic factors were easier than ever before, owing to developments in transport and the information revolution.

30. Migration had always been deeply rooted in the history of mankind, and all civilizations had benefited from the cultural and economic contribution of people from different regions. However, the pattern of the world had changed and States now had clearly defined frontiers which, understandably, they wished to control. It was therefore important for the international community to create an appropriate framework for the discussion of migration policies and to define global and coordinated solutions to current challenges. He welcomed IOM's dynamic work in the interests of countries of origin, transit and destination and of migrants, who deserved to be treated with dignity at all times. The Organization sought to give migration the respectable image it had had in the past so that it became a positive and constructive force, and to encourage a global approach, with a view to integrating migration into the process of economic and social development.

31. In fact, socio-economic inequality continued to be a driving force behind migratory flows, yet new barriers were continually being erected to prevent the free movement of persons, at a time when capital and goods were moving with increasing ease. Clearly, that contradiction exceeded IOM's competence, but the Organization was undoubtedly in a position to contribute in the search for solutions to the challenges of globalization. It was because his country wished to participate in that dialogue that it had applied to join IOM as an observer and he thanked the Council and Member States for granting it observer status, thereby enabling Mauritania's relations with the Organization to be placed on an institutional basis. His Government was ready to meet its obligations fully and to cooperate in working towards the fulfilment of IOM's objectives.

32. Mr. JOVANOVSKI (Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) – Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime) expressed his thanks to IOM for granting observer status to SECI. For the first time in history, twelve countries in South-Eastern Europe had decided to

establish a joint centre for combating transborder crime. The relevant agreement, which included direct police and customs cooperation, had now been ratified and, with the assistance of the Romanian Government, premises had been provided in Bucharest.

33. With strong support from the United States and Western countries, SECI had become operational on 1 November 2000. A large amount of information relating to transborder crime had been exchanged and a number of task forces had been set up. The first, in which IOM had participated, concerned trafficking in human beings and was coordinated by Romania. There were further task forces on commercial fraud, coordinated by Croatia; customs fraud, coordinated by Albania; financial and computer crime, coordinated by The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; small arms and light weapons, coordinated by Albania; and stolen vehicles, coordinated by Hungary.

34. Together with observers from twelve Western European countries and the United States, a strong cooperation network had been constituted to combat terrorism. On 21 May 2001, a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed between SECI and IOM; IOM would participate in activities such as the training of law enforcement officials and drafting of regulations on combating human trafficking.

35. He stressed that SECI had only one member in common with the European Union, Greece, which served as an example for law regulation, exchange of information rules and matters concerning the European level. The situation was highly satisfactory and he looked forward to further successful cooperation with IOM.

36. The DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed the new Members and observers to the Organization and pledged them IOM's full support and assistance. The admission of Mexico and Ireland had brought the number of Members to 93, reflecting the rapid growth and increasing representativity of the Organization.

37. Mexico had always been a country of origin, transit and destination. At its instigation, the regional migration process for North and Central America had been launched – the Puebla Process, named after the Mexican town in which the first Regional Conference on Migration had been held. Mexico's presence in IOM would extend and deepen the debate on the complex questions associated with international migration and IOM looked forward to developing programmes with and for Mexico. He was pleased to announce that the first official step in cooperation between IOM and the Government of Mexico had been made that morning in the form of an exchange of diplomatic letters regarding the creation of a training centre in the national migration institute.

38. Ireland had traditionally been a country of emigration, with Irish nationals migrating to many parts of the world. Over 40 million people of Irish descent lived in the United States, and 200,000 were first-generation migrants. In the past five years, with economic expansion, Ireland had experienced a massive inflow of people, estimated at 250,000, including substantial returns of Irish nationals, representing between 39 per cent and 55 per cent of the total annual immigration over the same period. Ireland, like Mexico, could play a key role in IOM, enriching the global migration debate. In November 2001 he had had the pleasure of opening the IOM office in Dublin with Mr. John O'Donoghue, Minister of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. He looked forward to building upon the programmes and cooperation which were already well established.



