



Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès  
des Nations Unies et auprès des institutions  
spécialisées à Genève

Statement on behalf of Belgium  
IOM 114<sup>th</sup> Council (27 – 29 November 2023)  
General Debate - Item 10

Dear Chairman, Director – General, Excellencies,

Belgium aligns itself fully to the statement made by the EU and its member states and to the joint statement on Ukraine.

1. Belgium welcomes Mrs. Pope's appointment as the new Director General of the IOM and as the first woman to lead this international organization and we are looking forward to work together.

2. We are facing the consequences of the climate crisis worldwide; climate change has a huge impact on people's movements and migration.

3. For this reason, supporting IOM to prepare for, adapt to and react on climate change is a top priority for Belgium, as our Minister of Development stated yesterday.

4. We would like to encourage and contribute to tackle climate change itself, its root causes, especially in vulnerable countries & populations.

5. At the same time we want to make our climate strategy complementary to our Strategy on migration and development & make people and communities more resilient against the adverse consequences of climate change.

6. Finally, we have to work on how we can better manage migration, to help both the people migrating and the host communities. A dialogue on regular pathways is needed to respond to changes in climate.

7. We are now in the second year of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine triggering an unprecedented movement of refugees and internally displaced persons stranded across Ukraine, the EU and beyond. The effects are felt far beyond, through its consequences for food security, in states already hard hit by climate change and related food insecurity.

8. -Regarding the situation in Gaza, we want to reiterate the importance of respect for International Humanitarian Law and

International Law. The protection of civilians -of all civilians- must be our main concern. We call for an extended truce and unimpeded humanitarian access to Gaza.

We are also appalled by the conflict in Sudan that forces people out of their homes.

9. Faced with these and many other crises, IOM has proven to be a 'can do' organization that wants to make the difference, assessing and addressing needs and crises globally through its efficiently functioning country offices and its flexibility on the ground.

10. This was confirmed in the 2024 IOM – MOPAN evaluation, where Belgium was pleased to be taking the role of co-institutional lead, alongside Canada and the Netherlands. IOM was commended in the report for its business model, its efficiency and flexibility.

10. The growth in IOM's budget and in staff requires strengthening the structures for precise and detailed focus on accountability, oversight, legal framework and HR management. Belgium would like to see detailed evaluations of IOM's staff surveys and promotion of gender equality in structures and operations. We believe the restructuring of the regional offices are a step towards a more coherent system.

11. In its role as coordinator of the UN Network on Migration, IOM has an important responsibility regarding the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration, developing safe, orderly and regular migration. We strongly encourage teamwork between the different UN-organizations to the benefit of the Compact.

12. In order to fulfil its various missions IOM must have adequate structural and financial resources. In this respect Belgium reiterates its appeal to the Member States to contribute to the essential structures of the IOM by means of core funding, as Belgium does by donating one million euros per year.

13. As IOM keeps growing and its importance is being acknowledged, we are looking forward to the new strategic plan and to learn how IOM will be handling its growth and its tasks in a challenging world.

Thank you.