



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)
Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Mr. William Lacy Swing

at the Eighth Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance

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Geneva

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is my honour and pleasure once again to meet with IOM Member State delegations at this Eighth Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance (SCPF). I would like to welcome you all. I trust that we will have an informative and fruitful discussion on the agenda. In providing you with a status report on the Organization's activities to date and plans for the future, your views will be of great value in guiding programmes and activities.

2. I would like to begin by expressing, on behalf of all my IOM colleagues, our sincere appreciation to the Chairperson, Ambassador Jazaïry (Algeria), together with the First Vice-Chairperson, Ambassador Strohal (Austria), the Second Vice-Chairperson, Ambassador Arango (Colombia), and Rapporteur, Mr. Talha (Bangladesh), who constitute the Bureau of the IOM governing bodies.

II. CONTEXT

3. As we gather today for this, the Eighth Session of the SCPF, migrant crises in the Middle East and North and West Africa remind us all of the enormous challenge governments face as they work to manage migration humanely and responsibly in an era of the greatest human mobility numerically in recorded history.

4. Through your generous donor assistance, the Organization has been able to respond rapidly to evacuate tens of thousands of stranded migrants fleeing ongoing violence in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and in Côte d'Ivoire. In doing so, courageous IOM staff have deployed in large numbers to remote border posts and frontiers to register, medically check and house migrants temporarily, until they can be transported to their countries of origin, more than forty such destinations at present.

5. Earlier humanitarian crises in Haiti, Pakistan and Sudan continue to demonstrate the migration consequences of "man-made" and natural disasters – displacements that demand IOM's attention and the diligent, dedicated efforts of our staff. The Organization will continue to provide critical life-saving assistance to migrants in need, while planning for the future and introducing, incrementally, migration management services; these include enhanced border management systems, livelihood initiatives and information-sharing efforts to strengthen the dialogue between States. As in the past, we will keep you, our Member States, abreast of developments through our regular information briefings.

6. The Administration accords commensurate attention to the wide array of IOM's non-emergency services. One of these is the regional consultative processes (RCPs). These RCPs serve as vehicles to bring together destination, origin and transit countries, and, in doing so, underscore that migration is a shared matter of concern and opportunity. In this regard, I am pleased that we could play a role in the Fourth Regional Ministerial Conference held in Bali, Indonesia, in March 2011, and the Fourth Ministerial Consultation on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in April 2011. I am looking forward to my participation in other RCP events, including the next Full Round of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees, to be held in Miami, in the United States of America, later this month, and the Puebla Process gathering in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic, in June 2011.

7. As the Organization continues to evolve and expand its services and presence after 60 years of existence, the Administration is steadfastly committed to ensuring the highest levels of staff professionalism and organizational efficiency. I remain committed to our internal institutional reform agenda, including: the final implementation of the new Field structure in 2011; the ongoing budget reform discussions; and the further streamlining and consolidation of our human resources policy.

III. AGENDA ITEMS

8. I would now like to introduce briefly some of the key topics on the agenda, which will be presented later in greater detail by my colleagues. We in the Administration will then respond to your questions and comments.

Item 3: Outstanding contributions to the Administrative Part of the Budget

9. These outstanding contributions remain an ongoing concern – one in which I remain actively engaged and one that we have regularly brought to your attention at various levels. As of 31 March 2011, total outstanding contributions for prior years amount to CHF 5.9 million. There are currently 21 Member States subject to Article 4 of the Constitution; this reflects a slightly deteriorating trend compared to the same period last year when 19 Member States were subject to Article 4. I commend those Member States that are making efforts to settle their overdue contributions; however, the amounts outstanding remain significant. I therefore urge those countries in arrears to work with the Administration on establishing repayment plans tailored to suit their specific situation.

Item 4: Statement by a representative of the Staff Association

10. Regarding this item, I wish to reiterate my personal commitment to close consultation with the Staff Association Committee (SAC). I – as well as the Deputy Director General – maintain regular contact with SAC throughout the year in order to ensure that all staff concerns are highlighted and promptly brought to our attention. In recent months, we have worked together on the ongoing revision of the Staff Rules and the application of the new Staff Regulations, the field restructuring process and various human resources matters, including the completion of the new Staff Evaluation System.

11. While there may occasionally be differing perspectives, the Administration and SAC have been able to find common ground for the good of staff on a number of issues. I will continue to work closely and regularly with the Committee to ensure the best possible conditions of service for IOM staff globally.

Item 5: Assessment scale for 2012

12. The proposed adjustment to the IOM assessment scale for 2012 is fully equated to that of the United Nations. The scale has therefore been updated with the addition of five new Member States, namely Botswana, the Central African Republic, Lesotho, Swaziland and Timor-Leste, which were admitted in November 2010.

Item 6: Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2010

13. I am pleased to report that the level of expenditures under the administrative and operational programmes reached a new record high of approximately USD 1.4 billion, representing an overall increase of USD 332 million (or 32.3 per cent) over the 2009 level. There were increases in most regions and programme areas, particularly in humanitarian

intervention in emergencies occurring primarily in Haiti, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Pakistan. This high level of activity underlines the continued relevance of the Organization's work and capacity to respond to migration challenges globally.