39. The number of IOM observer States remained at 37, as two new observers had been admitted while two former observers had become Members. The admission of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) brought the number of other observers to 63. The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, predominantly a country of immigration, attracting migrant workers from a broad range of States, was also experiencing irregular migration and trafficking, with considerable consequences, particularly in the field of public health. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania had long been a country of emigration and transit, mainly towards Southern Europe. Remittances from its nationals abroad constituted a significant source of income, but poverty and environmental degradation were responsible for population instability, creating a potential for emigration, encouraging people to leave rural areas and making them easy prey for traffickers. The admission of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania as observers would considerably strengthen migration dialogue in the Western Mediterranean, particularly in regard to preparations for the 5+5 Conference on migration to be held in Tunis in October 2002.

40. SECI's mission – to carry out joint transborder crime-fighting action and promote regional cooperation, was linked with IOM's work on counter-trafficking in that region and elsewhere. Its admission as an observer gave formal recognition to the existing operational relationship between the two organizations, also reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding signed between IOM and SECI in Bucharest in May 2001. New Members and observers brought new opportunities for the entire Organization, strengthening its ability to serve migrants and Member States.

(c) Statements by delegations

41. Mr. KESSEDJIAN (France), welcoming the new Members and observers, said that the steady rise in membership reflected IOM's dynamism and increasingly global mission. His Government considered that the Organization ought to be provided with the necessary resources to fulfil its mandate and ensure the security of its staff, and he therefore favoured a move away from zero nominal growth, provided that IOM applied rigorous budgetary restrictions, complied with the Financial Regulations and confined its activities to its core mandate. He stressed two important topics for reflection: IOM's role in emergency and post-conflict situations and migration management at regional level.

42. He commended IOM on its work in assisting the return of displaced persons and refugees in emergency situations. It would be useful to have a detailed description of the activities carried out in that type of situation, with the budgetary allocations corresponding to each operation, and indicating operations carried out in parallel with other organizations. Over the past few years, IOM had become increasingly involved in providing urgent humanitarian assistance on account of the growing need for such action. That new trend raised the question of whether such activities were covered by IOM's core mandate, what was the Organization's comparative advantage in that field *vis-à-vis* the many other organizations involved, and whether the development of the new activities enhanced the other tasks within IOM's mandate. The difficulties faced by IOM in Afghanistan and the lack of funding that had led to the suspension of certain projects demonstrated the need for careful examination of the matter.

43. His country attached considerable importance to the question of migration management at the regional level, as that approach had obvious advantages, providing a framework for discussion which might rise above areas of conflict or local interests. France wished IOM to play fully the role of a forum, as provided in its Constitution. With its broader vision and wide

audience, the Organization could pursue its analysis and adjust its objectives in the light of the results obtained. There was a need for more reliable, accurate statistics in order to gain better understanding of the interaction with other economic and social phenomena – an area in which IOM could play an essential role. It was thus important that, along with its support for regional approaches, IOM should pursue global reflection on migration. He looked forward to receiving information on the activities of the reflection group and the forthcoming publication of a new World Migration Report.

44. Mrs. FILIP (Romania) said that the complexity of migration matters now called for increased synergy between governments and international organizations to ensure more effective migration management, using a results-oriented approach. Research and cooperation with a view to achieving sustainable solutions were becoming essential, as the promotion of orderly migration and the prevention of irregular migration could not be achieved solely through control measures. Greater consideration should be given to people's motives for migrating, which were less clear-cut than before, ranging from State persecution to non-State persecution, from drought and other environmental factors to economic motives, or the simple desire to live in safe and better conditions. That called for new approaches and better coordination among all those involved in migration matters.

