

Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Republic of Serbia and to express our appreciation to the United Nations Secretary-General, the United Nations Network for migration, as well as to all the partners committed to achieve the highest possible standards in our responsibility to protect migrants and mutual goal of creating a world that recognizes their needs.

The Republic of Serbia has historically been a country whose many citizens migrated to more developed countries seeking work opportunities. In addition, Serbia is hosting more than 850.000 persons that have been forced to flee armed conflict in the Balkans at the end of the last century. Even today, after more than 23 years of displacement, more than 200.000 internally displaced persons in Serbia are waiting for the durable solutions.

During the last decade, we have become a transit country for migrants from other continents, seeking a better life for themselves and their families in Europe. Since recently, we, as many other countries, are hosting displaced Ukrainian refugees.

This migration dynamic has taught us to respect each and every person, to protect those in need, and to do our best to find solutions for the problems they are facing. Therefore, the Republic of Serbia has endorsed the Global Compact for Migration and will diligently work on its implementation.

Today, at the first International Migration Review Forum, we wish to reaffirm our commitment to the principles of the Global Compact. Serbia has already demonstrated that our legislative framework and its implementation are people oriented, with focus on the needs of the vulnerable population, especially women, children and the elderly. The

Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches are deeply embedded in our migration management system. In that sense, respect for the migrants' human rights was the leading principle in dealing with the migration crisis that Serbia, together with the rest of Europe, faced.

I would like to point out that Serbia has achieved significant progress in the implementation of the objectives of the Global Compact due to our international cooperation, active participation in a number of global and regional initiatives, and joint work with various UN Agencies. Additional progress has been achieved as a part of our accession process to the EU.

Nevertheless, we wish to make an appeal to jointly address the risks emerging from the latest conflicts and crises, since attending to the needs of the new waves of migrants may affect our efforts to find a solution for the previously displaced persons. It must not be allowed that we neglect the needs of any displaced person.

Ladies and Gentleman,

I would like to express the intention of the Republic of Serbia to achieve all the objectives set in the Global Compact for Migration.

Never in the human history, the number of the people in the forced displacement was so high.

In the years to come, phenomena will, due to different reasons, especially because of the numerous conflicts and growing poverty, grown up. That is why responsible reaction, solidarity and joint actions are crucial. If not, the price will be very high, maybe impossible to pay.

Therefore, we would like to invite all member States and partners to support the countries facing constant migratory pressures and various political and economic challenges in their effort to develop and implement policies and practices that will enable respect of human rights, elimination

of discrimination, providing development opportunities for migrants and through migration, and to Leave No One Behind.

Thank you for your attention