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STATEMENT

By

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President of the Republic of SLOVENIA

**at the High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements
of refugees and migrants**

19 September 2016

Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to sincerely thank Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for the organization of today's meeting and commend his engagement.

Migration has been a constant feature of human history. It is an indivisible part of global progress and development, and migrants have been important drivers of economic, social, cultural and human evolution. But today the amount of refugees and displaced persons present a human tragedy which mankind has not seen since World War II.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, too, has been devised with the aim to respond to migration as one of major global challenges.

When talking about the benefits of migration, what we have in mind is safe, orderly and regular migration. Our objective is to avoid irregular migration and firmly combat criminal networks that take advantage of it. We must also strengthen efforts to prevent false expectations, disinformation, and distorted images of life that awaits migrants and refugees outside their homelands.

In fact, we should strengthen our cooperation on all aspects of migration management, including on the return and reintegration of irregular migrants to their countries of origin.

The most effective way to address the crisis is to find viable solutions to its root causes and push factors – be it conflicts, persecution, human rights violations, terrorism, poverty, absence of good governance rooted in non-existence of the rule of law, lack of resources and prospects for youth, or effects of climate change. That can only be done by conjoined efforts of the entire international community, in the spirit of shared responsibility and solidarity, in an open dialogue and cooperation. The current global crisis is a stark reminder to all of us that we need to accelerate our efforts and work together.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The European Union is facing immense migration pressures on both its maritime and land borders. As a transit country, Slovenia has also faced an unprecedented flow of migrants and refugees fleeing the conflict-ravaged Middle East and North Africa. From mid-October 2015 to the beginning of March this year, more than 477,000 people entered our country; this is equivalent to about a quarter of the entire Slovenian population. We have therefore experienced first-hand how important it is to closely collaborate with partners within and outside the European Union and with international organizations. Slovenia actively participates in the EU reallocation and resettlement scheme, and has in the past two years also significantly increased humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons and refugees.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today's high level meeting is a meeting of hope for all those trying to craft a better future for themselves outside their homelands. The commitments outlined in the outcome document of our meeting are a good starting point. Nevertheless, our final goal remains the adoption of a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018.

A politics of peace and dialogue must prevail and introduce cooperation on the basis of international law and principles. United Nations need to play more eminent role in it – to this goal we shall also think of correcting the existing UN architecture in order to make it more efficient in conflict prevention and resolution of disputes.

Thank you.