

COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

103th Session

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR RYTIS PAULAUSKAS, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

Mr. Chairman, Director General, Excellences and delegates,

Let me start with thanking His Excellency Abdul Hannan, Ambassador of Bangladesh for his effective leading of the Council's work. I also have a pleasure to congratulate His Excellency Luis Enrique Chavez Basagoitia, Ambassador of Peru, on his election as the Chairman of the Council.

Lithuania aligns itself with the EU statement and firmly supports the EU strategic approach to promoting regular mobility of third country nationals and to adequate response to the root causes of forced migration, such as conflicts, poverty, unemployment or climate change.

This year has been marked by the important migration related events and crisis: High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in New York, IOM's conference on Diasporas in Geneva, and continuing large scale crisis in Syria and around it, in Mali and Philippines. The War report prepared by the Geneva Academy counted 37 armed conflicts around the globe in 2013, and each of them has caused migration or IDPs crises.

With this in mind, it is important to support the work of IOM in saving and advocating migrants. We commend its efforts in leading the migration issues and actively contributing to the migration management on all levels: global, regional and national.

On global level, after the successful HLD, the evaluation of its results now is taking place in various formats. The IOM now has to play a leading role in implementation of its outcomes. Lithuania strongly supports **all eight** identified points for action and

the mainstreaming of migration into the post 2015 development agenda in particular. At the HLD in New York, Lithuanian minister of Interior Alfonsas Barakauskas stressed the necessity to consider reviewing possible barriers to mobility in order to facilitate economic relations, prosperity and regional integration, taking into account the situation of the respective labour markets and security concerns. Based on national experience that the diaspora significantly contributes to the development of home and target countries, Lithuania favours enabling, engaging and empowering the migrants and diasporas to reach their full creative potential.

On **regional** level the cooperation between the EU and IOM is continuously widening. For Lithuania, currently holding the Presidency of the EU Council, the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum is of particular importance. The IOM, as a project implementing partner, has significantly contributed to the progress of work of the Panel which is a tangible element towards a closer political association and economic integration of the EaP countries with the EU. We hope that the Eastern Partnership Summit, happening now in Vilnius, will be a major step forward in lifting visa requirements for the EaP countries which meets all the benchmarks and, thus, will enhance mobility of citizens in a secure and well-managed environment.

Lithuania supports the EU efforts in strengthening the cooperation and use of the available tools in order to prevent often tragic outcomes of migrants' strive to reach the European shores across the Mediterranean or land border with the EU. Lithuania praises the IOM's readiness to cooperate with the EU and UN and commends its proposals to the special EU task force on immediate actions and priority policy issues.

In my **national** capacity, I would like to thank Ambassador Swing for his contributions to the EU JHA Council meeting and annual European Migration Network conference, both organised in Vilnius under the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU Council. On bilateral level, Lithuanian authorities have engaged in closer cooperation with IOM this year in preparing the national migratory policy and in

cooperating on protection of Lithuanian nationals in emergency situations in the third countries. We also hope to develop common training project for border guards from the third countries.

In conclusion, I would like to express my conviction that we, the IOM Member States, have to do our best in meeting our commitments to support, monitor and adequately finance the Organization.

Thank you.