

Mr. Mergen GURDOV

**Deputy Head of the State Migration Service of Turkmenistan
Head of Delegation**

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Dear participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of Turkmenistan to the 105th Session of the Council, allow me to extend our greetings and sincerely thank the IOM for the invitation.

First of all, let me express our gratitude to the IOM for the excellent organization and the created atmosphere of cooperation, and also to wish a successful and fruitful work to all attendees.

For Turkmenistan, participation in the 105th Session is a historical event, equivalent to the importance of the 103rd session, because exactly today it has been one year since Turkmenistan has become a full member of the International Organization for Migration. And it is a great honour personally for me, a representative of the State Migration Service of Turkmenistan, to participate twice in the events, so historical for my country.

The confidence of Turkmenistan is that after becoming a member of the IOM, an essentially new and effective mechanism of cooperation with the IOM will be created, aimed at protection of rights and legitimate interests of migrants and refugees that are seeking help today.

And today, this has been confirmed by implementation of all of the priority directions of cooperation with the IOM, outlined last year.

Today, with complete confidence, it is possible to speak about the essential results, reached during the previous year of collaboration of Turkmenistan with the International Organization for Migration.

Regarding the framework of projects, planned for 2014 in the field of cooperation of Turkmenistan with the Organisation, I would like to note implementation of virtually all projects. In particular, a number of essentially important projects have been implemented in the sphere of migration and health, migration and regulation of emergency situations, fight against human trafficking, and eradication of statelessness.

Moreover, by repeatedly providing during the entire year 2014 a political space for discussions of pertinent migration issues in a multilateral format, at the same time Turkmenistan shared best practices with other countries on enhancement of the national legal system in the sphere of regulation of migration and protection of migrants, as well as on acceptance of practical measures in this direction.

Readiness of our country for a constructive international dialogue in ensuring international security also confirms its commitment to having a consistent policy in the field of observance and protection of rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of migrants and refugees. In this context, it should be noted that the First Regional International Conference on Migration and Statelessness was conducted jointly with the IOM in June 2014 in Turkmenistan, during which firmness of a political will was clearly illustrated to each participating state in dealing with eradication of statelessness.

The political will of Turkmenistan expressed by the international initiatives that are consistently initiated by the President of Turkmenistan was also shown through effective measures, taken by the state for the resolution of problem of statelessness. In continuation of the policy of reduction of statelessness, that was launched by Turkmenistan

in 2004 just before the beginning of the above-mentioned Conference, 786 more stateless persons were granted Turkmen citizenship, new advanced biometric travel documents for stateless persons and refugees were introduced, and at the same time their free issuance was provided. And in the field of protection of rights of stateless persons and refugees, enhancements were entered into the national legislative system of Turkmenistan.

Thus, in the context of the acquired experience in the field statelessness in Turkmenistan, it is necessary to note the formation of a completed and consecutive, practical and legislative system on reducing statelessness.

Considering the practice of legislative harmonization and implementation of effective measures which were developed in Turkmenistan in the field of reduction of statelessness, at the Conference in Turkmenistan on Migration and Statelessness in June 2014 it was noted by representatives of the IOM that under the leadership of the esteemed President Gurbanguly BERDIMUHAMEDOV, Turkmenistan reached high results in the resolution of problem of statelessness.

And this is the case, as in Turkmenistan, for the purposes of prevention of statelessness naturalization of stateless persons is performed on quite simplified conditions, because what is important for us is the very fact of residence of the person in Turkmenistan, as well as a conscientious attitude towards laws, symbols and traditions of the country.

For the purposes of observance of the principle of the best interests of the child, an automatic acquisition of Turkmen citizenship is guaranteed by law for children born in the territory of the country in cases where they became stateless persons, and children whose parents are unknown, are considered as citizens of Turkmenistan; universal registration of birth of children and immediate issue of documents confirming Turkmen citizenship are provided in connection with acceptance of Turkmen citizenship. Also, a database of stateless persons

is continuously updated for the purposes of their subsequent naturalization.

A lot of things were implemented for accomplishment of other planned priority tasks within cooperation with the IOM concerning migration and health. In particular, with the participation of the IOM, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, a mechanism aimed at actions concerning migration and health was launched this year.

In this context, this year on 17 November a round table concerning migration and health care with participation of government institutions and international experts was carried out for the purposes of a necessary monitoring and determination of a political and legal framework of the project.

Realizing that human trafficking is a consequence of a not regulated migration, and that it is an important factor that has direct impact on the mixed migratory flows, taking into account results of the International Conference on exchange of experience which was carried out in Ashgabat in 2013 in counteraction to human trafficking, and following the priority directions, set together with the IOM in the field of human trafficking, this year the Government of Turkmenistan created a working group of representatives of relevant state structures and public organizations on development of the National Plan of Action (NPA) on human trafficking, and at the same time for the purposes of improving capacity-building of the working group members, trainings and two working meetings on development of NPA were held, which resulted in a preliminary draft of the National Action Plan.

Considering that a feature of a strategic location of Turkmenistan on axes of the main migratory flows, and high rates of developing transport and energy infrastructures require readiness of Turkmenistan for a solution of aspects, connected with natural disasters or technogenic crises, a project in the field of regulation of emergency situations was developed by the Government of Turkmenistan together with the IOM. The main focus of the project is directed at reaction of the staff of

relevant state bodies in situations of natural disasters, at capacity building and prevention and preventive measures. One should also note here the signing of the Agreement “On Cooperation in the Field of Prevention of Emergency Situations in the Caspian Sea and Liquidation of Their Consequences” on September 29, 2014 in Astrakhan by five states, among which was Turkmenistan, where an order of assistance and entry procedures into a requested country are stipulated.

Based on the fact that the preferential purposes of the state migration policy have still been an effective implementation of the migratory legislation, increase of level of management of migratory processes, and continuation of long-term and prospective cooperation with the IOM, allow us to assure the IOM Secretariat, leadership of the Organization and members of the Council, of our country’s commitment to continue the fruitful interaction on all activities of the IOM at the national level in order to increase efficiency of measures for regulation of migration and liquidation of its negative manifestations even more.

Thanks to the wise and a forward-looking policy of the head of our state, Turkmenistan will continue to more actively cooperate with the IOM on all initiatives and programs, initiated by the latter towards the development of the national and regional migration management systems.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our deep gratitude to the IOM for its assistance, rendered to our country.

Allow me also to congratulate the Independent State of Samoa on becoming a full-fledged member of the IOM, and organisations - on becoming observers.

Thank you for attention!