

Thank you, Mr Chair,

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

Let me warmly welcome the Republic of Uzbekistan among the IOM Member States. It seems we are slowly approaching the universal UN membership in the organization. This is the result of important dynamics in the field of migration and of due attention that the international community pays to this issue. In addition, it is a proof of understanding that the international community as a whole can only address migration effectively.

During the last year, the IOM was present in major humanitarian emergencies all over the world and its activities continued to expand. The character and expertise of the organization predetermine it to be the leading subject in migration issues. In order to preserve this well-deserved position, it has to keep pace with rapidly changing environments, as well as to adapt itself to ongoing reforms in the UN system, in line with Secretary-General's prevention agenda.

To this end, cooperation and coordination among all relevant actors across the system is necessary. Therefore, **we welcome the creation of the UN Network on Migration that should ensure close and efficient collaboration of all involved entities, without any duplication** of already ongoing activities. New, innovative approach and partnerships are needed.

As migration is a very comprehensive and crosscutting issue, only the engagement of all relevant actors can bring tangible results. We welcome the **strengthened engagement of the IOM with private sector, especially in the field of combatting migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons**, as well as the comprehensive approach of IOM in tackling these negative consequences of illegal migration.

The protection of and assistance to the most vulnerable migrants, including **assisted voluntary returns**, are important tasks in the centre of IOM's attention. In order to come to a sustainable outcome in return issues, it is necessary to **support the countries of origin in creating favourable conditions for life**. This aim goes in line with the 2030 Agenda and addresses the root causes of migration.

Mr Chair,

In order to take full benefit of migration, it has to be orderly and organized. Besides the large involvement of actors and the whole of society approach, which were already mentioned, **evidence-based policies leaning on reliable data** can do much in this direction as well. In this context, the Global Migration Data Analysis Centre and the Migration Data Portal are providing useful information.

Slovakia closely cooperates with the IOM as the essential partner in addressing the challenges of global displacement and is ready and willing to continue in this fruitful relation.

Mr Chair,

Let me conclude by expressing our appreciation and support to IOM's work, and by wishing the new Secretary General all the success in the process of establishing IOM's future strategic orientation and priorities.

Thank you for your attention.