

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON ADDRESSING LARGE MOVEMENTS OF  
REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**

**PLENARY SESSION**

**ECOSOC CHAMBER**

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Mr. Secretary-General,  
Distinguished Heads of States and Governments,

**My country is at the crossroads of irregular migration.**

**With more than 3 million people, Turkey hosts the largest refugee population in the world**

**At the same time, we also continue a fight against human smugglers at land and at sea. Through the tireless efforts of our relevant authorities, we were able to decrease irregular migration in the Aegean Sea by 95% in the last six months.**

**However, we also see that our unilateral efforts cannot be sufficient to cope with this global problem.**

**We have to say it loud and clear that the world needs a better strategy to deal with irregular migration. And, we need it urgently!**

**This strategy should have three dimensions:**

**First, we need to address the root causes of refugee movements. This is not an option. This is an obligation.**

**We must find a political solution to the Syrian conflict.**

**Otherwise, it will continue to be major source of irregular migration in our part of the world.**

**If we do not overcome structural problems of the Least Developed Countries, people will continue to search for a better future abroad.**

**Second, transit countries should be supported. Especially neighboring countries to the conflict regions are disproportionately affected by the flow of immigrants.**

**Financial assistance and resettlement are key instruments in this regard.**

**Unfortunately, our own experience shows that it is almost impossible to talk about burden sharing.**

**Turkey has spent more than 12 billion US Dollars for the Syrians alone. The contribution of the international community remained at 512 million US Dollars. We will continue to do what we can. But, we have to admit that this is not fair.**

**Third, negative rhetoric** such as **xenophobia, racism and Islamophobia** towards refugees or migrants must be stopped.

**Extremism** will only increase our problems. It will backfire and **fuel terrorism. Politicians, especially in Western Europe, must be more cautious** than ever.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Any strategy can be successful **if it is carried out collectively. Individual efforts cannot produce lasting solutions.**

There is **one lesson** that the entire world must have learned by now: **no one is immune from the consequences of refugee crises.**

Turkey is **ready to do its part.**

Last year, upon our initiative, the **General Assembly discussed irregular migration and the problems of Syrian refugees.**

Migration was **one of the major topics of our G-20 Chairmanship, in 2015.**

The first ever **World Humanitarian Summit** which was held in Istanbul last May had one clear message about migration: **“One Humanity: Shared Responsibility.”**

And now, we are **committed to assume a leading role** in the preparatory phase of the **“Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration”** by 2018.

We believe this **first ever UN Summit on migrants and refugees** will help our efforts in dealing with irregular migration.

Thank you very much.