45. Welcoming the opportunity provided by the current Council session to discuss IOM's role in emergency and post-conflict situations, she commended IOM on its expertise in that area which should be consolidated in future in order to improve coordination at regional and international levels. A major step forward had been made in her country since January 2002 when travel restrictions for Romanian citizens in the Schengen area had been lifted and the Romanian Government had adopted comprehensive measures concerning asylum and migration. IOM's technical support, through programmes which were complementary to her country's national strategies, was of particular value. A new Memorandum of Understanding with IOM was being prepared on cooperation for assisted humanitarian voluntary return. With regard to regional and subregional cooperation, Romania would be hosting a special meeting on security issues of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, focusing on trafficking in human beings, migration and asylum, law enforcement, border control initiatives and the combating of corruption and organized crime. Her country attached great importance to the granting of IOM observer status to the SECI Regional Center. Governments in South-Eastern Europe were having to review the whole range of migration policies and practices, as many of the countries in that area, formerly countries of origin, were now also countries of transit and destination. The SECI Regional Center had been instrumental in improving regional cooperation in that field.

46. The global number of migrants today was greater than at any time in the past. In addition to migration caused by ethnic violence and conflict, new factors were emerging, such as economic constraints, the growing relevance of ethnic networks, population growth in the less developed countries and the ageing of populations in many industrialized societies. Debate on migration had so far focused primarily on issues such as the integration of migrants in multicultural host societies and the opening of legal migration channels to meet labour market demand, but it now also included security-related aspects. Her country considered that while the fight against terrorism was imperative, the vast majority of people moving around the world did so for legitimate reasons and many of them required international assistance and protection.

47. Mr. ALBORZI (Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed the new Members and observers. For his country, a relatively new Member of the Organization, it was inspiring to see the high level of interest and confidence shown in IOM by a growing number of countries, which also reflected the

high level of IOM's responsibilities. At a very crucial juncture, and faced with serious challenges in the field of refugees and migrants, the Organization needed the unreserved support of all its Members, and in particular the donor countries. He expressed concern that a lack of adequate financial resources had forced IOM to suspend its transportation of returnees to Afghanistan. There was a risk that the suspension of IOM's operations there might bring the whole successful ongoing process of voluntary repatriation to a standstill. He therefore appealed to all Members, and in particular to donor countries, to give urgent attention to the emergency situation in Afghanistan. Along with the other Members, his country stood ready to extend the fullest support and cooperation to the Organization for its operations, which had proved instrumental in providing assistance to needy refugees and migrants. The current situation in Afghanistan had created a momentum for the whole international community to prove its commitment to ending the suffering of millions of Afghan refugees and displaced persons. It was time for IOM to contribute to the eradication of a major source of irregular migration in the world.

48. Mr. ERICKSON (United States of America) said that his Government was pleased to welcome Mexico and Ireland as Members of IOM, the leading international organization mandated to address migration issues. He looked forward to working with the new Members, both of which had deep, multifaceted migratory relationships with his country – Mexican and Irish migrants and visitors had played a major role in the history of the United States. He also welcomed the new observers. While welcoming the emerging role of the Council as a forum for dialogue on migration policy, he considered that the appropriate time for that dialogue should be during the regular, not the special, Council sessions. Furthermore Council sessions should take place only once a year.

49. Mr. SELIM LABIB (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that migration was an age-old phenomenon. Throughout history, people had moved in search of new opportunities. In modern times increasing numbers of people were joining those massive migration movements, partly on account of globalization. There had been an estimated 150 million international migrants at the beginning of the twenty-first century; it was therefore safe to say that it would be the century of migration. New and broader efforts should therefore be developed in order to increase and strengthen cooperation in migration management and achieve further economic and social integration and development. Africa attached the utmost importance to cooperation in the field of migration. It was important to note that nationals of developing countries, particularly African countries, constituted the highest proportion of migrants worldwide. Highly qualified and experienced Africans were leaving the continent in increasing numbers, a matter of major concern to African countries. It was therefore appropriate and necessary for African countries to become part of IOM, which had the responsibility to provide governments with information, advice and technical assistance to ensure orderly migration movements, assess the positive aspects of migration and combat irregular migration, especially trafficking. To date, 24 African countries were Member States of IOM and five African countries had observer status. The success of the support for implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) would depend on the return and integration of qualified workers to Africa, stimulated also by the gradual re-establishment of economic and political stability in Africa. IOM's Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) initiative would certainly make a positive contribution in that area. Regarding the Western Mediterranean region, the African Group commended IOM on its active participation in developing migration mechanisms to facilitate communication and cooperation between the countries of that strategically significant area. IOM had provided valuable assistance in elaborating an appropriate framework for cooperation on migration issues in that region. He welcomed all new Members

