

High-level event on
Strengthening Cooperation on Migration and Refugee Movements
in the perspective of the new development agenda

Statement
by H.E. Mr. Daniel Mitov,
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Mr. Chairman,

The elapsed years since the last, 2013 meeting of the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development have been marked by a changed international context but also by a growing need for change in our responses and approaches to migration!

Firstly, migration is as complex as ever. No-ones needs to be convinced of its interlinkages to development, exploitation, human trafficking or human rights and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development recognizes that. Still, growing complexity must now entail greater cohesion of policies and efforts! We need to stop treating the various aspects of migration as separate, somehow disconnected from one another. Increased migration is here to stay, it is an ever more prominent feature of our globalized world and we need to persevere treating it accordingly.

Secondly, the context of migration and refugee movements is changing all the time and we have to respond more actively. Persistent and deepening violent conflicts, rising terrorist threats and failing states are all impacting negatively human rights, development and security. While we will continue to extend our support for those who need refuge, addressing the root causes of large-scale displacements have to be addressed more vigorously! This entails a deeper commitment to end violent conflict, civil strife and extremism. Bulgaria is actively supporting various initiatives on enhanced dialogue on migration such as the forthcoming Summit on Migration in Valletta and the High Level Conference on Migration from the Western Balkans Route to be held in Luxembourg in a just a few weeks' time. Dealing sustainably with the root causes is of key importance including actively working with origin and transit countries.

Moreover, I am afraid that even if the situation in the MENA region is stabilized, those networks consisting of criminal individuals will continue their cruel and inhumane game with the destinies and lives of people in need, if we don't take measures.

Last but not least, increased flows are having greater impact at the national level. As migratory and refugee flows have considerably risen, Bulgaria has taken numerous measures to improve its asylum-granting but also its migration management capacity. In line with our firm commitment to international humanitarian and human rights law, we have implemented specific measures outlined in our strategy (2014-2020) on the integration of individuals with granted international protection and in our more general strategy on migration, asylum and integration (2015-2020). We are quite determined and have taken steps against the criminal networks involved in smuggling and human trafficking. Our deep and effective cooperation with the office of the UNHCR is as strong as ever and we tremendously value their continued support.

I treat the current migration and refugee crisis as a wake-up call to us all! Ever increasing movements of people are here to stay and, unless we deepen our commitment and engagement, so will be the displacements of people as a result of conflict and extremism. We can no longer afford to treat these matters as secondary. I sincerely hope that the meeting today will make an important contribution to that effect.

Thank you!