



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
G E N E V A**

- Check against delivery-

IOM 114TH COUNCIL

Item 10, General Debate

Statement by Mr. Gordan Markotić, Ambassador, Charge d' affairs

Chair, Director General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Croatia aligns itself with the EU statement and with the Joint Statement delivered by Ukraine.

Croatia warmly welcomes the new Director General, Ms Amy Pope, and is looking forward to continuing our valuable cooperation on all aspects of migration and mobility. At the same time, we thank you for your comprehensive report.

As crises around the world continue to grow and force people to move, IOM's timely response has further highlighted its critical and invaluable role as well as the special nature of its work. We commend IOM for its response in all crises as well as in the newest challenge - the situation in Gaza. Despite the attention given to Israel/Gaza conflict, crisis in Sudan and Russian war on Ukraine, which has caused the biggest displacement in the world since the WW II, are , we have not lost sight of the rest of the world.

We are concerned that conflicts and crises, including the serious consequences of climate change, are causing more human suffering and more forced displacement all over the world.

Croatia commends IOM's work across the whole spectrum of humanitarian-development-peace nexus, thus responding to emerging needs of affected population.

We support IOM as the lead UN agency on migration. We recognize IOM's role in ensuring better coordination of migration related work within the UN system, notably as the coordinator and secretariat for the Migration Network.

Croatia also supports the Global compact (GCM) for safe, orderly and regular migration.

We believe that regular and legal migration are necessary and natural way to progress the fabric of both our society and our economy.

We support your data-driven and people focused approach with due attention to saving lives and protecting people on the move.

In line with the strategic objectives that IOM set out – the need to promote legal pathways globally, Croatia supports IOM in taking this objective forward as part of a comprehensive, human rights based approach to migration in cooperation with other international organisations and stakeholders.

We support the attention given to internal accountability building on the results of MOPAN and the UN Advisory Alliance assessments.

Chair,

Croatia is highly impacted by the irregular migration routes, especially by the Western Balkan route where, since the beginning of the year until 15

October, we registered 91.167 migrants, the number that puts this route immediately after the Mediterranean route.

By mid-October of this year, Croatian police intercepted 60,717 cases of illegal border crossings. This number is significantly higher than in the entire previous year (50,624).

There has also been a significant increase in the number of applications for international protection in Croatia.

By mid October 2023. 57.855 persons expressed an intention to apply for international protection, which is seven times higher than in the same period in 2022.

Tackling the root causes of migration through a coordinated combination of development assistance, and supporting the partner countries in fight against migrant smuggling is the only appropriate action to prevent irregular migration flows. To achieve the maximum, we must use all available means.

Croatia's objective is to rely as little as possible on the ad hoc activities used to address "acute situations" and to replace them with systematic, comprehensive and sustainable migration and asylum policy. Migration governance and a comprehensive approach to migration remain key priorities for us and we count on IOM's leadership in that respect.

Let me conclude by reiterating Croatia's appreciation and support for the vital role and work of IOM.

Thank you Chair.