

GEORGIA

Statement

of the Deputy Permanent Representative of Georgia to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva Mr. Irakli Jgenti

(Item 10, General Debate, 107th Session of the IOM Council, 5-8 December 2016)

Thank You Chair and congratulations to you and other Bureau members,

I also will use this opportunity and congratulate everybody with the 65th Anniversary of the IOM and thank Director General Swing and the IOM team for the tireless efforts in confronting existing challenges. We welcome the agreement, which brought the International Organization for Migration into the UN system. We believe that this will further strengthen the collective response to the refugee and migration crisis. Georgia also congratulates and welcomes new members of the IOM family – China, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and the Kingdom of Tonga.

Distinguished delegates,

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN Member States committed to reinvigorate efforts to address the consequences of a migrant crisis which was already leaving millions stranded. Unfortunately, during the past year the scope of displacement has further increased and reached a staggering number of international migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons. The world still remains in the midst of crisis when people have to leave their homes to escape armed conflicts, internal turbulences, environmental disasters or other situations that endanger their freedom and livelihood.

The burden of forced displacement did not bypass my country either. Since the early 90s, Georgia's regions of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia have witnessed several waves of ethnic cleansing under foreign occupation. With ongoing creeping annexation and installation of barbed wire fences along the occupation line, the prospects of their safe and dignified return are still grim.

Distinguished Colleagues,

At the Istanbul World Humanitarian Summit this May, the UN member states expressed the commitment to uphold international law, prevent the crises generating the largest migration flows and support the emergence of safe, dignified and durable solutions for refugees and IDPs. We need to build on the pledges made and foster the collective actions to address refugee and migration crises.

In this regard, we welcome the adoption of a Political Declaration on refugees and migrants in New York in September 2016, which lays a solid ground for strengthened international cooperation, based on solidarity and shared responsibilities. We welcome and fully share the view expressed by the PGA Thomson that international community must jointly act on the commitments accepted and move towards the achievement of sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to underline the fruitful cooperation between IOM and Georgia throughout the years developed in the course of joint initiatives and joint responses to migration challenges. Since 2013, IOM implements 42-month project within the framework of the "Eastern Partnership Integration and Cooperation Program". The project aims at strengthening capabilities and capacities of the Government of Georgia in the field of migration and border management. One of the main directions of the project is a reintegration of returning migrants.

Since 2015, Georgia implements "supporting reintegration of the returned Georgian migrants" Program. In close cooperation with IOM, more than 1000 returnee migrants have received reintegration assistance. We would like to use this opportunity and once again, thank IOM for the active engagement.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Georgia will continue contributing to the international efforts in addressing large movements of migrants and refugees within the scope of the available resources.

Thank You