



114th Session of the IOM Council General Debates

STATEMENT

by Larysa Belskaya

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Mister Chairman,
Madam Director General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to wish Madame Pope and her team every success in and implementation of the new IOM Director General ambitious plans and approaches, which Belarus shares and supports.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration emphasizes the shared responsibility of States to mutually respect migration needs and to protect the safety and dignity of all migrants, in accordance with the international law.

At the same time, armed conflicts and interstate inequality, underdevelopment and instability, unilateral coercive measures, climate change, all these factors increase the vulnerability of many developing countries and their population, stimulate human mobility and contribute to new waves of irregular migration.

We welcome the IOM efforts as one of the leading crisis response agencies and the Organization's commitment to working with the international community to anticipate and mitigate the root causes of irregular migration.

Belarus shares the IOM commitment to saving lives and protecting people on the move. The challenges of migration cannot be solved by building walls, denying access to the territory or forcibly expelling migrants. Manifestations of racism and xenophobia against migrants should be totally unacceptable.

Belarus supports the expansion of IOM partnerships in the humanitarian field. My country has received a significant number of forced migrants and refugees from Ukraine. The Belarusian State provides them with all necessary support by guaranteeing, access to employment, education, medical services and social security. We are grateful to IOM and other UN agencies for their support and cooperation in this area.

IOM has always been and remains our important partner in joint efforts to combat trafficking in persons and protect its victims. We appreciate agency for its valuable contribution to the establishment in Minsk and long-lasting support of the International Training Center (ITC) on countering trafficking and illegal migration. We believe that the current growth of migration to Europe stimulates the activity of traffickers, therefore the anti-trafficking efforts of the IOM and Member States should be strengthened.

We welcome the publication of the first global technical guidance for administrative data on trafficking to address the lack of quality evidence and research available for policy and programme development. Belarus is interested in joining the training on this standardized approach, including on the basis of ITC in Minsk.

Taking into account current international trends and IOM approach to facilitating pathways for regular migration, Belarus also strives to take appropriate measures. Thus, on July 1, 2023, came into force the new legislation on external labor migration, aimed at reducing bureaucratic barriers to migrants access to the national labor market, debilitating labour gaps and attracting qualified migrant workers to the specific sectors of the economy.

However, we understand that efforts to facilitate legal migration that could be beneficial to employers in some countries facing labour shortages, but for countries of origin it could encourage a "skills drain" in sensitive areas, such as health care, etc. In this regard I have a question. How does IOM address this problem in its work with countries of origin in the context of facilitating migration routes?

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Belarus is interested in continuing cooperation with the IOM in all areas of its mandate in order to improve the national migration policy, strengthen the capacity of the migration service, and develop result-oriented international collaboration with stakeholders.

I thank you.