



Statement by the Permanent Representative of SLOVAKIA to the UN Office and other International Organisations in Geneva, Ambassador Dušan MATULAY in the general debate of the 115th Session of the IOM Council, November 2024

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Chairperson,

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

I am taking the floor to make some remarks that are of particular importance to my delegation.

Firstly, we thank Director General Amy Pope for her comprehensive opening statement. We especially appreciate her update on the key achievements of the organisation since October 1, 2023.

Your work has our support Director General, and we are grateful for your regular interaction with the IOM membership throughout the last 12 months. It gives us better opportunity to stay online as regards the dynamic progress under your five-year Strategic plan.

My delegation welcomes the carefully crafted priorities in the plan as an answer to the unprecedented migration situation in the world.

We subscribe to the statement that migration has been happening and will happen, and that the best way how to face this challenge is to make it work for us all.

It is especially important that in this endeavour we also keep focus on countering irregular migration as this type of migration is a major source of political issues

and tensions in my country. Countries should be able to oversee and control migration pathways and who travels them. Mitigating irregular migration and facilitating pathways for controlled migration will help to save lives and take away the breeding ground for activities of organised crime of the trafficking gangs.

The goal of facilitating regular migration pathways should also be cognitive and comprising of other important aspects of migration governance, such as protection, borders management, returns, readmission and reintegration.

Chair,

My delegation thanks the IOM for the presentation of its draft regional strategies. These are of crucial importance for the objectives of the organisation's main Strategic plan to see their implementation on the ground.

We also thank the IOM for providing through its country office in Slovakia its services in support to our authorities, including the assistance to war-affected people in Ukraine and to people arriving in our territory. We still have the responsibility of hosting a substantial number of people forced to flee because of the Russia's war in Ukraine.

In conclusion, let us also add our voice to those who warn against politically led instrumentalization of migrants. The ultimate victims of such practices are the very people who are being instrumentalized.

Thank you.