and observers, in particular the two African States, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

50. Mr. KLOTZ (Germany) welcomed the two new Members whose admission to IOM consolidated membership in the Latin American and European regions and brought the Organization a step nearer universality. He looked forward to supporting both countries in the solution of migration problems. He also welcomed all new observers. As migration legislation was becoming increasingly global and universal, IOM was required to take a global approach to migration problems. He supported the views of the United States concerning the role of the Council as a forum for policy dialogue, stressing that Council sessions should be limited to one per year.

51. Mr. ALCÁINE CASTRO (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, welcomed the new Members and observers, in particular Mexico which had a history of championing the human rights of migrants in the international context. The Latin American region and the Organization as a whole would be enriched by the contributions of the new Members, in particular within the forum for dialogue on migration. GRULAC had not yet formulated its final position concerning the frequency of the forum. It agreed that for the current year the forum should be held in late 2002 but considered it urgent for Member States and the Organization to discuss the matter in order to define the forum's objectives and evaluate the results of the Migration Policy and Research Programme (MPRP), so as to establish criteria with which to gauge the appropriate frequency of such dialogues and of any relevant informal meetings. The Group considered that more information was needed as a basis for the solution of migration problems which were common to all countries, and that once that was clarified a decision could be made on the number of meetings required.

52. Mr. DANENOV (Kazakhstan) said that his Government attached great importance to consolidated and extended cooperation with the Organization, which played a key role in solving international migration problems and in combating irregular migration movements. He expressed appreciation for IOM's representation in his country, particularly with regard to its programmes for the return of ethnic Kazakhs. On behalf of the Secretary of State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, he informed the Council that procedures were under way with a view to Kazakhstan's adoption of the IOM Constitution, in particular by aligning its national legislation with international standards regarding the rights of migrants and refugees. Once those procedures were completed, his Government would send in an official request for the admission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to membership of the Organization which he hoped would be granted at the Eighty-fourth Session of the Council in December 2002.

### Agenda item 3

#### IOM'S ROLE IN EMERGENCY AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS

(MC/INF/249)

##### (a) Presentation by the IOM Administration

53. Mr. de WILDE (Administration), speaking at the request of the Chairman, gave a presentation on IOM's emergency and post-conflict response. The presentation was divided into three parts: first, a general overview of IOM's emergency and post-conflict activities, illustrated

by a video film of IOM's work in that area worldwide; second, an introduction of information document MC/INF/249; and third, a video presentation of IOM's integrated approach to the specific situation in East Timor.

54. IOM's emergency operations had expanded substantially all over the world in programme areas where IOM had demonstrated a comparative advantage. In Afghanistan IOM had assisted in the return of over 250,000 internally displaced persons and refugees in 2002 – a labour-intensive operation involving extensive community relations and complicated logistical arrangements. Transportation was provided mostly by locally hired vehicles, supplemented by a fleet of 100 IOM trucks. The average per capita cost per return was USD 19. IOM had provided registration services and returnees had been issued with reintegration kits, including food and tools. Population displacement in Afghanistan had been caused by both drought and conflict, and the desire on the part of most people to return home had been very strong. In close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), IOM had assisted in the return of almost 100,000 refugees and internally displaced persons from Guinea to Sierra Leone, using ship, bus and truck transport. Sea transportation had also been important in the return of over 160,000 refugees from West to East Timor.

