



# CROATIA

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**Statement by  
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of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations**

**High-level Dialogue on International Migration and  
Development**

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Madam President,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to join others before me in expressing my satisfaction to participate at this High-Level-Dialogue on International Migration and Development as it allows us an excellent opportunity for an exchange of views on this complex issue, providing new insights into a global phenomenon of migration.

As Croatia has already aligned itself with the statement of the European Union, I will limit my statement to the national policies of Croatia.

Let me reiterate at the very beginning one of the messages from the Report of the Secretary General on International Migration and Development, namely that each of us holds a piece of migration puzzle, but none has the whole picture. It is time to start putting them together. Therefore, international migration cannot be managed unilaterally. Consequently, country partnerships and bilateral agreements as well as regional arrangements on migration are multiplying. But its complexity is global and is a fundamental feature of today's world system and demands attention at the global level.

The Republic of Croatia is on the crossroads of migration flows between the East and the West. Becoming a candidate for membership in the European Union, Croatia will surely face a new dimension and meaning of a consistent migration policy. Although national legislation in this area is a work in progress, Croatia has already achieved a significant improvement in regulating migration, asylum and similar issues within the framework of harmonization of domestic laws with the EU legislation. In process of adoption is also a document that will regulate the national strategy on migration, envisaging steps towards strengthening institutional capacity to manage migration effectively.

Croatia manages migration in accordance with principles of freedom of movement, solidarity and humanity, ensuring respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants. Legal foreign immigrants are permitted to stay in our country either temporary or permanently and their social inclusion is one of our top priorities.

Croatia continues to play a prominent role in regional cooperation. In collaboration with the International Organization for Migration's Mission in Croatia, a regional workshop on labour migration for integration and development in south east Europe was held this year in Zagreb. Its aim was to find a platform for discussions for the further development of policies and programmes on migration within and from the countries in the south-east Europe, in a spirit of positively implicating their economic and employment dimensions while contributing to combating possible irregular movements.

Like many other countries, Croatia is also only starting to learn how to maximize the benefits while minimising the negative effects of migration in development terms. Throughout the history, Croatia was a country of emigration, but during the last decade, Croatia has encountered a new challenge noting a gradual increase of a positive migratory balance. Some industries, being confronted with shortages of highly skilled

workers, employ foreigners. This shows that Croatia might face a growing demand for skilled and highly skilled workers in the nearer future. In addition, if negative demographic trends continue, a necessity to develop a forward-looking policy seems imminent.

Recognizing the important role of scientists in development, the Government of Croatia and a group of prominent scientists have launched a return migration program which has encouraged Croatian scientists abroad to foster a linkage with Croatia through joint international projects, training or specialization of the skilled personnel. Simultaneously, administrative institutions have been called upon to remove barriers to such assistance in order to enable the most effective cooperation possible.

An active involvement of national and local authorities, of regional and international institutions as well as of the private sector is required if we want multidimensional aspects of migratory issues to be addressed and managed in a coherent and coordinated way. We strongly believe that migration issues need to be addressed holistically at all levels, national, regional and global.

We support the idea that migration issues should continue to be observed and debated on a permanent forum of a voluntary and consultative nature, in the first place within the most valuable venue for the exchange of ideas and share of experiences, the United Nations in order that international migration is accepted as a normal and crucial element in the development process.

Thank you, Madam President.