

*Mister Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Republic of Poland I am honoured to address the 51st session of the Commission on Population and Development devoted to *Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration*.

At the beginning, let me congratulate you, Mister Chairman, on your election as President of the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission, and other members of the Bureau on their election.

*Mister Chairman,*

**The International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action constitutes a platform for the present and future activity of the Polish Government.** The population-related issues remain at the core of development, and are essential to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda, opened a new chapter of possibilities and actions to accelerate and sustain development, recognizing that each country faces specific challenges. **A new vision of the sustainable development of Poland was institutionalized on 14 February 2017, with the adoption of the Strategy for Responsible Development (SRD)** – a comprehensive instrument for managing the main development processes of the country.

In support of sustainable urban development the Strategy calls for implementation of low emission policies, preventing uncontrolled suburbanization and improving spatial harmony. Particular attention in the SRD was given to three areas of activity: the largest urban agglomerations, medium-sized cities losing social and economic functions, and areas endangered by permanent marginalization.

*Mister Chairman,*

**Poland acknowledges the increasing role of cities in stimulating socio-economic development and is actively supporting the SDGs' goal 11 (*Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*).** Sustainable urban development in Poland is realized through the implementation of *National Urban Policy* carried out under the mentioned Strategy for Responsible Development.

*National Urban Policy (NUP)*, sets the desired directions for action aiming at strengthening the capacity of cities and urban areas to create jobs and improve citizens' life quality. In a broader perspective, improving development conditions of Polish cities will be realized within the *Networking Urban Initiative*. It is based on the experience of international programs such as: URBACT, the EU Urban Agenda, and is in line with objectives and tasks of the New Urban Agenda and Agenda 2030.

Further SRD's strategic projects responding to the problems of sustainable urban development are the *Action Package supporting self-government institutions in programming and realization of revitalization* and *Action Package for medium-sized cities losing social and economic functions*. The second addresses challenges of the 122 cities with identified development challenges, which hinder the development of those cities and surrounding areas.

Additionally, **Poland is actively involved in European Union initiatives, such as Urban Agenda of the EU**. We also implement the instrument of *Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI)*, co-financed from ERDF funds, dedicated to functional areas. Within this instrument, municipalities of functional areas (urban core and functionally linked areas) implement commonly agreed strategy and can receive financing for joint projects in areas of sustainable urban mobility, thermo-modernization and revitalization.

*Distinguished Delegates,*

We also see the need to respond to the dynamic migratory situation, as international migration has become one of the most pressing global challenges. Adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants we have acknowledged that we are facing an unprecedented level of human mobility, which is affecting us particularly in the form of large scale, mixed migration flows.

The international community is currently in the middle of a process of developing two global compacts. One for migration and other for refugees. Through this process we pursue an ambitious goal of establishing a framework for broad global cooperation. **We believe that this framework should help us to regain control over migration movements**, at the same time enabling us to provide comprehensive aid to those in need of support and protection, primarily in their regions of origin.

**Poland acknowledges the potential positive contribution of migrants to sustainable development and inclusive growth. Still, unprecedented scale of irregular migration that we face makes it almost impossible to unlock these gains.** Reflecting on the Agenda 2030 – we are of opinion that we need policies which will ensure that migration is an orderly, safe and regular process, governed responsibly by sovereign states cooperating within a well-balanced common framework.

The changes taking place in the migration situation in Europe, as well as demographic and economic changes in Poland, prompted us to undertake work to revise the current migration policy and to adopt new rules corresponding to these changes. **The Sustainable Development Strategy, emphasises the importance of attracting migrant workers with desired skills to the Polish labour market**, in light of

the diminishing labour resources. From 2018, works on a new national migration policy have begun, aimed at ensuring its cohesion, flexibility and adequacy to the course of migration processes.

**Being a frontier state of the EU, Poland plays a key role in stabilising its migratory situation in Europe.** To this end we are constantly improving the security of our eastern borders. At the same time Poland, in the year 2016, took in about 60% of legal economic migration to the EU. **Majority of migrants in Poland are citizens of Ukraine, which was undergoing a security and economic crisis. Throughout this crisis Poland has retained instruments facilitating access to our labour market for the citizens of Ukraine.** We also apply the same simplified rules for temporary labour migration to Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Russia. Poland is also the first country to accept foreigners coming from the East who are seeking international protection.

*Mister chairman*

**The Government of Poland has also increased its financial resources for humanitarian aid, which in 2017 was directed mainly towards refugees in the Middle East, taking its part of the common responsibility.** In 2017, the value of this aid was six times higher than in 2015. Besides bilateral aid Poland contributes to specialized humanitarian agencies and through participation in special EU funds and instruments.

**Poland was also the first EU country to sign, at the end of 2017, the agreement with the European Investment Bank on joining the Economic Resilience Initiative (ERI).** By donating 50 million euros intended for helping Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine, Poland has become the largest donor of the ERI initiative. We stand ready to continue are strengthened efforts in the future.

*Thank you for your attention*