

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Speech by Dr. Mobini, Deputy Minister of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of the National Organization of Migration

To the 114th session of the Council of the International Organization of Migration

(Geneva, 27-29 Nov, 2023)

MR. / Madam Chair

Director General,

Excellencies, Ministers,

Distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to participate in the 114th session of the Council of International Organization for Migration. I would like to join others in extending a warm congratulations to Ms. Amy Pope on her appointment as the first lady to serve as Director General of IOM.

At the outset, I would like to draw your attention to the question of the Palestine, a territory which has been one of the main historical breeding grounds for migration and displacement in the world. In the present time, it is the responsibility of the international community to stop the killing of innocent people and to tackle the root causes of forced displacement and migration of the Palestinian citizens, specifically in Gaza.

Mr./Madam Chair,

As you are fully aware, the migration crises that have been caused by various political turmoil, climate change and other factors in the Iran's neighboring states have deeply affected my country. Iran has been hosting millions of the people on

the move who uprooted because of the military intervention by the extra-regional countries in Afghanistan and in Iraq for more than 4 decades.

The security and economic problems as well as restrictions like the ban on students and girls to go to school have forced the Afghan nationals to leave their homes and move to the neighboring countries in search of better livelihood. In the aftermath of the earthquake in Herat, Afghanistan, in October 2023, and due to the dire situation of the people affected by the earthquake, many Afghan citizens have flocked to my country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, despite its challenges, has been providing refugees and foreign nationals with various educational, health, cultural and other services without any discrimination. In the current school year, more than 700,000 Afghan nationals have freely enrolled in Iranian schools. They have also access to higher education system in Iran and are studying in universities. More than 130,000 refugees have enjoyed free health insurance services in 2023 and the government has empowered migrants through offering vocational services and direct and indirect subsidies. These are just a small part of the services offered by my country to refugees and migrants. Iran has contributed far beyond its fair share to host and protect refugees, and it is expected that the international community should shoulder more of this burden.

Mr./ Madam Chair

The Islamic Republic of Iran appreciates the IOM's attempts to remain engaged in numerous protracted crises namely situation in Afghanistan, where tens of thousands of people have been **newly** displaced, as mentioned in the Director General's 2023 report. Nevertheless, several decades of hosting millions of refugees and foreign nationals have inflicted huge economic, social, cultural and even security costs on my country, putting massive pressure on local hosting communities and leading to a reduction in their resilience. Meanwhile, the assistance provided to Iran by the international community for hosting millions of refugees and foreign nationals is very low and covers less than 1% of our total expenses for them.

Distinguished Delegates,

The mass influx and unfair distribution of the burden of hosting refugees and displaced persons has affected the services offered by my country. Moreover, the Unilateral Coercive Measures have worsened the situation. Unilateral sanctions not only negatively affected the willingness of donors to contribute, but also even impeded the process of fulfilling our support. Therefore, my country is no longer capable of accepting new displaced people and it is expected that many of those who are seeking to settle in Iran, would decide to move onward to the European countries, if the international community does not undertake its responsibilities.

In conclusion, I would like to appreciate the opportunity created by IOM to exchange thoughts and views between the organization and its member states.

Thank you for your attention.