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Statement by MONTENEGRO

H.E. Ambassador Nebojša Kaluđerović

Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other International Organizations

Mr. High Commissioner,

Excellences,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great honour and pleasure to address you on behalf of the Government of Montenegro and express the gratitude for the support UNHCR provided through various programmes for displaced persons and migrants in all parts of the world.

In the time when the world is facing the most challenging issue - large movements of refugees and migrants it is extremely important to once again reaffirm our dedication to the principles of international protection, support and assistance to refugees and displaced persons. We believe that mechanisms of international organizations must be used in addressing these complex political and humanitarian challenges, while common responsibility for providing assistance to refugees and migrants should be undertaken. Like many times before, the UNHCR, together with the countries that are mostly affected by migrant movements, took over a great responsibility of resolving this, for all of us important issue.

Montenegro will continue to support all international actions aimed at resolving the refugee and migrant crisis. In this regard, we strongly support the adoption of a global compact for refugees and migration at the recent Summit for Migration and Refugees. We express our readiness to fulfil our part of obligations and constructively, in accordance with the possibilities, contribute to international efforts to reaffirm the principles of refugees and migrants protection.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me take this opportunity to point out the achievements of Montenegro made in resolving the issue of refugees, displaced and internally displaced persons.

Montenegro is very committed to the full implementation of international standards in the field of asylum and migration.

Although it has not been directly affected by the current migration routes, Montenegro has taken the necessary measures for eventual acceptance of migrants and refugees in the event of a sudden influx, in accordance with all international standards. The Government of Montenegro has prepared the Plan of Action in case of a possible mass influx of migrants and refugees on the borders of Montenegro. The Plan envisages close cooperation of the relevant state authorities with the support of international institutions, primarily the UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and the Red Cross of Montenegro. We have also developed a Draft Schengen Action Plan which, in addition to issues of border security under the Schengen standards, will adequately set out plans for control and prevention of irregular migration and dealing with other asylum issues. The Government of Montenegro will, in accordance with the capabilities and existing capacities, continue to take care of asylum seekers. As a country that is in the EU accession negotiating process, Montenegro welcomes the definition of a new strategic framework of the EU foreign and security policy which, inter alia, points out that the European Union remains committed in future to the strengthening of relevant agencies and addressing the causes of the migrant crisis, with full respect for human rights and international law. We are also looking forward to the EU initiative "Migration Partnership Framework" of July 2016, which launched a new set of actions to addressing the causes of the migrant crisis. Montenegro expresses its readiness to take all measures in order to achieve close cooperation with its neighbours, with the countries of possible destinations, as well as with the countries of origin of refugees for more efficient coping and finding of a sustainable answer to the problem of refugees and migrants.

At the national level, the Regional Housing Programme, which Montenegro implements in cooperation with Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and international partners, provides durable solution of the housing problems of displaced and internally displaced persons from the former Yugoslavia. Montenegro has successfully implemented several sub-projects which resulted in 182 families permanently resolving their housing problems by the end of 2016, while additional 145 families will resolve these issues in 2017, especially the most vulnerable groups. Fully committed to providing durable solution of the status of refugees and displaced persons, the Government of Montenegro will continue to undertake activities toward implementing additional sub-projects for durable solution of housing problems, especially for the most vulnerable categories, old and disabled persons.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me once again express our gratitude to the UNHCR, which has over the years been a reliable partner of Montenegro, and we believe that our mutual cooperation in the future will help us better address challenges we face.

Thank you for your attention.