55. Natural and man-made disasters often deprived large numbers of people of basic shelter, the lack of which could cause massive population displacements, as a secondary or tertiary problem. After hurricane Mitch in Honduras, IOM had assisted in the building of temporary housing for 6,500 people, thus avoiding the need for movement to locations further afield, and in January 2001 following the earthquake in Gujarat, India, IOM had provided emergency shelter to 9,610 victims, many of whom were themselves internal migrants from other parts of India who had come to work in the salt fields. Temporary housing made of local materials had been quickly erected with the active participation of the population.

56. IOM was also carrying out demobilization programmes in post-conflict situations in a number of areas. An integrated return programme for ex-combatants was being carried out in the Congo, under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), providing former combatants with training as bakers, carpenters and veterinary pharmacists, to assist them to return to civilian life. In East Timor special demobilization programmes had been devised to suit the special needs of over 1,000 former guerrilla fighters. In Kosovo, IOM had carried out a large-scale demobilization programme involving the registration, survey, training and return of former combatants to participate in the reconstruction of post-conflict society. Voting from abroad was also an important part of IOM's outreach services to migrant diasporas, particularly in East Timor and the Balkans, in association with the United Nations and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The participation of migrant diasporas in political decisions affecting post-conflict reconstruction was an important factor in political stability.

57. Turning to the information document on IOM's role in emergency and post-conflict situations (MC/INF/249), he highlighted five main points. First, IOM's programmes in response to emergencies had grown substantially since 1990 (as reflected in Annex I of MC/INF/249). Those activities had received over USD 483.3 million and had benefited over 8.2 million people. Over the same period expenditure on emergency activities as a percentage of IOM's total operations had risen from over 14 per cent in 1998 to over 34 per cent in 2001. Funding had been provided by specific emergency appeals to donors, almost always within the context of consolidated United Nations appeals, and not to the detriment of more routine programmes. Second, the number of donors providing support for emergency and post-conflict activities had

increased from nine in 1991 to 36 in 2001. Third, the 29 major emergency and post-conflict programmes from 1991 to 2001 had raised IOM's global profile and enhanced its reputation for efficient, practical migration programmes. That experience had refined routine programme activity and opened the door to new areas of operations such as demobilization. Fourth, IOM's emergency and post-conflict activities were similar to its normal programmes as they consisted mostly of transportation assistance, return and reintegration programmes, capacity-building for emergency management and community assistance programmes to stabilize population movements. Diaspora outreach services, medical assistance, psychosocial programmes and registration, survey and processing programmes were also important. It should be borne in mind, however, that emergency programmes could not be carried out without funding. When funding was exhausted the programme had to stop, as in Afghanistan where, after returning over 250,000 internally displaced persons and refugees to their homes, IOM had suspended its country-wide internal transportation network. The service would be resumed if further funding was obtained. A more dependable funding mechanism would permit more effective management and more efficient humanitarian response. Fifth, emergency and post-conflict activities had brought IOM into much closer operational cooperation with the organizations of the United Nations system. IOM regularly participated in the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and in the United Nations Consolidated Appeals Process.

58. A video film was then shown of IOM's activities in East Timor, illustrating the integrated approach that had been adopted. As a result of serious civil disturbances following the August 1999 popular vote for independence, one-third of the 800,000 population had been driven into camps in West Timor and the remainder had fled to the mountains. Between October 1999 and November 2001, IOM had undertaken a major relief programme and assisted over 140,000 people to return to their homes in East Timor. Transportation had taken place by land or sea and returns had been coordinated through the IOM's network of offices in Jakarta, Canberra and Darwin as well as its support offices in West Timor. Despite the closure of West Timor offices for security reasons after the attacks on United Nations personnel there in September 2000, IOM had pursued its return activities from West Timor through its Indonesian counterparts. Initial registration of refugees had been carried out by IOM, UNHCR and the Indonesian authorities, followed by medical checks and transportation services. IOM had collaborated closely with partner agencies including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, to help East Timorese refugees to reintegrate into their communities.

