



Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations Office and other International
Organizations at Geneva

Statement by Czechia at the 115th Session of the Council of International Organization of Migration

26 – 28 November 2024

Delivered by Václav Bálek, Permanent Representative

Madam Chair, Director General, Excellencies, and distinguished Delegates,

Czechia aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union.

As you recognize, Director General, global displacement continues to rise at an unprecedented rate. The number of persons on the move is alarming, and so is the complexity of displacement, when refugees and migrants move side by side.

Our response to this phenomenon must be comprehensive and balanced, protecting those in need of international protection, as well as addressing the challenges of irregular migration.

The reform of the European asylum and migration policy is crucial and inevitable, and the EU needs to go even beyond the already agreed Pact on Migration and Asylum, in order to reduce the migration pressure and increase the efficiency of returns, readmissions and reintegration.

Given the importance of this endeavour, and considering the invaluable expertise of IOM, we are looking forward to a close and pragmatic cooperation. The partnership with IOM is a priority for us. We also welcome IOM's engagement to increase cooperation with other organizations, namely UNHCR.

Since February 2022, the Czech Republic has granted protection to more than 650,000 people fleeing Ukraine, as a consequence of the unprovoked and unjustified Russian aggression. This number represents 6 % of the Czech population.

We valued the IOM's support in handling the crisis situation in the first year of the war, as well as we value your current approach to the protracted displacement. The hope of many Ukrainian refugees is still to be able to return home once the situation allows.

Despite the unsettling situation in Ukraine, we remain aware of the challenges on other migration routes and we continue to provide support to IOM operations in different countries.

This year the Czech Republic has supported IOM projects in Greece and Tunisia in the total amount of 2 million Euro. Since 2020, we have provided 6.5 million Euro in support of IOM programs overseas, and we plan to continue our efforts in this respect.

Director General, let me highlight that we appreciate your strategic leadership of the organisation and the reinforced communication with governments. We thank you and your teams in the field for all your tireless work and efforts, often in challenging conditions. We highly commend your action and you can rely on our support.

Thank you.