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## Activities of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

**Reply to Recommendation<sup>1</sup>:** Recommendation 1806 (2007)  
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has noted with interest Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1806 \(2007\)](#) on activities of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). It has transmitted the recommendation to member states and to the European Committee on Migration (CDMG). The comments received from the CDMG are appended to this reply.
2. The Committee of Ministers fully agrees with the Assembly's positive assessment of the IOM's contribution to protecting the human dignity and well-being of migrants, in encouraging social and economic development through migration, assisting in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management and in advancing understanding of migration issues. It notes that 40 member states of the Council of Europe enjoy full membership and a further four observer status within the IOM.
3. The Committee of Ministers remains strongly committed to ensuring close co-operation and co-ordination in international action, in particular on the European scene. It therefore agrees with the Parliamentary Assembly that the Council of Europe should continue to ensure and develop collaboration with the IOM, particularly on issues related to the core values of the Council of Europe.
4. In this respect, and in response to the specific recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly in paragraph 7, the Committee of Ministers notes with satisfaction the continued and active participation of IOM representatives in the meetings and activities of the European Committee on Migration and its subordinate committees. These activities address, *inter alia*, issues related to the protection and integration of migrants, including children and elderly migrants, as well as the question of access of persons of immigrant background to employment.
5. The Committee of Ministers agrees that the IOM is an ideal forum through which the implementation of policy recommendations of the Committee of Ministers in the fields of migration and integration could be encouraged in order to promote the fundamental values of the Council of Europe, raising awareness and strengthening the human rights dimension of the work of the IOM. Recommendations CM/Rec(2007)9 on life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors and CM/Rec(2007)10 on co-development and migrants working for development in their countries of origin are recent examples of such recommendations.
6. As the Assembly is also aware, the IOM held observer status with the Ad hoc Committee on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CAHTEH), the body responsible for the elaboration of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The Committee of Ministers is therefore confident that the Organisation, where appropriate, and in the framework of its activities to counter trafficking, will bear in mind and promote the ratification of this convention and its implementation in states parties following its entry into force on 1 February 2008.

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1. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 March 2008, at the 1021st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.



7. The Committee of Ministers takes note of the suggestion to strengthen co-operation in the field of combating intolerance and xenophobia. Particularly mindful of a number of relevant general policy recommendations, and other pertinent activities carried out in that field, the Committee of Ministers invites the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) to consider the usefulness of reinforcing co-operation or information exchange with the IOM.

8. The Committee of Ministers has also transmitted [Recommendation 1806 \(2007\)](#) and the present reply to the International Organization for Migration, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), as well as to the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) and the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) for information.

9. In this respect, the Committee of Ministers would draw the Assembly's particular attention to the fact that the North-South Centre has worked closely with the IOM for a number of years, with representatives of the IOM regularly associated with the centre's activities in the field of migration. In particular, the IOM participated in a series of workshops on co-development, organised by the NorthSouth Centre and the Directorate General for Social Cohesion between 2003 and 2006. These workshops allowed for a series of recommendations on co-development policies to be drawn up, as a tool for addressing the causes of migration. In 2007, the IOM followed the work of the North-South Centre on "migrants, actors and vectors of intercultural dialogue" in the framework of the consultation process for the Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue. In 2008, the IOM will also be associated in the North-South Centre's EuroMediterranean meeting on migration, co-development and intercultural dialogue (Tangier).

10. Finally, the Assembly should also be aware that over the last three years, the CEB has continued its co-operation with the IOM through the provision of grants to two different IOM projects, with a third currently under preparation.

**Appendix – Comments of the Bureau of the European Committee on Migration (CDMG) on Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1806 (2007) on the activities of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

- a. The European Committee on Migration (CDMG) takes note of Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1806 (2007) on the activities of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- b. The IOM is an observer to the committee and it participates actively in both its meetings and activities. Inter-secretariat contacts are also maintained between the two organisations with a view to establishing effective co-operation, avoiding unnecessary duplication and achieving synergy.
- c. Representatives of the IOM field missions are regularly invited to participate in relevant CDMG/secretariat events in the member states. Moreover, opportunity is taken of these meetings to develop contacts and explore possibilities of joint activities. It is worth noting, in particular, the active participation of the representatives of IOM in the regional meetings of CDMG members in South-East and eastern Europe where they contributed to the debates on future activities of CDMG.
- d. It is important to bear in mind the distinct missions of the two organisations and the particular nature and work of the CDMG as an intergovernmental committee in the fields of migration and integration. Nonetheless, the CDMG considers that IOM (like other observer organisations) has an important role to play in implementing the policy recommendations of the Committee of Ministers in the fields of migration and integration.
- e. In this context, the CDMG reminds the Committee of Ministers of the relevant paragraphs in the statement (reproduced below) on its role and future activities that the committee adopted at its 52nd meeting (Strasbourg, 6-8 November 2006), to the preparation of which the IOM representatives contributed.

*“xvi. The CDMG should develop effective co-operation with the European Union and other international organisations. The CDMG should aim to become a valuable forum for the exchange of information on the activities of other organisations and thereby improve co-ordination and co-operation. Through active partnerships, particularly with the ILO, OSCE and IOM, the CDMG should identify ways in which they can assist in the implementation of its policy recommendations. Moreover, in order to make this co-operation more effective the members of the CDMG should aim to improve co-ordination between members and their national counterparts working with other international organisations.”<sup>2</sup>*

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2. Appendix III to the meeting report (Document CDMG(2006)76).