14. The Organization's continued growth highlights the importance of strengthening core structures. Therefore, I hope that the Working Group on Budget Reform will be able to reach conclusions to help address this issue. With the large increase in the Operational Part of the Budget, the project-related overhead was also significantly higher. After deducting all expenditure allocations, there was a net surplus of USD 3.2 million of additional Discretionary Income for the year as a whole. In accordance with provisions of the Discretionary Income reserve mechanism approved in 2009, however, this surplus was added to the Discretionary Income reserve, which has a cumulative balance of USD 4.3 million as of 31 December 2010.

15. The External Auditor of IOM, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, has completed the audit of the 2010 accounts. The Auditor has expressed an unqualified opinion on the financial statements, noting that they give a fair view of the Organization's resources, expenditures and financial position. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the work of the Auditor, and I look forward to a strengthened collaboration in the years ahead.

16. IOM is currently implementing International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). I can report good progress during the past year, including new disclosures which should increase the transparency and usefulness of IOM's financial statements. I refer you to the progress report on IPSAS implementation, distributed for today's meeting, which outlines the achievements thus far, as well as plans for the future.

Item 7: Revision of the Programme and Budget for 2011

17. The Administrative Part of the Budget remains unchanged at CHF 39,388,000. The scale of assessment and contributions has been updated with the addition of five new Member States admitted in November 2010, namely Botswana, the Central African Republic, Lesotho, Swaziland and Timor-Leste. The originally approved budget of USD 619.0 million for the Operational Part of the Budget has been increased in this Revision by USD 321.4 million to a total of USD 940.4 million; this increase is due to expanded ongoing activities and the addition of new projects. This trend indicates that the budget for the year is likely, once again, to exceed USD 1 billion, and will likely be in the range of last year's performance. We expect increased project activity in all major geographical regions and service areas.

Item 8: Support for developing Member States and Member States with economy in transition – 1035 Facility

18. This agenda item relates to the 1035 Facility, for which two separate reports are presented: one on the financial status for 2010, and the other for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2011. This Facility continues to provide an important micro-funding mechanism to implement migration-related capacity-building projects in developing Member States and Member States with an economy in transition. I appreciate the interest shown by all delegations in the Facility, and I welcome and greatly appreciate the voluntary contributions made to the Facility by Austria, Belgium, Hungary, Italy and the United States of America.

Item 9: Exchange of views on items proposed by the membership

19. The next item on the agenda is an exchange of views on two topics that you, Member States representatives, proposed in preparation for this meeting. The first topic is IOM oversight and evaluation. This is a critically important subject, in particular when considering the rapid growth in organizational activities and coverage, and the creation of new departments at Headquarters and the new Regional Offices. Sound oversight mechanisms covering financial controls, professionalism and integrity in human resources management, risk assessment, fraud prevention and quality controls of project endorsement and project implementation are an absolute necessity, and I have made this one of the priorities of my Administration.

20. The second topic is IOM cooperation with the United Nations system. As migration has gained visibility on the agenda of governments around the world – as well as within the United Nations system – and as humanitarian crises increasingly involve population movements requiring coordinated international responses, interaction between IOM and the United Nations has intensified accordingly, especially over the last five years.

21. An in-depth presentation on these two topics will be made later by several colleagues, followed by an interesting discussion.

Item 10: Progress report from the Working Group on Budget Reform

22. The growth in the Organization and funding of the core structure are at the centre of the ongoing discussions of the Working Group on Budget Reform. It is my hope that the Working Group will be able to arrive at sustainable conclusions that would address the issue. I would like to thank the Chairperson of the SCPF, who is also the Chairperson of the Working Group, for his leadership and commitment to this effort.

Item 11: Update on the Field structure reform implementation

23. The IOM Field structure reform implementation is progressing well. Planning for the new Field structure to be implemented in the second half of 2011 is currently under way. The terms of reference for the new Field structure are complete. The Project Endorsement Working Group has developed the new IOM Project Handbook, which consolidates all relevant IOM processes, guidelines, templates and tools for each stage of the cycle. I have asked the Deputy Director General, whom I designated to head this effort, to provide you later with a brief status report on the implementation of the Field structure reform.

Item 12: Update on the 60th anniversary

24. As you know, 2011 marks the 60th anniversary of IOM. It is an important milestone, one that we are celebrating through diverse activities at Headquarters and in Field Offices. For the anniversary session of the Council in December, an interactive panel discussion is planned on the “Benefits of migration” with distinguished personalities who have their own migration experience and can engage in a discussion with high-level representatives from our Member States on present and future trends in migration. The Deputy Chief of Staff will provide you with an update on preparations for this anniversary.

IV. CONCLUSION

25. Distinguished delegates, I look forward to a productive discussion on all these items. We will continue to seek active consultation with you in all areas of the Organization’s work.