



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
Statement of Deputy Minister of Interior of Albania
H.E. Mr. Andi Mahila

Honorable Director General

Distinguished Participants

I am honored to address today the 115 session of International Organization Migration Council and to share with you the commitment of Albania toward the regular migration paths.

Migration management, focusing on finding sustainable solutions for regular and safe migration, continues to be a global priority. Migration is a phenomenon that has been, is, and will remain present worldwide. To limit irregular migration as much as possible, Albania believes that our joint commitment should focus on creating the appropriate conditions to provide opportunities for regular migration.

On October 15, Albania officially opened the first Group Chapter of negotiations with the European Union, which includes Chapter 24, “Justice, Freedom, and Security.” This chapter addresses issues such as border control, migration, asylum, police cooperation, and the fight against organized crime and terrorism, reaffirming Albania’s determination to move forward in this significant phase for the country.

At the same time, the Albanian Government is closely cooperating with the European Commission on the implementation of the Western Balkans Action Plan, aiming to strengthen common mechanisms for border management, return policy and the prevention of irregular migration, creating a balanced approach for regular and safe migration from countries of origin to the Western Balkans.

Moreover, in the spirit of regional cooperation, we have achieved concrete results for our citizens and migrants by improving the regional framework for promoting free movement and regular migration through engagement in the Berlin Process initiative or the Migration, Asylum and Refugee Regional Initiative (MARRI), which Albania currently holds the leadership of until July 2025.

The adoption of the National Migration Strategy (2024-2030) and Action Plan (2024-2026), for which I would like to thank IOM for its technical and financial support, is a cornerstone for migration management in Albania. This document, aligned with the

Global Compact on Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aims to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation for migration management at the national level and has fostered a robust dialogue between relevant ministries and local governments to address the challenges and opportunities arising from migration.

The implementation of the Strategy also focuses on finalising labour migration agreements, both with the countries of destination of Albanian citizens and with the countries of origin of foreign migrants entering Albania. These agreements are essential to create appropriate and safe conditions for regular migration and to promote decent migration, which supports workers' rights and enables sustainable development for both parties. Another key element is the improvement of our legislation to facilitate foreigners' access to the labour market and the digitalization of migration services, creating a sustainable system that promotes safe and legal pathways for migratory movements.

Cooperation with international organizations and civil society has been essential throughout this journey. IOM has been and remains a key partner for the Albanian Government in this commitment, contributing to drafting and monitoring the legal framework for free movement focusing on protecting vulnerable categories. We are confident that this cooperation will continue to be important in promoting regular migration and integration policies, including enriching the legal framework of labour migration agreements, engaging the Albanian diaspora in the vital process of Albania's accession to the European Union, or achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are convinced that cooperation with IOM and other international organizations working in Albania will continue strengthening the Albanian state's capacity to manage migration sustainably and fairly.

I wish you a productive session, and thank you for your attention.