

BMMYK 73. İCRA KOMİTESİ TOPLANTISI HİTAP TASLAĞI

*Madam/Mr Chair,
High Commissioner Grandi,
Dear colleagues,*

Türkiye has been historically at the crossroads of movements of large number of asylum seekers and refugees with different backgrounds.

We by all means and generously support millions of people from all ages and backgrounds all over the world, including Syrians, Afghans, Ukrainians, Rohingas or Somalians.

For almost a decade now, we have been the largest refugee hosting country with more than 4 million people, most of whom are Syrians.

Currently, in Türkiye, almost eight hundred thousand Syrian children go to schools.

Millions of Syrians benefit from our health and other services.

For the last 11 years, almost 800 thousand Syrian babies have been born.

In addition to our efforts inside Türkiye, we have also been providing security and humanitarian support to 5 million Syrians on the other side of the border, especially in the northwestern part of the country.

These people are facing the harshest conditions and unfortunately almost forgotten by the international community.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

Challenges in our region are not limited to Syria.

We have taken measures to facilitate entry and stay of Ukrainians in Türkiye following the war in the country.

In this regard, we have welcomed almost 500 thousand Ukrainians with no hesitation.

We have provided humanitarian assistance and shelter to the affected Ukrainians inside and outside the country.

We will continue our diplomatic efforts to find a solution to the conflict.

Meanwhile, it is important to take steps to mitigate the negative impact of the war on vulnerable people as in the case of İstanbul Grain Agreement that Türkiye facilitated.

Beside Ukraine, we should not forget and turn our back to the crisis in Afghanistan either, not just out of humanitarian concerns, but also for preventing challenges, particularly new waves of irregular migration.

We believe that sustained, limited engagement with the Afghan Caretaker Government is indispensable to be able to help the Afghan people.

At a time when the war in Ukraine attracts bulk of donor interest, we should keep international attention on Afghanistan alive.

Madam/Mr Chair,

Developments in our region necessitate close and effective cooperation in the field of migration and Türkiye is the key on that.

We are always ready to share more of our experience.

We would also like to reiterate that fair and equitable burden sharing is a must.

On the other hand, externalization of asylum seekers, pushbacks or shifting international responsibilities to third countries are the new unacceptable trends.

These trends continue risking lives of thousands of innocent people.

As High Commissioner Grandi also touched on his opening speech, the number of people who have lost their lives last year trying to reach Europe is more than 3000.

Human life should not be so cheap and the international community should not forget its responsibilities stemming from the 1951 Geneva Convention.

The push-back cases on land and at the sea from Greece are unacceptable.

The EU should take a step to prevent Greek pushbacks and FRONTEX engagement and hold those involved in the incidents accountable.

We appreciate several calls by the UNCHR to put an end to these practices.

Madam/Mr Chair,

As one of the durable solutions we give importance to safe, voluntary and dignified return of the refugees.

If and when Syrians feel that their country is secure enough and free from any retribution, most will be willing to return.

We work to advance the political process within the framework of the Constitutional Committee as well as the Astana process.

The situation in the opposition held areas constitutes a good example.

More than 526 thousand Syrians have returned to those areas thanks to the stabilization efforts of the Syrian Interim Government.

Political and financial support to such efforts will facilitate returns.

We also expect international community to contribute to the host countries with increased resettlement quotas.

Thank you.