

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR MEHMET FERDEN ÇARIKÇI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY TO THE UNOG
(106th Session of the IOM Council 24-27 November 2015
15:00-18:00, WIPO New Conference Hall)**

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director General,
Excellencies,

(Let me extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the heinous terrorist attacks in Paris, Beirut, Ankara and ^{Bangkok} ~~Marr~~. In the aftermath of these tragic events, we would like to once again emphasize that we should refrain from the language that demonizes refugees as a group. Refugees, ~~many of whom are~~ fleeing extremism and terrorism, should not be turned into scapegoats.)

At the outset, we congratulate you Mr. Chairman on your election and convey our gratitude to your distinguished predecessor for his valuable guidance during the year. We are confident that we will also achieve a substantial progress in our efforts under your wise leadership.

We are also pleased to welcome the five new members of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

As the current Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), firstly I would like to present brief information on the work of the Forum and the Istanbul Summit.

When Turkey assumed the Chairmanship of the GFMD, in July 2014, there were more than 50 million displaced persons worldwide, including nearly 2.5 million Syrians who had fled the war in their country. Today, alone 12 million Syrians have been displaced and now there are over 2.2 million Syrians only in Turkey. Globally, we are seeing the tip of the iceberg. Dramatic events in Syria, the Horn of Africa, the Bay of Bengal, the Gulf of Aden and Eastern Europe show us that this is a systemic challenge for the long term.

As the numbers manifest, in the course of our Chairmanship the world's attention has been focused on migration more intensely than ever. Therefore, we aimed at accommodating the recent migration challenges and issues to our agenda. As a result, 2015 GFMD for the first time took up the issue of "forced migration". We also organized a first ever ad hoc meeting on the subject matter in Brussels, in last July, titled "Mediterranean Crisis in a Global Context of Migration and Development".

Indeed, the 8th Summit Meeting of the GFMD hosted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, was held in İstanbul on 14-16 October 2015 under the overarching theme of “Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development”.

One thousand participants and approximately 150 countries, international organizations, civil society and private sector representatives attended the Summit. The Summit provided all of us with the opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment and to strengthen our partnerships to address current migration crises and to promote sustainable development through human mobility. Our deliberations underlined our shared responsibility and need for action.

We have also concluded that the Global Forum and concerned stakeholders should play a role in the implementation of migration-relevant targets and goals in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. We believe that as the leading international migration agency, IOM has a significant role to play to ensure the continuity of our accomplishments for effective implementation of the SDGs.

We would like to underscore the contribution of Forum members and observers, as well as international organizations and civil society in the success of the İstanbul Summit. We would also like to underline the role of the private sector in enhancing labour mobility and protecting migrants’ rights. With this understanding, we have endorsed the establishment of a regular GFMD public-private interaction mechanism at the Summit.

In this regard, we commend the support of IOM. Let me recall the side event that we co-organized with the IOM on the margins of the High Level Political Forum this year in New York, on human mobility and sustainable development. Taking this opportunity, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to IOM.

The 18-month-long Turkish Chairmanship will be concluded on 1 January 2016 and will be handed over to incoming chair Bangladesh, a country with considerable experience on migration and an active contributor to the Forum’s achievements.

Mr. Chairman, (national hat)

It is easy to forget that migration in today’s world is generally a positive thing. It is up to all of the stakeholders to work together to promote the positive outcomes of migration. In this vein, as the leading migration agency IOM’s achievements and operational responsiveness are very valuable. We would like to thank once again the Director General for his comprehensive report and reiterate our support to the work and efforts of IOM under his able leadership and his strong team.

Furthermore, as the Chair of the Budapest Process, we commend IOM's contribution to this platform, as well as its efforts as an effective member of the Global Migration Group in order to create synergy among different platforms and actors.

We would also like to commend the IOM's work in addressing natural or man-made disasters and its efforts in the fields of preparedness, response and recovery in the emergencies we have seen and continue to witness.

Moreover, we welcome the Migration Governance Framework. The framework, bringing humanitarian and development aspects of migration together, will serve as a reference point for member states in their endeavors to meet the SDGs. We commend the work of IOM on migration and health. As a country hosting more than 2.2 million Syrians, we believe that it will contribute largely to our endeavors in terms of rights, dignity and well-being of migrants. We also reiterate our support to IOM's humanitarian policy, IOM's work on migration and health, as well as private sector partnership strategy. We are pleased with the adoption of the resolution on IOM-UN Relations ~~this morning~~ today.

We would also like to underline the importance of the International Dialogue on Migration and commend the success of the Migrants and Cities Conference that was held last month.

At this point, let me underscore the close and effective cooperation between Turkey and IOM on various areas spanning from migration management to counter trafficking, from integration to humanitarian assistance. I would also like to commend the contribution of IOM's Turkey Office during the preparatory work of the International Protection and Foreigners Law that has been adopted in 2013. The enactment of the Law reflects the conviction that a strategic approach to migration can deliver benefits.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey has a strong tradition to responding to those in need. Today, Turkey ranks the third largest donor country world-wide. We are now the biggest refugee-hosting country in the world, including more than 2.5 million Syrians and Iraqis.

We now have 25 temporary protection centers accommodating nearly 260.000 Syrians. They are provided with food, non-food items, health and education services as well as psychological assistance, vocational training and social activities. Nearly 2 million Syrians who live outside these centers are also under our protection regime, benefiting from free medical services.

Turkey's expenditures is rapidly edging toward 8.5 billion US Dollars for all these efforts, whereas the total contributions we received bilaterally and multilaterally from the international community have been limited to only half a billion US Dollars. The responsibility for refugees stems not from geographical proximity that translates into a burden, but from a conscientious responsibility and humanitarian values which are a manifestation of our collective conscience.

As a solution to this crisis lingers, the number of those who attempt the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean to European shores, has been increasing dramatically. Since the beginning of 2015, our Coast Guard saved more than 85.000 migrants at sea and its operations cost five million Euros per month.

Within this context, upon Turkey's initiative, the agenda item of "Global awareness of the tragedies of irregular migrants in the Mediterranean basin with a specific emphasis on Syrian asylum-seekers" was included in the agenda of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly and was discussed last Friday.

The time has come to jointly come up with solutions based on common humanitarian values to resolve these tragedies rather than to turn a blind eye to them. This has also been endorsed by the G-20 Leaders in their final communiqué, at the Antalya Summit last week. We will also continue to discuss these issues next year in May at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul that will coincide with IOM's 65th Anniversary. At the WHS, we shall have extensive debate about these issues from a humanitarian perspective.

Mr. Chairman,

We should highlight the needs and rights of migrants, stand to the principles of diversity and equality as well as create a consensus on common values and vision. In this vein, one of the ten core international instruments within the UN framework, the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families that Turkey is a party to, has utmost importance. Unfortunately, it has taken 25 years to get only 48 ratifications from 193 UN member countries to this Convention. This not only constitutes a contradiction to our efforts to protect the migrants in the current evolving international setting, but also a failure in the endeavors of International Geneva in the field of human rights.

Thank you.