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NINETY-FIRST (SPECIAL) SESSION

**DRAFT REPORT ON THE
NINETY-FIRST (SPECIAL) SESSION OF THE COUNCIL**

Geneva

8 June 2006

Rapporteur: Ms. R. Poitevien (Venezuela)

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**DRAFT REPORT ON THE
NINETY-FIRST (SPECIAL) SESSION OF THE COUNCIL**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Council convened for its Ninety-first (Special) Session on Thursday, 8 June 2006, at 3.10 p.m. in the Palais des Nations. One meeting was held, chaired by H.E. Mr. J. U. Ayalogu (Nigeria).

ATTENDANCE¹

2. The following Member States were represented:

Afghanistan	Democratic	Kenya	Republic of
Algeria	Republic of the	Kyrgyzstan	Moldova
Argentina	Congo	Latvia	Romania
Australia	Dominican	Libyan Arab	Serbia
Austria	Republic	Jamahiriya	Slovakia
Azerbaijan	Ecuador	Lithuania	Slovenia
Bangladesh	Egypt	Luxembourg	South Africa
Belarus	El Salvador	Malta	Spain ²
Belgium	Estonia	Mauritania	Sudan
Benin	Finland	Mauritius ²	Switzerland
Bosnia and Herzegovina	France	Mexico	Thailand
Brazil	Germany	Morocco	Tunisia
Bulgaria	Ghana	Netherlands	Turkey
Burkina Faso	Guatemala	New Zealand	Ukraine
Cambodia	Guinea	Nigeria	United Republic of Tanzania
Canada	Haiti	Norway	United States of America
Chile	Honduras	Pakistan	Uruguay
Colombia	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Panama	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Congo	Israel	Paraguay	Yemen
Costa Rica	Italy	Peru	Zambia
Côte d'Ivoire	Japan	Philippines	
Croatia	Jordan	Poland	
		Portugal	
		Republic of Korea	

¹ See List of Participants (MC/2195).

² See paragraph 8.

3. Bhutan, Burundi, China, Indonesia, Russian Federation and the Holy See were represented by observers.

4. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, International Labour Office, African Union, *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* and the Universal Postal Union (UPU)³ were represented by observers.

5. The following international non-governmental organizations were represented by observers: the International Islamic Relief Organization, Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS)³ and the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad.³

CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES AND OBSERVERS

6. The Council took note that the Director General had examined the credentials of the representatives of the Member States listed in paragraph 2 and found them to be in order, and that he had been advised of the names of the observers for the non-member States and the governmental and non-governmental organizations listed in paragraphs 3 to 5.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Council adopted the agenda set out in document MC/2188.

NEW MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

(a) Applications by the Republic of Mauritius and the Kingdom of Spain for membership of the Organization

8. The Council adopted Resolutions Nos. 1133 and 1134 (LXXXXI) admitting the Republic of Mauritius and the Kingdom of Spain as Members of IOM.

(b) Applications by the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS), the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad for observership

9. The Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), and the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad were granted observer status at meetings of the Council, in accordance with the terms of Resolutions Nos. 1135, 1136 and 1137 (LXXXXI).

10. The representative of Mauritius expressed his country's deep appreciation to the IOM Council for having approved its application for membership of the Organization. The Republic of Mauritius was pleased to become a Member of IOM in order to promote and encourage social and economic development through migration and pledged its full support in furthering IOM's

³ See paragraph 9.

mandate and mission. It looked forward to working closely with all Member States in a spirit of cooperation.

11. With up to 75 million people moving between developing countries, there were many opportunities for development and many challenges. Mauritius looked forward to benefiting from IOM's broad expertise in migration, especially at a time when it was re-examining its economic strategies to boost performance. Mauritius had relied in the past on preferential trade agreements in sugar and textiles to spur growth and sustain economic and social progress. However, the loss of preferential market access following drastic changes in the European Union's sugar regime and the dismantling of the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) had exposed the country to stiff competition, with labour retrenchment in both sectors. A new economic strategy, based on the temporary migration of Mauritian workers with appropriate skills, had been devised to deal with the situation.

12. A significant number of Mauritians were working overseas, and some 25,000 foreign migrant workers were working in key sectors of the domestic economy – textiles, construction, tourism and information and communications technology; the Government therefore recognized the need to ensure the orderly migration of people at the international level and could appreciate the impact of migration on the economic and social advancement of States. International migration could also have a positive effect on development policies.

