



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

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**RESTRICTED**

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## **WORKING GROUP ON IOM–UN RELATIONS AND THE IOM STRATEGY**

Second meeting (15 April 2014)

**CHAIRPERSON’S NOTE ON THE FIRST MEETING**

**HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2014**



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1. The first meeting of the Working Group on IOM–UN Relations and the IOM Strategy, established by the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance during its Thirteenth Session, was held on 13 February 2014. The meeting was chaired by the Chairperson of the Council and focused on two main subjects: (a) preparatory discussions on the objectives and scope of the Working Group and the question of observers; and (b) draft terms of reference.
2. In preparation for the discussions, the Administration had prepared two background documents: IOM–UN relations: timeline (WG/REL/2014/1); and IOM Strategy discussions: timeline (WG/REL/2014/2). The Chairperson circulated in advance a draft on the terms of reference.
3. Concerning the draft terms of references that were considered during the meeting, the Chairperson of the Working Group took note of the many comments and suggestions made by the Member States. He also requested that any additional proposals be sent to an e-mail address set up for that purpose by 24 February to ensure all concerns were taken into account.
4. On the subject of the organization of the work to be carried out by the Working Group, the Chairperson reminded delegates that three sessions had been planned for 2014 to review the two topics under discussion, namely IOM–UN relations and the IOM Strategy. Participants expressed differing views on whether the two subjects should be addressed separately or together, and, if not at the same time, the order in which they should be discussed.
5. In view of the comments made by delegations, the Chairperson suggested the following timetable for the upcoming meetings in 2014:
  - 15 April: to discuss IOM–UN relations;
  - 22 May: to focus on the IOM Strategy;
  - 25 September: to address both topics together.
6. The Chairperson indicated, however, that he did not expect discussions on either topic to be finished by the end of the year. He also said that it would not be wise to defer discussions on one of the topics until next year. His objective was therefore to develop a workplan and to obtain an agreement among Member States on the objectives of this exercise and on the main questions and concerns to be addressed by the Working Group.
7. During the meeting, discussions on IOM–UN relations highlighted that, while the process would be complex, focus should be put on the concrete and practical aspect of the relations. All possible options were to be considered through a pragmatic process that would take into account the practical, legal, organizational, operational and financial aspects of the issue. It was also stressed that the objective of the process was to ensure the well-being of migrants and IOM's ability to address their needs.
8. There was some discussion on whether there was a need for a consultant or a neutral entity to review, analyse and give advice on the possible options. The Chairperson suggested

that this be kept as a possibility for later in the process, when the issues and questions to be addressed had been further defined and developed by the Working Group.

9. It was suggested that the Administration should also be asked for its views during this process. The Chairperson explained that the IOM Director General had indicated that the Administration wished to remain neutral on the matter. The Chairperson said that, later in the review process once all avenues had been explored, there might come a time when the Director General's views might need to be sought. In the meantime, all documents produced by the Administration would be neutral and factual in nature.

10. Various delegations expressed interest in having additional material and some made suggestions concerning the type of information that would help the membership in its work. In this regard, the Chairperson pointed out that a number of background and reference documents had already been made available on the IOM governing body website in the section dedicated to the Working Group.

11. As a conclusion of this first meeting, it was agreed that, for the second meeting of the Working Group, scheduled to take place on 15 April 2014, the Member States would be provided with the following documents:

- Revised terms of references for the Working Group;
- Mission reports from the Chairperson's trips to the Field (Mediterranean and Philippines) from which he hoped to gain insights into how IOM was fulfilling its mandate and its relationship with the United Nations.

12. In addition, upon request by Member States, the Administration agreed to provide the following:

- A paper outlining specific areas where the current relationship between IOM and the United Nations impeded IOM's work;
- A paper with a detailed quantitative analysis of the legal, financial and organizational impact of the various models of association.

13. In order to provide the information required for the second paper, it was agreed that the Chairperson would request the Director General to ask the United Nations for information on the specific models of association.

14. Lastly, the Chairperson mentioned the issue regarding the possible involvement of observers in this process. He confirmed that some observers had already approached him to express interest in the discussions of the Working Group. One delegation, however, was of the view that the Working Group should be limited to Member States only. He understood the sensitivities and for now the process would involve Member States only. He would, however, consult bilaterally and with regional groups to see what consensus might be possible on this subject.