59. The second phase of the operation involved community assistance to absorb the returnees, by means of the Community Assistance for Population Stabilization Programme. Communities were helped to prioritize their needs and equipped with tools and materials as well as technical expertise. Hundreds of community projects had been carried out, including water distribution, bridge and road repair, school and market rehabilitation and support for local business enterprises, such as workshops and cooperatives. IOM had collaborated in a number of programmes with other partners, such as the USAID Office for Transition Initiatives and the Canadian International Development Agency, to provide assistance to local communities in obtaining basic services. With funding provided by USAID, the World Bank and the Government of Japan, IOM had established programmes for the reintegration of former guerrilla combatants, providing them with registration and identity cards and appropriate training in, for example, commercial activities, building skills or livestock management. The aim of the operation was to reunite families, to help rebuild East Timor and to establish peace and security.

60. The presentation demonstrated the increasing importance of emergency and post-conflict programmes within the Organization and the urgent need to obtain funds to meet those new challenges.

(b) Debate

61. Mr. LINDVALL (Sweden) said that he welcomed the first debate on IOM's role in emergencies. He thanked IOM for the pertinent background paper and for the presentation by Mr. de Wilde and stressed the importance of the discussion, given IOM's increasing involvement in humanitarian crises and complex emergencies. Indeed, Sweden had funded a number of programmes in that field.

62. He was disappointed, however, at the limited scope of the background paper and would have preferred to receive more elaborate thoughts on IOM's comparative advantages in emergencies, as well as some discussion on the criteria governing IOM's decisions whether to engage in emergency situations and on the limits of the Organization's capacity and competence. He was extremely interested in IOM's views on the value of its response to a humanitarian crisis and the ways in which it could complement other humanitarian actors.

63. For Sweden, coordination with other actors was essential in order to achieve optimal results, often with very scant resources, and he welcomed the emphasis placed on that aspect by Mr. de Wilde. Finally, he underlined that his country looked forward to continued discussion on that important issue and would welcome a more strategic and forward-looking paper on the subject in the coming months.

64. Ms. PARKER (Australia) congratulating the new Members and observers, was pleased to note that the number of Members and observers was increasing, since broader participation brought benefits in terms of global cooperation. Furthermore, she praised IOM's exemplary performance in managing, on Australia's behalf, the off-shore processing centres on Nauru and Manus Island, and commended the professional conduct of IOM's officers in a legitimate, core aspect of IOM's work. The people in both those centres had sought to enter Australia illegally and had been taken to the centres in order to establish their identity, to assess their claim to protection and to make them available for voluntary return if Australia had no obligation towards them. IOM had clearly contributed greatly to emergency and post-conflict situations over many years, as Mr. de Wilde's presentation had shown, and the Organization had demonstrated its ability to adapt to change over the past decade. She suggested, however, that an evaluation of IOM's role in such events would be beneficial, both internally in identifying best practices and the most efficient use of resources, and externally in considering how IOM's role had meshed with that of other agencies, with a view to identifying areas of overlapping responsibility, the benefits of working together, areas of expertise and the comparative advantages of each organization.

65. Mr. HOMANN-HERIMBERG (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)) said that 2002 marked the tenth anniversary of the historic General Assembly Resolution 46/182 which had led to the creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, later the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). In that brief period, UNOCHA had steadfastly endeavoured to strengthen the United Nations response to complex emergencies and natural disasters, and to improve the overall effectiveness of the coordination of humanitarian operations in the field. That work had

been accomplished largely through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, comprising the United Nations, IOM, non-governmental organizations and the Red Cross movement under the chairmanship of the Emergency Relief Coordinator. On 22 May 2002, the Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator and Director of UNOCHA's Geneva Office had chaired a meeting for the mid-year review of the Consolidated Appeals Process. That meeting had been followed by one reviewing the funding situation of humanitarian programmes in Afghanistan, at which IOM had stated that it was compelled to suspend return transportation assistance for Afghan refugees owing to lack of funding. That fact was highly regrettable: UNOCHA hoped that the situation would be remedied speedily and that the Organization would be able to resume such an important activity as soon as possible.

