

**PERMANENT MISSION OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AT GENEVA**

STATEMENT BY

H.E. Mr. Dejan Šahović

**AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
HEAD OF DELEGATION OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO
AT THE 90th SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION**

Geneva, 1 December 2005

Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Growing number of initiatives in the field of migration on international level indicates the need for comprehensive, coordinated, and multifaceted engagement and cooperation of all relevant actors – governments, international organizations and civil society in addressing the issue of migration in all its complexity. The finalization of the International Agenda for Migration Management within Bern Initiative, development of Essentials of Migration Management as a guide for policy makers and practitioners, as well as the report of Global Commission on International Migration presented in October this year are very important steps forward in building partnerships and better understanding of migration issues in today's interconnected world.

In past two days during the International Dialogue on Migration we had a very interesting exchange of views. Interesting presentations from different regional perspectives were made, with the emphasis on the need to develop policy coherence in migration management on national, regional and international levels. We are confident that this session of the IOM Council will further contribute to the preparations for the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that will take place during the next session of the UN General Assembly in September 2006.

Mr. Chairman,

We listened with attention the introductory statements by Mr. Brunson McKinley, IOM Director-General and Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director-General at the opening of the general debate this morning. They reflect very busy agenda of the organization, dynamic developments that are taking place in the field of migrations and some innovative approaches to deal with growing challenges.

We wish to reiterate our full support for their continued efforts in addressing migration issues and particularly to the activities of the IOM in the field. In this connection, I wish to express appreciation to the IOM for valuable assistance and support provided to Serbia and Montenegro so far in our efforts to create the institutional and legal framework in asylum, migration and visa matters in compliance with the EU standards.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to present a brief overview of the developments in my country with regard to the migration related issues and our cooperation with the IOM.

Within the EU CARDS programme, Serbia and Montenegro adopted the National Plan of Action on Migration aimed at defining all necessary intermediary steps and concrete activities concerning legislation, institution building, procedures, standards and best-practices. In March this year, the Framework Law on Asylum was adopted as a first step towards establishing national asylum system. The draft by-laws on asylum are

finalized and should be adopted shortly. The draft Law on Foreigners is currently under preparation. In addition, initial model of IT visa system has been developed, as a basis for a new visa issuance system in our diplomatic-consular network. One of the problems we experience with regard to the asylum issues is the lack of adequate infrastructure - most importantly acceptance centers for asylum-seekers and illegal migrants in conformity with international standards. As a first step in resolving this problem, the European Agency for Reconstruction provided financial resources for construction and adaptation of two acceptance centres for asylum seekers in Serbia and Montenegro.

I would also like to highlight our joint efforts with the IOM aimed at strengthening the regional cross-border co-operation in South-Eastern Europe concerning trafficking in human beings and illegal migrations. Also with the IOM active engagement we are undertaking education and information campaigns on trafficking in human beings and providing protection and assistance to the victims of trafficking. Finally, I would like to welcome the launching of the IOM's one-year programme to provide voluntary return assistance to irregular migrants in Serbia and Montenegro as well as the organization's engagement in assisting voluntary return of citizens of Serbia and Montenegro, by providing reinstallation grants and travel expenses. Furthermore, in the context of development of regional network of information centers for legal migrations and employment in Western Europe, Serbia and Montenegro is included in the IOM's pilot project on selection of qualified foreign workers for employment and permanent residence in the Czech Republic.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our commitment to continued close cooperation with the IOM in addressing all aspects of complex migration issues. We will also continue to work together with all other relevant actors, through the EU CARDS programme and beyond, with the aim of establishing proper asylum structures and capacities for comprehensive migration management.

Thank you for your attention.