

**114th Session of the Council**

**High Level Segment**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Taulant Balla, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Albania**

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed members of the IOM Council,

I am honored to stand before you today with profound gratitude for the opportunity to address this esteemed council on the critical matter of the intersection of climate change and human mobility. This is an issue of paramount significance that necessitates our collective attention, compassion, and decisive action. I commend the International Organization for Migration for its firm commitment to addressing the challenges posed by climate-induced migration.

I wish to emphasize the fruitful partnership between the Albanian Government and IOM Albania in tackling migration challenges. Our joint initiatives, spanning from direct support for migrants to the formulation and implementation of migration strategies, diaspora engagement, capacity-building programs for our administration, and awareness campaigns, have yielded many positive outcomes. These efforts highlight the power of collaboration in finding sustainable solutions, crucial in navigating the complexities of migration challenges, especially those exacerbated by the changing climate.

The interconnection between climate change and human mobility is undisputable, impacting us all and affecting vulnerable populations. In Albania, where environmental shifts have broad consequences, this connection is particularly poignant. Despite having among the lowest greenhouse gas emissions in the region, Albania is identified by the World Bank the Europe's most vulnerable country from climate change effects. Recent years have witnessed increasing temperatures, disproportional and heavy rainfall, and more frequent extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, in the country. Projected sea-level rise poses threats of higher flood and coastal erosion, affecting urban areas along the coast, arable land, and coastal habitats. Key vulnerable sectors include agriculture, energy, health, and tourism that count for more than 70% of the national GDP, influencing thus the overall economic development of the country.

Albania's national strategy on migration stands as a testament to our commitment to integrating climate change considerations into our policies. Provisions have been made to address the climate-induced aspects of human mobility, acknowledging the significant role climate change plays as a push factor for migration. Furthermore, Albania serves as a transit country for thousands of migrants each year, with climate changes impacting the migration decisions of many.

These considerations build on our National Strategy for Development and Integration, recognizing the profound impacts of climate change on various sectors of the economy. The alignment of development goals with climate resilience underscores the importance of sustainable practices in mitigating challenges related to climate-induced migration.

The Albanian government has established a robust legal framework in response to climate change, adopting key documents such as the Law on Climate Change, the Strategy for Climate Change with a specific chapter on adaptation, the revised Determined National Contribution, and the National Energy and Climate Plan 2020-2030. This reflects our international commitments to emissions reduction targets and measures to protect the country from the effects of climate change, particularly focusing on the coastal areas until 2030.

Our goal is to mobilize financial and other resources necessary to protect Albania from the effects of climate change, transitioning to a climate resilience development path with net zero emissions. Through this integrated approach, we strive to create a future where development and climate considerations create synergies for the benefit of all.

Nevertheless, challenges persist, and international cooperation is more crucial than ever. It is imperative that we acknowledge these challenges and seek cooperation with all nations. By sharing best practices, enhancing capacity, and building resilience, we can collectively address the complex dynamics of climate-related mobility.

In the spirit of collaboration, I call upon the international community to recognize the urgency of a coordinated global response. Climate-induced migration exceeds borders, and our solutions must reflect this reality. Albania stands ready to work hand-in-hand with our regional partners in the Western Balkans, as well as with the global community. Increased support, both in terms of

financial assistance and knowledge sharing, is essential for implementing effective solutions.

In conclusion, I want to reaffirm Albania's unwavering commitment to addressing the challenges posed by climate change on human mobility. The path ahead may be challenging, but through continued collaboration, information sharing, and the development of innovative solutions, we can protect vulnerable populations affected by climate-induced migration. On this journey we are together, for the sake of a sustainable and resilient future for all.

Thank you