



International Organization for Migration
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Item 7.

S T A T E M E N T

of H.E. Ambassador Vladislav Mladenovic

G e n e v a

Mr. Chairperson,

The Republic of Serbia aligns its self with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union.

I would like take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Swing for his comprehensive report.

The Government of Serbia recognizes IOM as the leading international organization for the protection of the interests of migrants. Our cooperation has always been active and mutually beneficial.

We welcome the proposed IOM Programme and Budget for 2016 as well as the Report of the Working Group on IOM-UN Relations.

Mr. Chairperson,

The dynamics of migration and refugee flows in the Western Balkans has undergone profound changes. Today, the Western Balkans has become an important migration route. Since the beginning of this year, more than 470 000 migrants from the Middle East, Asia and Africa have crossed the border of Serbia, almost 25 times more in comparison to 2014. The fact that only 600 asylum applications have been submitted, testifies that the migrants final destination is not Serbia but the Member States of the European Union. Such developments have put pressure on government institutions. Migration management is a complex and costly process calling for planned and organized actions.

The Republic of Serbia meets the standards with regard to the protection of migrants. From the outset of the migration crisis, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has opted for a proactive approach in order to ensure adequate protection and assistance to those in need and has demonstrated its readiness to face the large influx of migrants and refugees. Enormous efforts are being invested in order to provide them with proper assistance, adequate reception, temporary accommodation, medical care, food and medicines and information regarding the asylum procedure, with full respect for their human rights. At the same time, border controls have been increased to prevent criminal activities of human traffickers and people smugglers.

The Government of Serbia established, in June 2015, a Task Force responsible for dealing with problems of mixed migratory flows. At the local level Migration Councils have been established and appropriate joint mechanisms have been developed. The relevant institutions have provided necessary assistance, opened transit centres, and identified appropriate facilities for emergency migrant accommodation.

All these measures have been implemented in a situation when Serbia is faced with serious economic problems.

I would, also, like to remind that in Serbia there are still more than 200.000 internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija and over 40.000 refugees from Croatia.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Republic of Serbia is convinced that the current migration crisis can be resolved only through a comprehensive approach and the engagement of the entire international community. We are committed to work with all relevant international organizations - IOM, UN and EU, as well as with concerned states, particularly the states on the migration route and states of destination. Such cooperation would contribute to adequate humanitarian assistance, appropriate migrant registration, exchange of information, trans-border cooperation and the fight against human trafficking, which are of essential importance for the protection of human rights of migrants and refugees.

As an EU candidate and a state surrounded by EU Member States, the Republic of Serbia is committed to the establishment of a unified policy aimed at managing the current migration crisis and stands ready to undertake its international obligations as well as those agreed by all EU Member States. At the same time, we believe that international humanitarian assistance should be allocated in proportion to the scope of the problems facing the states on the migratory route.

The position of the Republic of Serbia is that building fences and closing borders is not the answer. The precondition for a sustainable solution of the migration crisis is to solve the root causes.