

**112TH Session of the IOM Council
State Secretary Dr Stanislav Raščan
Acting as Minister for Development Cooperation of Slovenia**

- The Covid pandemic has caused an unprecedented global health emergency. It continues to seriously impact livelihoods of vulnerable groups.
- The pandemic resulted in further aggravation of the existing socioeconomic crisis and in increase of humanitarian needs worldwide. Despite the serious public health situation currently going on in many of our countries, we must not forget the people in need.
- Border closure and mobility restrictions represented one of the first responses to the pandemic. It has become clear that we must look for durable and long-lasting solutions.
- Resilience building, knowledge-based decision making and multilateral cooperation should be among our key strategies.
- For doing so, global solidarity and shared responsibility are crucial. This is especially true when it comes to vaccines. Global equitable access to the Covid-19 vaccines and health treatment should be our main goal in trying to end the pandemic.
- Slovenia continues to engage in joint global efforts against the pandemic. So far, we have shared more than 2 million doses (via COVAX and bilaterally) and contributed 500.000 EUR to COVAX AMC for 2021 and 2022.
- When it comes to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, Slovenia follows the guidelines of the international organisations on applying protective measures, with special care being devoted to the vulnerable groups. Refugees and asylum seekers have equal access to the Covid vaccines.
- In the field of migration, comprehensive approach needs to be further streamlined as well as partner cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination. The only way to tackle some of the key migration challenges such as migrant smuggling, illegal migration, instrumentalization of migration as well as root causes, is to do it together. We see the cooperation with international organizations as crucial.
- Beyond the pandemic, Slovenia's development cooperation keeps focusing on eradicating poverty and inequalities in order to mainstream sustainable solutions and address root causes of illegal migration.