

HE MILOŠ PRICA, AMBASSADOR AT LARGE  
MFA - BOSNIA &  
HERZEGOVINA

Mr. President, Excellences, dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my great honor and pleasure to address you here today on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the beautiful city of Marrakech, on the occasion of this historic moment when we are adopting the first UN Global Compact on Migration. I would like to express our gratitude to all who have participated in creating this so important document, led by the co-facilitators, Ambassadors Juan Jose Gomez Camacho and Jurg Lauber. Also, our appreciation goes to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for the great hospitality we are enjoying in this wonderful country.

The migration is not only the problem of the modern society; it has been a part of the human history since its very beginning. History of the world is partly the history of migration. In today's world the main drivers of migration are weak economic conditions in countries of origin, wars, political turmoil, natural disasters, climate change etc.

My country has faced throughout its history many different waves of migration, let me just mention a few: settlement of Sephardi Jews in 15<sup>th</sup> century, migrations during the Ottoman rule, within the Austria-Hungarian Empire, migrations as a consequence of two World Wars.

In recent quarter of the century we have experienced huge wave of migration during and after the tragic war from 1992-1995. The second significant wave of migrants we have faced in last several years' is immigration of many of our skilled and educated people to the most advanced European countries since they open their job market to foreigners.

Regarding the migration crisis in Europe that started some four years ago, triggered by the exodus of affected population from the war-torn countries like Syria, Libya, Afghanistan as well as from the least developed countries in Asia and Africa, Bosnia and Herzegovina until recently hadn't been affected significantly. The so called Balkan route of migrants from the above mentioned parts of the world, involved my country only sporadically. But since the beginning of 2018 the situation with illegal migrants has started to develop much more seriously. According to the data available, the arrival of illegal immigrants in 2018 till the

end of October 2018 reached the number of 21201, compared to 464 recorded for the whole 2017. It is estimated that between 4500 and 6000 refugees and migrants remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina in need of humanitarian assistance. The majority have arrived in an irregular manner, most of them attempting to reach Croatia and the rest of the European Union. We would like to express our gratitude to the EU, UNDP, IOM, WHO for the financial assistance and technical support in providing equipped shelters for over 2000 migrants in different cities throughout the country, especially for families, children and most vulnerable categories. Our authorities with the assistance of WHO and other international organizations and agencies are doing their best to cope with needs for food, health care and other basic social services.

As it is rightly mentioned in the Global Compact, migration should never be an act of desperation. But when it happens, the comprehensive cooperation and orchestrated efforts at national, regional and global level have to take place in order to respond to the needs of migrants. Their human rights have to be fully respected with special attention to the most vulnerable groups, like women, girls, unaccompanied minors, disabled persons. Of course, most of those migrants that where pushed by harsh conditions in their places of origin are honest and respectable people. But it shouldn't be forgotten, that under these conditions some individuals from terrorist and other kind of illegal groups could take advantage of the situation for their illicit activities. During such a crisis, they may trigger the sense of insecurity and resistance, even animosity by the domicile population towards migrants. In these circumstances security issue has to be properly tackled by implementing best practices and lessons learnt and by engaging all stakeholders. We are glad that special attention in the Compact is given to the prevention of smuggling of migrants, where transnational response has to be particularly strong.

Needless to say, if we continue to see more inequalities in the world, if we fail to eradicate absolute poverty and hunger, if the gap between rich and poor continues to widen, we are going to face more challenges regarding the migration. Therefore, we see the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030 as indispensable. This Agenda, the continuation of the MDGs, if properly implemented, will pave the way toward the prosperous world living in peace and harmony.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me underline, that the success of Global Compact will be measured by its implementation on the ground. The more international cooperation on migration governance is seen, the higher percentage of migration will be safe, orderly and regular and the success in this field will be greater. But the long-lasting improvement and solution could be made only if the main causes of migration in countries of origin are successfully resolved, if the world assists least developed and developing countries in their economic development and technological transformation, post-conflict peacebuilding, if we reverse the process of climate change. Thus, we see the Global Compact on migration only as a first step in tackling this so important global challenge.

I thank you for your attention.