

Meeting 461  
Date 02-12-04  
Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Tape No. \_\_\_\_\_

**IOM COUNCIL, DECEMBER 2, 2004**

**Statement by the United States**

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Colleagues:

**Introductory Remarks**

Let me first congratulate Ambassador de Alba and the members of the Bureau on your election, and join others in welcoming our new member states and observer to the Council.

**DG and DDG Statement**

I would like to thank the Director General and Deputy Director General for their comprehensive statements, which both highlighted the excellent work of IOM and the challenges that lay ahead. We appreciate IOM's work, from activities dealing with migrant movement processing and assistance to capacity-building and anti-trafficking efforts. IOM has proven to be a very good partner in sometimes very difficult situations around the world.

## **Managing Growth**

We note that reflection and focus on mandates and core service areas are key to properly managing growth. IOM's first priority should be to provide quality performance in its core service areas. IOM should guard against broadening its programs too widely over the spectrum of humanitarian activities and should continue to focus on mandate and professional competencies. At the same time, IOM historically has been a service-driven organization, and indeed that is one of its great strengths. We appreciate IOM's flexibility and responsiveness in environments where other organizations do not have this ability.

## **Assessments**

The U.S. supports the IOM Administration's ongoing efforts to encourage Member States to settle their outstanding assessments promptly; in particular we support efforts to encourage those Member States that currently are subject to the provisions of Article 4 of the constitution to agree to a satisfactory repayment plan as soon as possible. We encourage Member States to take

their membership seriously – there are certain benefits, as well as obligation linked to membership in IOM.

## **Management**

On management issues, we continue to urge IOM's leadership to review the IOM internal management and organizational structure, with an eye toward improving the work of the organization. This includes closer collaboration with the Staff Association Committee; continued coordination on a regular basis with other multilateral organizations, including UNHCR; and working toward increasing representation of women at senior levels within IOM through recruitment and staff development.

## **International Migration and IOM's work**

At the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, many speakers praised IOM for improved transparency, and that must continue. But we as members must all contribute our time and ideas to help set IOM's priorities and provide policy guidance. Therefore, we must be active in working with IOM's leadership in setting the international migration agenda, as well as IOM's role within it.

The U.S. position on international migration issues is straightforward. We support – and advocate for – humane, orderly, and legal migration. We believe it is beneficial to both sending and receiving countries, as well as to the migrants themselves. We remain a strong supporter of IOM's work to promote regional dialogues worldwide, as they offer the most practical opportunities for addressing shared region-specific migration challenges and developing concrete shared responses. We also commend IOM's technical assistance programs to strengthen national migration management capacities including through the provision of model legislation and training.

For the United States, one of IOM's greatest values is its work to promote migration as a win-win phenomenon for both sending and receiving states. Therefore, we encourage IOM's initiatives on migration and health, the facilitation of legal migration, the promotion of integration, and the protection of migrants from exploitation, as they are consistent with IOM's mandate an international law.

IOM has proven to be a very compatible partner with the U.S. government and other Member States around the world. We believe that IOM is an appropriate center of multilateral migration debate and dialogue and look to IOM to take a leading role in these discussions. We believe it is time for the organization to craft a new Strategy Paper, which would take a retrospective look at the work it has accomplished in the past ten years, how it has evolved in that time, and its vision for the future. IOM's work in migration is important and unique, and we should try to preserve IOM's role as a central body providing policy advice and services on migration. As migration becomes an increasingly important focus for the international community, IOM should take a proactive approach in crafting its Strategy Paper and use that paper as a starting point for future consultations.

The United States supports IOM's continued cooperative approach with the UN, including UNHCR, and other international organizations, as well as NGOs. Strengthening these partnerships through dialogue and coordination is essential to any successful operation. An excellent example of this partnership was the recent IOM-UNHCR joint seminar, graciously hosted by

the Government of the Bahamas on “Contingency Planning for Mixed Migratory Flows in the Caribbean.”

We praise IOM’s ongoing work in both Afghanistan and Iraq. IOM continues to provide valuable advice and assistance to the Iraq Property Claims Commission (IPCC), aiding the resolution of remaining legal disputes, claim processes, and public information campaigns. In Afghanistan, IOM successfully assisted with the out of country registration and voting of more than one million Afghans living in Pakistan and Iran during the October 9 election. We look forward to IOM using this expertise in Iraq to implement out of country voting program for the Transitional National Assembly Election scheduled for January 2005.

## **Conclusion**

Mr. Chairman, we are living in a time of great change, in which the international dialogue and interest in migration is ever expanding and in which protection and security of both beneficiaries and humanitarian worker continue to be a concern. We also know that IOM faces many challenges in

the years ahead, as it responds to international policy issues and the ever-increasing complexity of humanitarian work. We are confident that IOM can meet those challenges, and we look forward to continued close collaboration in the coming year.