13. Before joining the Organization, Mauritius had benefited from IOM's services as a member of the African Union and of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and had enjoyed ties with the Organization through the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme, a memorandum of understanding signed between IOM and SADC in October 2004 and the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), a regional process launched by IOM in 2001.

14. The representative of Spain told the Council how pleased his country was to rejoin the Organization after a 30-year absence. In that time, Spain had undergone major political, social and economic changes. It had become a mature democracy. Income per capita had grown from USD 8,000 in 1974 to USD 25,000 in 2005. In 1974, 20 per cent of the workforce had been employed in agriculture and fishing, compared with 5.3 per cent in 2005. During the same period, the percentage of those employed in the services industry had risen from 20 to 68.

15. After decades of being essentially a sending country, Spain had become a major receiving country as well. There were approximately three million migrants in Spain, primarily from Ecuador, Colombia, Morocco and Romania. The number of foreign residents had risen sharply, by 39 per cent since 2004, owing to the Government's regularization of foreigners' status, a top priority. In addition to working migrants, Spain hosted a significant number of unemployed people, mainly retirees whose needs posed a daunting challenge. With IOM's help, however, there was no doubt that Spain would rise to that challenge, fully respecting foreigners' rights in a constructive spirit whereby all members of society would enjoy the potential benefits of migration and the potential risks would be mitigated through the implementation of appropriate policies.

16. Migration should be perceived as a rich melting pot of cultures and all sending, transit and host countries should act responsibly and in the spirit of dialogue embodied by the Alliance of Civilizations, an initiative proposed by the Governments of Spain and Turkey and launched by the United Nations in 2005.

17. Spain's membership of the Organization had been greatly facilitated by the growing cooperation between IOM and various Spanish Government ministries in programmes in Spain, Latin America and North Africa. IOM had always maintained a delegation in Madrid. Nevertheless, by formally joining the Organization, Spain hoped to further strengthen its relations with IOM and make a valuable contribution to the debate on migration.

18. The representative of the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS) thanked the Council for admitting the CMS as an observer to IOM and expressed confidence that its new standing would strengthen the relationship between the two organizations, for the benefit of activities in favour of migrants. An educational, non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in New York in 1964, the CMS encouraged the study of the sociological, demographic, economic, historical, political and legislative aspects of human migration, refugee movements and relations between ethnic groups worldwide. It was the legal entity in charge of representing the Congregation of St. Charles Missionaries (the Scalabrinian Congregation), whose 270 seats around the world managed a wide variety of services for migrants. The CMS and many Scalabrinian seats had been cooperating with IOM for many years on research, assistance for migrants, the definition and implementation of migration policies and social and cultural projects for migrants. Now that the CMS had observer status with the Organization, cooperation between the two would be even more effective, enabling them to ensure that migration was considered from a humane and ethical perspective.

19. The representative of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) was grateful that the UPU's request for observer status had been accepted, as its discussions with IOM had brought to light their growing interest in working together. The UPU, a United Nations specialized agency, was the principal forum for cooperation between governments, postal administrations, private sector stakeholders, postal workers' unions and user organizations. Its mission was to develop communication between people through the efficient operation of postal services. It was also the guarantor of the 1878 Postal Services Payment Agreement, which 130 countries had ratified to date.

20. Thanks to its observer status, the UPU hoped to enhance its knowledge of migration phenomena, to integrate the issue of international migration in its strategy as an intergovernmental organization and to carry out, together with IOM, activities and projects that would further the efforts of the international community in that field. It hoped that IOM would participate in its work as well, if possible when the Council of Administration convened in October 2007.

21. The UPU's interest in migration issues had to do, *inter alia*, with international financial transfers in a world in which nearly three billion people did not have access to financial services. For those people, who were sometimes beyond the reach of traditional financial institutions, the costs of transferring money could be high. As a result, they turned to parallel networks that fostered money laundering to the detriment of those sending money, undermining national savings and development. The UPU wished to make a global, accessible and low-cost

contribution to development and help reduce poverty by making its international financial services available in the worldwide network of 650,000 post offices. To that end, it had set up an electronic fund transfer network of which 30 States, most of them developing countries, were already members. It planned to extend the network on the basis of a detailed analysis of migration flows, using the data provided by IOM. The network of post offices could also provide support for various social, administrative and logistic services intended for groups of migrants.

