



G R U P A 484

Gračanička 10

B e o g r a d

Tel: + 381 11 2632 544, 2631 246 * Tel./Fax. + 381 11 2631 445

PIB 101516043 * MATIČNI BROJ 17151274

E – mail: office@grupa484.org.rs

Website: www.grupa484.org.rs

ENGLISH only

Addressing at the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, 19-20

January 2009, Vienna,

“Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region”

Mr Chairman, distinguish participants

In these two days of the Economic and Environment Forum on Migration management, many various aspects of the migration and migration management policies have been tackled, showing the complexity of the migration phenomenon.

My intervention will focus on one type of migration that has not been substantially addressed at this forum and is sometimes overlooked and neglected. It is the issue of refugees/asylum seekers. They are part of the forced migration just as trafficking is.

Nowadays, mixed migrations are main features of migration flows. You have an asylum seeker, using smuggling channels to enter a state where he/she seeks asylum. You have an economic migrant using asylum system to stay in country where he/she hopes to have a better life. It is not easy anymore to distinguish different types of migrants. That is why comprehensive migration management is needed: migration management which includes all types of migration, addresses it accordingly and with appropriately designed policies; migration management, which is based on cooperation of the countries of origin, transit and destination, intergovernmental and international organizations as well as CSO and academia.

International protection for those that are persecuted in their own country has to be reassured in the future. Few speakers have mention that already at the Forum and I

am glad that this was included in the EU statement made at this forum. I hope that in the future, the refugee issues will be more present, in accordance with their importance in overall migration flows¹. In finding durable solutions for refugees we also need cooperation of the countries of origin and host countries, regional cooperation and involvement of the intergovernmental organizations such as OSCE.

Mr Chairman, distinguish participants

Allow me to give you the concrete example for regional cooperation and involvement of OSCE and present you one of the most important initiatives in OSCE region regarding forced migration. According to the UNHCR statistics there are more than 30 protracted refugee situations² throughout the world. All of these protracted refugee situations are located in African and Asian countries. All but one, which is actually located in the very heart of the Europe.

Refugees in Serbia have been waiting for more than thirteen years for durable solutions. 200 000 refugees have been naturalised in Serbia so far. However there are still almost 100 000 refugees residing in Serbia. Nearly three quarter are Croatian refugees and one quarter coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UNHCR has enlisted Serbian protracted refugee situation as one of the five that should be addressed immediately and possibly solved in the next two years.

OSCE, EU and UNHCR together initiated Sarajevo process in 2005 in order to close refugee caseloads in Western Balkans once for good. Joint regional matrix was supposed to be developed by the end of 2006. Today, at the beginning of the 2009, this has not been done yet.

The main problems are still open questions regarding return to Croatia such as acquired and legal rights of refugees regarding property, pension etc. "It is estimated

¹ For more details see Martin, Philip. Susan Martin, Patrick Weil. *Managing migration: the promise of cooperation*. Lexington books, Oxford, 2006

² Protracted refugee situation is the situation in which refugees are living in appalling conditions for more than five, usually ten and sometimes more than fifteen and twenty years without perspective for their durable solution.

that some 20 000 refugees families lost their apartments in Croatia. The issue of occupancy or tenancy rights (OTR) seriously affects the achievement of durable solution since a restoration of previous rights would allow many refugees to solve their own problems without state support. UNHCR advocates for a solution to this problem, maintaining that the establishment of a fair settlement mechanism is the best way forward.”³

The repossession of property and tenancy rights was carried out undisturbed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but this is not the case in Croatia. Only fair and even solutions can contribute to the regional stability and reconciliation so much needed in this part of the world.

OSCE, EU and UNHCR should reinitiate Sarajevo process and push Western Balkan countries to sit at the table and to finish joint matrix and to implement it for the benefit of all countries in the region, but first of all, for the benefit of the refugees.

If Europe cannot solve one single refugee protracted situation how can we expect that African and Asian countries can solve theirs.

Thank you for your attention.

Statement made by Miodrag Shrestha, Executive Director of Group 484

³ UNHCR, Protracted Refugee Situations, December 2008