

Text of the speech of the Chief of State Migration Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Firudin Nabiyeu at High level meeting (plenary session) of UN General Assembly to address large movements of refugees and migrants

(September 19, 2016)

Dear Mr. Chairman!

Expansion of geographic area of conflicts and crisis zones across the world in recent years has resulted in increase in the number of those who have lost their lives and forced to flee their homes to the large extent. Today as a result of conflicts and violations more than 60 million persons have been subject to forced displacement.

In the first place international community should prevent armed conflicts and should further increase efforts to resolve existing conflicts in accordance with norms and principles of international law, including sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states. It is very important to strengthen cooperation between states and international organizations such as UNHCR, IOM and relevant mechanisms of UN in solution of problems of refugees, IDPs and migrants.

We consider that today difficult situation and needs of IDPs, the total number of which has reached record – 41 million, should not be left without attention and therefore, general and holistic approach of international community is required in respect to solution of this problem. We suppose that the existing difficult situation requires serious consideration of drafting universally binding document based on Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. In this context Azerbaijan welcomes adoption of “Convention for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons in Africa”, which is considered the first binding document on forced displacement, by African Union. At the same time, we do hope that the ambitious goal set forward in UN Secretary General Agenda for Mankind to reduce forced displacement at least by 50 per cent by 2030 will be achieved.

Reasons for significance and sensitiveness attached by Azerbaijan to IDP issues are fully understandable. Our country has faced large scale internal displacement problem due to occupation of its territories by Armenia. Azerbaijan with total population of 9.7 million is one of the counties with the biggest burden of displacement for per capita IDPs. It is more than 25 years that Armenia grossly violating norms and principles of international law continues efforts towards consolidation of its aggression policy, as well as current status-quo and hinders return of thousands of Azerbaijani IDPs to their homeland. Furthermore, it should be mentioned with regret that Armenia taking advantage of current refugee and migrant crisis settles Armenians from Syria in occupied territories of Azerbaijan. It is gross violation of international humanitarian law, first of all 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocols.

Azerbaijan has undertaken all the problems of IDPs forced from their homeland. Measures on employment, education, accommodation, medical and social provision of these persons are continuously implemented by Azerbaijani Government. During the past period around a hundred modern settlements have been built, accommodation conditions of thousands of refugee and IDP families have been improved. During the past 20 years approximately 6 billion dollars have been spent to solution of social problems of IDPs in Azerbaijan. Efforts of Azerbaijani Government in the sphere of solution of problems of IDPs have been highly appreciated by UNHCR, International Organization for Migration and other organizations.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

We do believe that Political Declaration adopted today which reflects the idea of consideration of strategies on protection of IDPs, prevention of emergence of IDP situations and reducing such cases will give a big global push to the efforts of preparation of effective protection framework for these vulnerable group.
Azerbaijan is ready to contribute to his process.

Thank you very much for your attention!