22. The representative of the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad was particularly gratified that the Foundation had been admitted as an observer as it was the first organization of its kind to achieve that status. The Foundation had initially started working with IOM in the field of research. Its services were intended for the large community of Moroccans from many different backgrounds who were living abroad in many different countries. The Foundation considered it vital to learn more about that community, how better to serve its interests, and to that end had set up, in partnership with IOM, the Observatory on the Moroccan Community Residing Abroad. The Observatory's first publication, *Marocains de l'Extérieur*, had described the demographic and social characteristics of Moroccans living in six European countries: Germany, Belgium, Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands. Since then, the Observatory had conducted numerous studies and surveys, making a wide variety of key information available to decision-makers. A new research programme was presently being validated by the relevant services of the Foundation and IOM.

23. The Council welcomed the two new Member States and the three new observers to the Organization. For the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) and for Portugal, the arrival of two new Members confirmed the current relevance of migration issues and was further evidence of the Member States' commitment to IOM's goals. The representatives of several Latin American countries expressed special satisfaction at Spain's return to the Organization. In the past, many migrants had left Spain for Latin America; the flow was now reversed, and Spain, like many Latin American nations, had become a country of origin, transit and destination.

24. The representative of Morocco was pleased that yet another African country, Mauritius, and a close neighbour with which Morocco had historical ties, Spain, had joined IOM. For obvious reasons, he was particularly pleased that the Hassan II Foundation had been granted observer status.

25. Morocco had always worked with the other countries of Africa to meet the multiple challenges of peace and development. To that end, it would be hosting the tripartite Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development in Rabat, on 10 and 11 July 2006. The Conference would bring together the representatives of nearly 60 African and European countries and a dozen organizations, including IOM, to lay the groundwork for genuine cooperation in the following areas: cooperation on the management of regular economic migration, measures to facilitate workers' movements, the promotion of development, financial mechanisms to foster joint development, enhanced knowledge and skills and measures aimed at ensuring that sufficient skills were available for the development of African countries, partnerships between scientific and technical institutions, reinforced cooperation on training and on irregular immigration, capacity building to help transit and departure countries control national borders, and police and judicial operational cooperation and aid for victims.

26. Morocco also attached great importance to the mandate and mission of IOM, and had therefore been surprised to note that the United Nations Secretary-General's report on international migration and development had omitted to mention the Organization. That omission was all the more surprising given that United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/227 had explicitly invited IOM to contribute to the preparation of, and participate in, the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

27. The Director General welcomed the new Members and observers and thanked all Members for their presence and continued support. The admission of new Member States and observers reflected the growing importance of migration in today's world. Indeed, globalization was forcing small developing countries such as the Republic of Mauritius to find new ways to prosper in the 21st century, and migration was a promising alternative. He offered IOM's support in helping new Members achieve their objectives and looked forward to working closely with them on migration issues, particularly during the High-Level Dialogue and particularly with Spain, at the Ibero-American Meeting on Migration to be held in Madrid in July 2006. With Spain back in the fold, all 25 European Union Member States were represented at IOM.

28. The new observers had been dealing effectively with migration problems for many years and set good examples. The CMS, for example, had accumulated a wealth of information on migration and was known for its hands-on approach. The UPU was a powerful network for helping migrants, governments and economies worldwide manage remittances more effectively. The Hassan II Foundation, the first diaspora outreach organization to join IOM as an observer, was a model for ongoing initiatives in developing and transit countries allowing home countries to maintain contact with and tap the potential of expatriate workers.

29. The Director General reiterated his welcome to the new Members and observers. The entire Organization stood to benefit from their contributions, which would make IOM a richer, more effective organization.

OTHER BUSINESS

30. One delegate wondered why the United Nations had waited until 2006 and the High-Level Dialogue to discuss the link between migration and development and lend greater support to those organizations working in the sphere of migration. It was important to find ways to enhance the relationship between all players. He stressed the pressing need to establish effective mechanisms, such as plans of action, in Africa.

31. The Director General said that IOM was keenly aware of the problem. There was indeed a gap between the aspirations and needs of migration management and the ability of governments to perform the task effectively in both the developing and the industrialized world. Greater capacity building in all countries would lead to better migration management. It was a huge challenge to empower governments, the private sector, economies and society as a whole by providing the necessary resources, equipment and training to deal with the challenges of migration in the 21st century.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

32. After thanking the interpreters and the Meetings Secretariat, the Chairperson declared the Ninety-first (Special) Session of the Council closed on Thursday, 8 June 2006, at 4.40 p.m.