



BELARUS

**106TH SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL
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GENERAL DEBATES

**STATEMENT OF MS. OLGA STANKEVICH,
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**Dear Mr.(Ms.) Chairperson, Dear Mr. Director General,
Respective audience,**

On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Belarus I would like to welcome all the participants of the 106th session of the IOM Council.

Every year IOM provides its platform to the member-states, observers and other interested international partners to discuss different questions, connected with migration in general.

Migration became a transnational phenomenon long ago. There is no state in the world which is not deeply concerned about migration problems. Every movement of people leaves a trace. In the conditions of globalization in our dynamic and mobile world creation and support of an efficient migration management system has a great importance for realization of its positive potential.

I would like to stress that this session has particular importance in connection with the situation of serious international concern when global movement of people has received a mass character and has achieved the scales which had not been seen ever before.

Belarus shares this concern given the difficult migration situation, increasing number of humanitarian crises, caused by ongoing and new armed conflicts, and also

unprecedented nature of the humanitarian challenges that IOM and other key international partners faced in the last years.

Our country appreciates the active efforts of IOM in solving migration problems of a new century, in providing assistance to displaced persons and also in paying the attention of the international community to this problem. We encourage you to continue this work.

Belarus is seeking to increase its contribution to the international security. It has always been and remains committed to the IOM's goals and objectives and its consistent policy in the sphere of observing and protecting the rights, freedoms and legal interests of migrants and refugees.

Efforts of separate countries are not enough for successful migration management. We need a complex and collective approach. In this respect we appreciate the importance of IOM's work on coordination of these efforts in the sphere of migration with the UN. And we are committed to the elaboration and realization of an effective strategy and programs in the sphere of migration and development.

Active migration processes are taking place all over the world. The process of intensification of migration has affected the Republic of Belarus as well.

In the first half of 2015 14 823 persons arrived to our country for permanent residence. At the same time 4 272 persons left the territory of the Republic of Belarus for permanent residence.

As before major migration flows to the Republic of Belarus are observed from the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States such as Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan which amount to 90 % of the total number of migrants arriving to Belarus. The tendency remains of a considerable increase in the number of citizens of Ukraine, arriving to the territory of our country for employment, obtaining international protection or permanent residence.

So, in comparison with the same period of 2014 in the first half of 2015 we witness 67% increase in the number of citizens of Ukraine, who were registered for

temporary residence in Belarus for a period of up to 90 days. And this figure is as good as almost 40 thousand people.

The number of Ukrainians, who obtained the permit for temporary residence for the period of one year, exceeded the index of the previous year by 191% and is almost 10 thousand people. In the first half of this year 5 050 citizens of Ukraine received the permit for permanent residence. An increase amounted to 385%.

The trend of a significant increase in the number of persons seeking protection in the Republic of Belarus which became evident in the second half of the last year, remains in 2015. Geography of the countries of origin of forced migrants has not changed and the number of forced migrants arriving to Belarus constantly increases.

We can note that the flow of forced migrants is characterized by an increase in the number of persons, who left Ukraine because of the crisis in south-eastern regions of this country. Also we can say about the unchanged number of asylum seekers from Syria and Afghanistan. In 2015 applicants from Ukraine amounted to 77,3 % of the total number of foreigners who applied for protection. And applicants from Syria amounted a little bit more than 10%.

Up to September 2015 24 314 foreigners has arrived in the Republic of Belarus for employment. There are 10 634 Ukrainians among them. Unfortunately illegal migrants still continue to use the territory of Belarus as a transit corridor.

At the same time the migration situation in the country remains stable and is under control. A comprehensive and affective system of legal and social protection of migrants has been created. The measures on providing migration stability taken on the national level and effective governmental migration policy allow us to control the migration situation in the country.

Delegation of Belarus appreciates high level of cooperation with IOM, positive dynamics of its development and constructive character of our interaction at all levels. Under the IOM's support our Government has realized many significant projects, which have enhanced national potential in the sphere of migration management and

anti-trafficking.

At the same time, taking into account the constantly changing migration situation in the world and emergence of new trends in its development, we expect the widening of the IOM's project activity in Belarus. We also underline the importance to continue joint activities on developing and strengthening the potential of the International Training Center on Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. Our country appreciates further IOM's assistance to ITC's activities.

Belarus highly appreciates the IOM's contribution to combat human trafficking and is grateful for the assistance, which is provided by IOM in migration issues. Our country intends to follow up to take an active position at the international arena on the issue of addressing trafficking and effectively participate in international, regional and sub-regional migration forums. We shall continue overall assistance to consolidation of the efforts on combating modern slavery and other brutal violations of human rights and also in overcoming the consequences of humanitarian crises.

In conclusion I would like to thank the IOM staff and Ambassador Swing personally once again for provided assistance and express our hope for further fruitful and mutually profitable cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.