

MC/2122

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6 November 2003**

EIGHTY-SIXTH SESSION

**APPLICATION BY THE
JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE (JRS)
FOR REPRESENTATION BY AN OBSERVER**

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1. In a letter dated 3 November, a copy of which is appended as Annex I, the International Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service, International Office, made a formal application for his Organization to be accorded observer status at meetings of the IOM Council. The Director General's reply thereto, dated 5 November 2003, is appended as Annex II. An appropriate item will be included in the revised provisional agenda of the Eighty-sixth Session of the Council.
2. This matter falls under rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure for the Council which provides that the Council may admit, upon their application, international organizations, governmental or non-governmental, concerned with migration, refugees or human resources as observers at its meetings.
3. An appropriate draft resolution will be submitted to the Council when this matter comes up for decision.

Annex I

LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 2003 FROM THE INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR
OF THE JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE, INTERNATIONAL OFFICE,
TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

Sir,

On behalf of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), we have the honour hereby to apply for official admission, as observer, to the various meetings of the International Organization for Migration.

JRS is an international Catholic organization whose mission is to accompany, serve and defend the rights of refugees and forcibly displaced peoples. JRS facilitates the involvement of individuals and communities, and promotes regional and global cooperation and networking on behalf of refugees and forcibly displaced people. JRS offers services for refugees and forcibly displaced people at regional and national levels, supported by an international office in Rome. Set up by the Society of Jesus in 1980 and now at work in over 50 countries, the JRS priority is to accompany refugees whose needs are more urgent or forgotten. JRS works with refugees and displaced people regardless of their race, gender, religion, national or ethnic origin.

JRS is present in refugee camps, with asylum-seekers in urban areas, during repatriations, in immigration detention prisons, with internally displaced people, and with people driven from their homes by conflict, humanitarian disaster or violation of human rights. JRS activities with refugees and forcibly displaced people include education and training, pastoral care, humanitarian aid, legal counselling, psycho-social counselling and support, public information, research, networking, advocacy and defence of human rights.

IOM's activities are of great interest to JRS, since we have a long history of working alongside IOM in the field. In East Timor JRS worked closely with IOM in the repatriation exercise. In West Timor currently JRS and IOM sometimes work together on the continuing repatriations. In Thailand JRS' team meets monthly with IOM in the IDC Coordinating Committee. In Angola JRS has worked with IOM in preparation for the repatriation of Angolans, and in Zambia JRS currently works with IOM on the repatriation from Meheba to Angola. In the Dominican Republic JRS works alongside IOM with Haitian refugees and migrants. These are just a few examples of the many working relationships between JRS and IOM in the field.

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Given the fact that JRS' mission is to work with refugees and displaced people and that JRS already has relationships with IOM in the field, we would hope to establish closer relations with IOM. We hope that observer status with IOM would further this collaboration, which would be advantageous not only to each of our organizations but also to the refugees and displaced people throughout the world with whom we work.

We therefore request you to consider our application for observer status at the next session of the Council.

[Complimentary ending]

Annex II

LETTER DATED 5 NOVEMBER 2003 FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION
TO THE INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE,
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 3 November 2003 conveying the desire of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) to obtain observer status in the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

IOM is pleased to have an international organization such as the Jesuit Refugee Service, whose mission is to accompany, serve and defend the rights of refugees and displaced persons and the migrant community at large, seeking to establish closer relations with IOM. As indicated in your letter, JRS has a long history of working alongside IOM in the field and I am confident that this growing cooperation will benefit both organizations in fulfilling their mandate.

The necessary action will be taken for inscription of your request on the agenda of the next session of the IOM Council, which is scheduled to take place in Geneva from 18 to 21 November 2003. An appropriate document formally presenting your application will be distributed to all Member States and observers in the near future. You will receive a copy of it, together with further details and procedural information concerning the Council session.

It gives me great pleasure to receive your request for observer status. Allow me therefore to express my satisfaction at the prospect of a closer relationship developing between JRS and IOM.

[Complimentary ending]