



B E L A R U S

STATEMENT

by His Excellency Yury Ambrazevich
Permanent Representative of Belarus
to the UN Office at Geneva
112th session of the IOM Council
General debate

Mr. President,

Director-General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year we mark the **70th anniversary** since the founding of the International Organization for Migration.

Conceived initially as an entity to address displacement in Europe caused by World War II, the Organization has grown over the past seven decades into **an agency with a nearly universal membership and global reach.**

We would like to pay our tribute to the Organization for its decades-long work to promote orderly, regular and safe migration that brings benefits to its members.

The IOM's services in today's world are in great demand, because human mobility is on the rise.

There are **various drivers and structural factors** that underlie this mobility. **War and conflict** are certainly among

them. They displace millions of people, force them to seek better living opportunities elsewhere.

Belarus has traditionally been a transit route for migrants from war- and conflict-affected Asian and Middle Eastern countries on their way to Europe.

True, the transit migrant flows via Belarus have recently increased.

We have been as concerned about this development as our counterparts in the European Union have. So, **the obvious way to address this evolving challenge was through cooperation.**

This trend however, occurred at a time of tense political relationship between Belarus and its European Union neighbors.

So, to our deep regret, instead of cooperation **our counterparts opted for politicization.**

They started using absurd rhetoric saying that Belarus is allegedly instrumentalizing migrants for political purposes and is thus waging a hybrid war against them.

Belarus rejects these absurd accusations.

On the contrary, we are convinced that it is our opponents who politicize the entire problem in order to further demonize Belarus.

Let me state loud and clear that **the Republic of Belarus stands ready for cooperation with the European Union and its interested Member States** in order to find a solution to the current challenge.

We would very much like to hear a similar statement of readiness for cooperation on the part of our opponents.

Let me conclude by thanking the IOM for its involvement in addressing the crisis with migrants at Belarus' borders with its EU neighbors.

Thank you.