66. Mr. NEUSTRUP (Denmark), while appreciating the work of IOM in emergency and post-conflict situations, recalled that its core mandate was migration. The Organization should therefore focus its endeavours on areas that were clearly within its mandate and were covered by its core expertise. It was equally important that IOM seek to maintain operations at a realistic level, one at which it was possible to sustain funding. Denmark attached great importance to the Consolidated Appeals Process and appreciated IOM's commitment to coordinating its efforts with those of other humanitarian agencies, either through participation in the Consolidated Appeals Process or through the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. In particular, he welcomed the close collaboration with UNHCR and urged that it continue, both in the field and at Headquarters level, and that it include work within the Action Group on Asylum and Migration (AGAMI).

67. Mr. LUNDY (Canada) welcomed the new Members and observers and expressed his appreciation for the presentation given by Mr. de Wilde and for the information paper (MC/INF/249) prepared by IOM on the topic. Canada had a long history of working with IOM to resettle refugees from post-conflict situations, and he welcomed the expansion of IOM's operations in that area. He had some concerns, however, about the sustainability of such operations and IOM's ability to undertake operations when there was no guaranteed source of funding in advance. In the past, IOM had undertaken tasks at the request of governments: when 56,000 refugees from Hungary had been resettled in Canada in the late 1950s, the Government of Canada had guaranteed that IOM would receive payment for their transportation. The humanitarian assistance field was crowded with organizations and he therefore hoped that IOM would concentrate on areas where it could deliver services on the basis of its established expertise. The key to the delivery of humanitarian assistance around the world was coordination with other United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and the governments of the Members States affected, and he therefore welcomed the focus in the presentation on that aspect.

68. Mr. EGLOFF (Switzerland), welcoming the debate on the topic and applauding the work done by IOM in emergency and post-conflict situations, said that Switzerland would continue to support the Organization in its endeavours to target operations more specifically and more effectively. However, it was not possible to make a proper assessment of IOM's role in emergency and post-conflict situations over the past ten years on the basis of the document submitted to the Council. First, the terms "emergency" and "post-conflict" were still undefined. Moreover, IOM should supplement the quantitative data by a qualitative analysis of the impact of such operations, and he urged the Organization to carry out an internal review to complement the document before the Council. Second, paragraph 31 of the document, and the video, had both confirmed the dispersal of IOM's activities, a point which he had already raised in more general terms recently in the Executive Committee. Third, on the basis of the information supplied by the Administration, it was difficult to endorse the Organization's assessment of itself, particularly in



respect of the acquisition of specialized expertise and technical skills. He trusted that his comments, although critical, would be taken in a constructive spirit.

69. Mr. ERICKSON (United States of America), thanking the Administration for the information paper and the video presentation, said that IOM's involvement in emergency and post-conflict situations was a topic which warranted discussion in the Council. However, he believed that the issue should have been presented at the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance prior to bringing it to the Council. The current session of the Council was a special one and had been called to celebrate the entrance of new Members and observers, and he urged the Council to focus on that subject and not to discuss other issues. He believed that emergency and post-conflict situations warranted considerable attention prior to further consideration in the Council. He therefore reserved comment and requested that a debate on the issue be added to the agenda of the next session of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, with additional material and background documentation provided prior to the discussion.

