

## STATEMENT

**by Cristina Avornic, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova  
at the 113<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOM Council**

*(Geneva, 02.12.2022)*

*Dear Chairperson,  
Director General Vitorino,  
Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,*

I am honoured to address the Council and to welcome the diligent effort of IOM and its member states to further build up support to effectively respond to the cumulative challenges we are facing.

We thank the Director General for the report presented this Wednesday and for the insightful comments made as regards long-term responses, the IOM and the entire UN migration network are to deliver in the future.

The Republic of Moldova appreciates the efforts made and the special role of the IOM in coordinating the activities related to the process of ensuring the efficient management of migratory flows at global and regional level, the implementation of the measures that contribute to an orderly and safe migration of persons.

On a national note, migration remains an important socio-economic trend for Moldova, **a country with one of the highest total emigration rates in the world, which lately is noticing a continuous increase of immigration flows as well.** Thus, our long-term goal is to address migration's demographic, social and macro-economic effects by tackling the underlying development challenges in multiple sectors and making Moldova a better and a safer place, along with favouring the unlocking of the migration potential for sustainable development.

In this regard, important measures have been taken, as is the adoption of the *National Development Strategy, entitled "European Moldova 2030"* – that sets the strategic vision for the development of the Republic of Moldova in the next seven years, including in areas related to migration and asylum. In addition, we have approved the *Programme for managing the migration flows, asylum and integration of foreigners*, which by 2025 year intends to tackle 4 major objectives, as (i) Regulating the migration flows (ii) Consolidating and adjusting the asylum and statelessness system to the EU and international standards, (iii) Implementing and strengthening the mechanism for the integration of foreigners and (iv) Strengthening the state's response capacity to the increased influx of people at the state border.

Mr. chair,

For the Republic of Moldova, the current session of the IOM Council comes at a time when our country is facing an unprecedented massive influx of refugees from Ukraine, energy insecurity, economic and social challenges following the act of aggression committed by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and its people. Since the onset of the war, the Republic of Moldova has received more than 650 thousand arrivals from Ukraine, and over 80,000 refugees have chosen to remain, with more than half being children.

As part of the provisions of state of emergency instituted in our country, Moldova has created a legal framework to protect and integrate refugees, which also includes access to healthcare, education and labour market. At the same time, a draft Government decision on granting temporary protection to refugees from Ukraine has been developed and is in the process of being finalized.

As Ukraine continues to be under attack, an escalation in missile attacks on civilians and critical energy infrastructure would lead to a new wave of refugees fleeing to Moldova, with whom Ukraine is having the longest western border with. Our country is preparing to host more in the winter, should they need to flee a military escalation or lack of heat, electricity and water. But this will put additional pressure on already strained budgetary and human capacities.

We are grateful to the development partners, IOM and other UN agencies, which have responded to emerging needs in our country in this crisis. As Moldova is currently confronting with a twin challenge of high risk of disruption of electricity and gas supply and prohibitive prices for its consumers, this could jeopardise our stability and security. Just in the past year, the cost of natural gas went up 7 times, the cost for electricity increased 4 times, whereas the accessibility of electricity for the population decreased 3 times. Under these circumstances with worsened cost-of-living and being at the forefront of emerging threats as a result of the war: smuggling of arms, drugs, goods and people, we need further support to enhance our capabilities.

Director General Vitorino,

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my gratitude for the fruitful cooperation that exists between the Republic of Moldova and the IOM, as well as for the valuable assistance offered by the UN Migration Agency in ensuring that my country advances in embracing the global goal of making migration work for all. On another note, your visit paid to Chisinau this spring, following the massive flows of refugees, is perceived as a great sign of solidarity and empathy towards my country and region for which we personally thank you.