

Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Migration remains both an opportunity and a challenge,
globally and in Europe.

From the very beginning, Greece supported the adoption
of the Global Compact,
as a political framework of international cooperation,
aiming to promote the protection of migrants' rights,
while ensuring the well-being of both receiving and sending societies.

Greece is committed to support safe, orderly, and regular migration.

And we do so.

By supporting EU policy and legislation on legal migration.

By ensuring migrants in Greece have access to the social welfare state, education, and healthcare,

including free vaccination against “Covid-19”.

By giving top priority to the protection of unaccompanied minors.

But at the same time tackling smuggling networks,

Working to eradicate human trafficking,

Protecting the external borders of the European Union,

in line with international law and European acquis.

We cannot allow smugglers to decide who comes and lives in Europe.

Especially as Europe does not neighbor with warzones,
other than Ukraine but,
in our case, with countries members of
the European Union, NATO and the Council of Europe.

Our strategy safeguards human lives,
as evidenced by the sharp decline in last few years' number of fatalities
in the Aegean Sea.

Greece is actively protecting human lives.

It is critical that we focus on such positive developments, avoiding misinformation which is disseminated for political purposes.

Migration should not be used for geopolitical gains, Instrumentalizing human suffering, as it happened on several occasions in Europe, in the last few years.

On the contrary, managing borders requires bilateral and regional collaboration and agreements.

Like the 2016 EU/Turkey Joint statement, which Turkey fails to implement. It puts human lives at risk each and every day in the Aegean Sea and in the land borders.

While I recall that Turkey has opted out from providing protection to all refugees in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

On the other hand, the European Union must take further joint action for the protection of fundamental rights,

proving a Common European Protection space

to those in entitled to.

As individual member states cannot any longer handle the pressure alone.

We are working with our EU partners to agree on much needed regulatory improvement in European Regulations.

Greece has done more than its fair share for many years.

For Greece, offering opportunities and pathways for legal migration, in parallel with facilitating dignified return and sustainable reintegration of returnees,

is of utmost importance.

Greece has enhanced cooperation with certain countries of origin, while introducing a new model of cooperation on migration and mobility.

We are offering multi annual work permits,
in particular for seasonal workers,
encompassing at the same time, cooperation on return
and combatting trafficking and smuggling activities.

We would like to thank the UN Network on Migration
for its essential role in supporting the implementation
and review of the GCM.

Thank you.