70. Mr. TOMITA (Japan) congratulated the new Members and observers and expressed his appreciation of the video presentation which had been most useful in understanding the situation. He had been especially pleased to see the Japanese flag on food transported to the camp for internally displaced persons in Afghanistan. Echoing previous comments, he said that there was a need for cooperation and coordination with other United Nations institutions. The video had shown that IOM had funded a training and rehabilitation programme in East Timor and he sought clarification on the demarcation between IOM and other humanitarian organizations such as UNHCR or UNDP which also conducted training programmes. Furthermore, he shared the concerns expressed regarding the sustainability of the programme and about the suspension of the transportation project in Afghanistan and wondered about the possibility of cooperating with other United Nations bodies such as UNHCR and WFP in providing transportation for refugees, for example from Iran to Afghanistan.

71. Ms. RAATIKAINEN (Finland) thanked Mr. de Wilde for his presentation and welcomed the new Members and observers. Echoing previous speakers, she called for discussion on such an important issue to be pursued in the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance. It was in the interest of all to ensure that IOM's resources and skills were used in the most efficient way. She therefore suggested that it would also be useful to reflect on the Rapid Response Transportation Fund, an important tool developed by IOM.

72. Mr. de WILDE (Administration), responding to the debate, expressed his appreciation for the frank criticisms made. Although IOM had been involved in emergency and post-conflict work since its foundation over 50 years ago, it was the first time that a governing body had addressed the issue systematically, and he looked forward to further discussion.

73. With regard to the question of sustainability raised by many speakers, he pointed out that the issue was not unique to IOM. In fact, funding difficulties in Afghanistan were endemic to all international organizations operating in that country. For example, WFP had announced the suspension of several of its projects, and returning refugees and internally displaced persons were receiving reduced resettlement packages. Moreover, the representative of UNOCHA had noted that although the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Afghanistan had received some 60 per cent of the total contribution for 2002, the overall funding of the CAP programme was well below 50 per cent of the original requirements.

74. IOM's requirement for Afghanistan had been USD 74.8 million, of which it had received USD 39 million, the fifth highest level of assistance given to any international organization (52 per cent), after UNOCHA (63 per cent), UNHCR (61.7 per cent), WFP (58.6 per cent), and UNICEF (56.8 per cent). Hence the problem of sustainability affected all organizations, including UNHCR, which might run out of money in the very near future.

75. However, there was a more important systemic issue at stake. IOM's emergency and post-conflict activities did not form part of an overall plan or theory, but emerged as a response to crisis situations, in close consultation with other agencies involved: successful projects received funding and were sustained, whereas others fell by the wayside.

76. On the avoidance of overlapping, he explained that IOM worked closely in Afghanistan with the coordination structure provided by organizations within the United Nations system. Perhaps the CAP should be more strategic in its approach but, generally, the emergency programmes constituted a practical response to specific problems.

77. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that he welcomed the discussion as a model for further debates within the Council and the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance on IOM's role in the spectrum of agencies, as well as on ways of securing more reliable funding. He was convinced that IOM had an important role to play in emergencies, because of its comparative advantage in terms of flexibility and speed of response. Many, though not all, of IOM's useful services in crisis situations had been highlighted in the video. Ultimately, it was up to Member States to stipulate IOM's spheres of activity.

78. He hoped that in future it would be possible to address other appropriate topics, such as the growing labour migration demands placed on the Organization. He looked forward to continuing the debate and thanked Mr. de Wilde and his team for their presentation.

#### Agenda item 4

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

79. Mr. LUNDY (Canada) voiced the concern of his Government over the regularity with which special sessions of the Council had been held in recent years and hoped that the present special session would be the last for some time, in the absence of a specific decision by Members or a genuine emergency. Canada did not consider that the admission of new Members justified mid-year Council sessions; the holding of a predictable session annually ensured adequate and broad-ranging representation of Member States. His Government therefore requested specifically that, in future, there should be only one Council session a year.

#### CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

80. The CHAIRMAN thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the Eighty-third (Special) Session of the Council.

81. The Eighty-third (Special) Session of the Council of the International Organization for Migration closed on Wednesday, 5 June 2002, at 12.50 p.m.