



**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus
Geneva**

Speaker: *H.E. Ambassador Olympia Neocleous*

**STATEMENT BY CYPRUS MISSION
To the
115th Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)**

Chair,

Cyprus aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

We thank you, Director-General, for your report and express our unwavering support for your vision, your efforts, and the invaluable work of the IOM and its dedicated staff.

Cyprus welcomes the new Global Office in Brussels as well as the appointment of the new Head of the IOM Cyprus Office and looks forward to a close and fruitful collaboration aiming to managing migratory flows and addressing humanitarian needs. We acknowledge the critical role of the partnership with the IOM and UNHCR, in addressing the profound challenges posed by displacement in our region. For this, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Organisation.

Today, we face a reality defined by unprecedented levels of forced displacement and human vulnerability. The root causes—economic inequalities, political instability, armed conflicts, human rights violations, climate change, and resource scarcity—are well known. These drivers, intensifying in both scope and scale, compel millions to undertake perilous journeys, placing immense pressure on humanitarian systems and host communities.

Over the past year, the global landscape has become even more challenging. The worsening crises in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan and the ongoing war in Ukraine have created profound humanitarian needs. For Cyprus, as a frontline state, these developments have amplified migratory pressures, requiring constant adaptation of our national policies and resources. Smuggling networks, human trafficking, and the instrumentalization of people for political purposes exacerbate irregular migration and pose profound challenges to human rights and dignity.

Migration continues to be a matter of utmost priority, particularly in light of the escalating crisis in the Middle East. This underscores the importance of the European Union's Pact on Migration and Asylum, which seeks to establish a comprehensive and balanced framework for addressing these challenges.

Chair,

The crisis in Lebanon is of particular concern. The displacement of 400,000 Lebanese and Syrians into Syria underscores the urgent need for humanitarian assistance. Cyprus stands ready to support efforts to address this crisis and work closely with the IOM and UNHCR to ensure timely and effective responses. We also reaffirm our commitment to creating the conditions for safe, dignified, and voluntary returns to Syria, in line with UNHCR guidelines.

Looking ahead, the challenges of migration demand transformative solutions that address root causes, safeguard the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees, and foster integration and inclusivity. Equally important is the collective effort to counter anti-migrant sentiment. In this context, the IOM's pivotal role in global migration governance is indispensable. Cyprus remains steadfast in its support for the IOM's efforts to harness the positive potential of migration while providing essential on-the-ground assistance to those most in need.

Thank you.