



DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Speaking points by Aurelia Bouchez,
Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation in Republic of Kazakhstan
at the Ministerial Conference on Refugee Protection and International Migration:
The Almaty Process**

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Your Excellencies, distinguished participants, dear Guests. I would like to start by thanking the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for inviting me to address, on behalf of the European Union, the Ministerial Conference on the Almaty Process and to congratulate Kazakhstan for this important and timely initiative.

I would like to confirm the EU's strong support and interest to strengthen our cooperation at all levels on the issue of international migration and refugee protection. This is a topic with rapidly increasing importance in the region of Central Asia, including in view of Afghanistan post 2014.

The European Union recognizes the importance of migration in the development context and endorses the objectives of the Almaty Declaration and of the regional Action Plan, the latter prepared with the valuable expertise of UNHCR and IOM: Thus, the EU will support the common objectives established by the parties.

The European Union is ready to share its experience and the expertise of its Member States to facilitate obtaining the planned results.

In this context the European Union would like to encourage the Central Asian countries to actively participate in already on-going initiative supported by the EU such as the Prague Process, as well as in the Budapest Process. The Central Asian states could make a full use of programmes such as the BOMCA (Border Management Assistance to Central Asia), a programme that works in all five countries in the region. BOMCA's 9th phase is about to be launched. Another important program is the Migration EU Expertise, which already works in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

We look forward to enhancing our cooperation in the above mentioned projects in order to meet the objectives of the Almaty Declaration and the Regional Action Plan.

Migration and refugee challenges have regional, and often global, impact. They are complex challenges, as a number of speakers already underlined, including development, humanitarian and security issues, which require a comprehensive approach and close coordination between

the stakeholders. Hence our meeting is quite relevant in addressing these issues, and it is important to make its outcome sustainable.

I would like to conclude by confirming that there is much work ahead to reach our common targets and objectives. A good coordination of concerted actions is necessary in order to achieve effective and efficient implementation of the regional initiatives on refugee protection and international migration. I am confident that, with the dedication shown by all participants today, we will be successful.

Thank you for your attention!