



**Seventy-third Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the High-Commissioner's
Programme
10-14 October 2022**

**Statement of H.E. Dr. Nermina Kapetanović,
Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

I would like to start by joining all the previous speakers in expressing my pleasure at the fact that Mr Filippo Grandi will continue to lead UNHCR for another 2.5 years.

As is well known, Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period of 1992 – 1995 was subjected to military aggression and horrible war, and saw hundreds of thousands of its people of all ethnicities flee the atrocities and carnage to save their bare lives, and were welcomed by many countries in Europe and the world.

We, therefore, based on this terrible and most unfortunate historic experience, have a deep understanding of the reasons underlying the migration movements, and have nothing but sympathies for those forced to leave their homes, those displaced from their homes, reaching unknown and foreign countries around the world, in search for security and peaceful life.

Overall, the numbers of asylum-seekers and migrants arriving in the country have dropped considerably during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, the migrants and asylum seekers are accommodated in seven reception centers and are provided with food and non-food items, primary and secondary health care services, including mental health psycho-social support and emergency support during COVID-19 pandemic.

We are grateful to the UNHCR and the EU for all the assistance provided to date, especially in terms of strengthening identification and referral of people in need of international protection, access to free legal aid, psychosocial assistance, accommodation and educational activities for asylum-seekers with specific needs.

I would like to express my appreciation to the European Union for a new project, worth thirty-nine point five (39.5) million euros, announced by Mr. Margaritis Schinas, Vice President of the European Commission for the promotion of the European way of life, during his recent visit, earlier this month (on 9 October 2022), to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The goal of this new project is to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in managing mixed migration flows and border management, and in dealing with the issues of irregular migration, border security, asylum, return, the fight against migrant smuggling and the fight against human trafficking.

We commend the cooperation and coordination established between the UNHCR and key international partners operating in the country, such as IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA, EU, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Save the Children, and other humanitarian organizations.

Bosnia and Herzegovina strives to do its utmost, within its political and constitutional set-up,

to uphold the universal international protection obligations.

In this regard, we strongly support the work of the Office of the High Commissioner in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the world at large, and wish Mr. Grandi all the best in the next two and a half years.

Thank you.