



8th COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE
FOR MIGRATION AFFAIRS

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**Economic migration, social cohesion
and development: towards an integrated approach**



Introductory speech by

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Dear participants of the Conference!

I am glad to welcome you in Ukraine at the 8-th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs, it became possible with the support from the Council of Europe.

Of late years migration processes became the global challenge for prospects for human development in the twenty first century. Annual number of migrants (from 2 to 4 million people) outruns the world rate of growth of population. According to the data of International Organization for Migration currently we have about 125 million of people residing outside their countries of their citizenship and we have on the planet about one billion of internal migrants. International migration is connected with unprecedented demographic changes, transition of refugees, repatriates, who are forced to leave their countries because of the economical instability and violation of human rights.

It is necessary to draw your attention to the fact that migration is attended by such phenomena as irregular migration and in human beings trafficking, that is the gross violation of national and international law.

Of course, we remember about crimes on racial ground as well. Unfortunately, of late years we register the growth of particular these crimes in Ukraine . To counteract this we have created within the Ministry of Interior the special unit of Criminal Investigation Department, whose task is to improve this work and to draw to criminal responsibility 90% criminals from radical youth groups and groups, that have committed crimes on racial ground.

Ukraine is the country, which is situated at a crossroads of the mass stream of social transition and it starts its "entry" to the difficult migration space and to the stormy migration being.

As my colleague Mr. Nemyria has already mentioned, that according to the data of the State Boarder Guard Administration starting from the early this year 16 million foreigners have entered the territory of Ukraine and 15,5 million have left the country during the same period.

This year on the territory of Ukraine the law enforcement bodies have detained about 13 thousand irregular migrants, about 1,5 thousand people, who violated our national legislation, are deported. In 2007 over 2 thousand persons were deported. As we see Ukraine has serious challenges in the sphere of migration processes control and countering irregular migration.

That is why in overall prospects the prime task of migration policy is to manage the migration processes basing on the national interests of the country, of course, bearing in mind the rights of the people who have the status of migrants.

Currently one of the priorities for Ukraine in the process of counteraction the illegal migration is the signing of bilateral agreements on readmission first of all with countries of origin and transit of irregular migration.

At present Ukraine signed and ratified 17 Readmission Agreements that establish the procedure of admission and readmission of irregular migrants. We continue the negotiation process on concluding such agreements with other twenty states among which Croatia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Libya and others.

In December 2006 the Agreement was signed between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Russian Federation which is important for this process. In order to organize readmission process from the EU through Ukraine away to the countries of origin of migrants it is necessary to speed up ratification of this Agreement and we hope for the support of our colleagues from the RF in understanding of this process.

In the framework of obligations assumed by Ukraine to the EU member-states we have opened two temporary holding facilities for irregular migrants this year and we will further continue this process.

Taking the opportunity I would like to thank the European Commission, International Organization for Migration for technical support. We can proudly say that these temporary holding facilities fully comply with all European standards and secure the rights of people temporary staying in these facilities.

Ukraine faces the burning problem of legalization of foreign citizens who acquired the status of irregular migrants due to certain circumstances. We are perfectly aware that overall majority of them does not commit criminal offences, work in the spheres of the national economy of Ukraine and intend to legalize their status, bringing at the same time certain peculiarities and positive aspects to our land. Therefore the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine is considering the possibility to declare the amnesty for those irregular migrants, which state their willingness to register their documents and make their stay at the Ukrainian territory official. We studied the experience of the European countries, where this and similar approach has given positive results, and I would like to invite my colleagues to share their experience, gained from studying of this issue, during this 8th Conference of Ministers.

The examination of modern tendencies of the migration processes development in the world proves the fact that problems, related to the migration processes, extend beyond the borders and become the essential factor for the European states, including Ukraine.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine pays much attention to the establishment of the international cooperation in migration control sphere. At that the cooperation of the Black Sea states assumes notably great significance.

From the ancient times the Black Sea has been the important transport chain of trade and migration flows, starting from the times of the "Silk Route" to the modern pipelines. Today the important channels of the illegal migration go through the Black Sea Region, which makes the regional cooperation in the sphere of combating illegal migration and job placement of the illegal migrants especially timely and effective.

Taking into consideration the transnational character of irregular migration, the interaction of Ukraine with the member countries and observers of the Regional Center of Southeast European Cooperative Initiative and the Organization of the Black Sea

Economic Cooperation is of utmost importance in channels closure of transportation of Ukrainian citizens abroad for the purposes of sexual and labour exploitation.

Making use of possibilities of the Regional Center of SECI departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine are being actually and operatively informed on commission of crimes with the involvement of Ukrainian citizens, international illegal migration channels and trafficking in human beings, search for criminals, organized criminal groups.

Dear colleagues, we should say that the country that has set a goal to accede to the European Community is on the way to start this process in migration management. Ukraine has just initiated the reform of central administration, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine setting the tasks related to establishing European-style civil ministry where the State migration service will be found. I defend the position of my French colleague who has convincingly proved that migration should be controlled and organized. As Mr. Davis said in his speech, migration is not a problem, but it must be under the serious state control for prevention of criminal acts as well as better adaptation and integration of legal migrant workers newly arrived in their country.

We are also very much aware that in different countries there are national peculiarities of organization of control over migration processes, different legal basis governing this work.

The ministers of internal affairs, ministers of justice, heads of national migration services and other departments responsible for migration process are present in this hall today. I believe that our meeting will also allow us to establish direct contacts which will serve to draw our positions together for the success of mutual affair.

To this effect I propose to use the capabilities of the centre, where we are sitting now, for holding of the bilateral meetings the importance of which could not be overestimated. We are not setting a task to solve all the problems at the same time, first of all, it is impossible, but we hope that this meeting will discuss, bring out and recommend for implementation the new common ideas concerning migration policy.

Let me wish all participants of the meeting good work, new impressions, and development of the business and scientific contacts.

The Ministry of the Internal Affairs of Ukraine is ready to help you.

Thank You for attention.