



ARMENIA

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Statement by the Republic of Armenia

International Organisation for Migration: 111th Session of the Council

Item 11: General debate

Delivered by H.E. Andranik Hovhannisyan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Armenia to UN Office and other International Organisations in Geneva

Mr. Chairman,

Director General, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation to IOM for organization of the 111th Session of the Council as well as for smooth and coordinated work of the organization in these challenging times. We hope that institutional and administrative reforms will contribute to even more effective work of the organization.

We congratulate you Mr. Chairman and the Bureau upon its election and wish fruitful endeavors.

We also take this opportunity to extend our congratulations to the Russian Federation for becoming fully-fledged member of IOM and look forward to translate the years of close bilateral and multilateral cooperation on migration issues to this respectful forum.

Our congratulations also to Malaysia for confirmation of the Observer status in the IOM Council.

Mr. Chairman,

Restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic largely influenced migration trends and, in many cases, paralyzed mobility across the world. At the same time, inadequately functioning support systems, as well as massive closure of a number of businesses created additional vulnerability for the millions of migrants and people on the move. Despite the overall decrease of migratory flows, anti-migrant rhetoric, exclusion, xenophobia and hate speech are still on the rise.

Since its independence Armenia's policy in the area of migration was aimed at exploring and fulfilling the positive impact of migration in a safe and regulated environment, including through encouraging the full utilization of the potential and skills of the migrants.

Armenians have many examples from their own history which confirm how migrants and their descendants become valuable assets for the host nations. Let me recall one of the most recent cases, where the US Moderna company, chaired by Noubar Afeyan of an Armenian descent has just created a vaccine that protects against Covid-19 by nearly 95% of effectiveness.

Mr. Chairman,

Armenia supported the Global Compact for Migration and continues to stress strong cross-cutting links between its implementation and realization of Sustainable Development Goals.

Armenia attaches utmost importance to the solid legal and institutional systems to counter irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and related activities. We established multi-dimensional effective cooperation with partner countries as well as international structures in a wide range of sectors such as integrated border management, document security as well as a well-functioning readmission system.

Mr. Chairman,

Though pandemic greatly restricted mobility and travel, it has not stopped aggression, war and consequent enforced displacement. Despite the appeal by the UN Secretary General for a global ceasefire, which Armenia wholeheartedly endorsed, Azerbaijan with the support of Turkey, has yet again opted for an aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh with the aim of ethnically cleansing it from the indigenous Armenian population. For a month and a half, the civilian infrastructures - schools, residential buildings, hospitals and places of worship were

under intentional shelling, including by cluster munitions, the fact that was confirmed by the Human Rights Watch.

The aggression committed by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh has resulted in a humanitarian disaster that brought a new wave of forced displacement. Tens of thousands of Armenians left their ancestral homes since Azerbaijan, hand in hand with jihadist mercenaries it employed, was committing despicable atrocity crimes against the civilian population and servicemen. Gross violations of the human rights and international humanitarian law have been registered, which included ISIS-style beheadings of prisoners of war, mutilation of corpses.

The UN Working Group on Mercenaries has confirmed the use of foreign terrorist fighters by Azerbaijan. After the ceasefire has been established alarming reports claim that Azerbaijan resettles families of the terrorist fighters in the occupied Armenian villages.

Today, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, tens of thousands of displaced people, are in a dire need of an urgent life-saving humanitarian assistance, which we call upon the international community to provide them in accordance with the UN Charter and principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. The humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh is the outstanding litmus test for the ability of the international community to adequately respond and address the challenge faced by the people, without leaving anyone behind.

I thank you.