Mr. President,
Director-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As this is the first IOM Council session for our new Director-General, I would like to start my statement by extending sincere congratulations to His Excellency Antonio Vitorino on his election to this post last June.

We would like to wish the new Director-General every bit of success in his future endeavors, and assure him of Belarus’ continued support to the IOM work.

The Director General takes office at a time when the International Organization for Migration is facing both tremendous challenges and immense opportunities.

In just a couple of days the international community is set to endorse the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration at the Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakesh.
As the former Director General William Lacy Swing rightly said in July on the occasion of the completion of negotiations on the draft Compact: “It is the beginning of a new historic effort to shape the global agenda on migration for decades to come”.

Indeed, human mobility is the defining characteristic of our time and is likely to remain such for the foreseeable future.

As it affects all of us in various ways, we need to harness its positive potential while containing its downsides.

Belarus is convinced that the Global Compact on Migration provides us exactly with a tool that is necessary to realize this vision.

Belarus fully supports the new mandate that the International Organization for Migration will receive with the adoption of the Compact.

We believe that the IOM, owing to its long-stranding and enormous experience and expertise on migration matters, is best placed to assist Member States with the Compact’s implementation, especially in its capacity as coordinator of the International Network on Migration.
Likewise, we welcome the central role assigned to the IOM with regard to the follow-up and review of the Compact.

Mr. President,

The Global Compact sets out a number of important practically-oriented measures to deal with the consequences of migration. This work, however, may ultimately turn out to be futile unless we address the root causes.

Indeed, according to the Global Compact, there are various drivers and structural factors that underlie migration.

War and conflict are certainly among those. Unfortunately, the UN Security Council far too often cannot intervene to resolve them, because of disagreements among great powers.

We are thus absolutely convinced that finding agreement among great powers on the fundamentals of a new international order, which will allow to restrain war and conflict, is the prerequisite for progress in all other areas.
That was the core of the initiative proposed last year by the President of Belarus, who also offered Belarus’ capital Minsk as a venue for a possible process.

Mr. President,

In concluding, I would like to say that Belarus immensely appreciates its cooperation with the IOM. In particular, very recently, on 23 October the Government of Belarus and the IOM have launched a major multi-year project titled “Helping Belarus Address the Phenomenon of Increasing Numbers of Irregular Migrants”, which will be financially supported by the European Union.

Thank you for your kind attention.