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United Nations General Assembly meeting on

**Item 130: “Global awareness of the tragedies of irregular migrants in the
Mediterranean Basin, with specific emphasis on Syrian asylum seekers”**

20 November 2015

**Intervention by
H.E. Mr. Zsolt Hetesy
Deputy Permanent Representative**

Mr. President,

Heads of State and Government have come to New York almost two months ago to have the highest level dialogue on migration and refugee crisis.

Since then, more people have left their homes, fleeing persecution or in search of a better future. Lives are still lost as thousands without hope and other options take the journey through the Mediterranean daily. Meanwhile, vital systems of the effected countries are crumbling from the financial, logistical and security toll of the increased flows of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

We must respond decisively and together to manage and end the overall migration and refugee crises and for this we need to look further than the Mediterranean. We need global and comprehensive action on the following fronts:

- Tackling the root causes of the refugee crisis;
- Addressing issues related to global migration;
- Providing humanitarian aid and development assistance to host countries and communities;
- Bearing in mind the need for synergy and virtuous cycles, including by investing in sustainable development.

The current mass migration is of unprecedented dimensions and has diverse causes. This requires global, but also specific and different responses.

Mr. President,

Let us first address the issues of refugees. Without putting an end to the conflicts, there is no solution for the refugee crisis. Here the Security Council has a special responsibility. Besides stopping conflicts, the Council should also support more decisive mitigation measures. Efforts led by the EU to step up against criminal networks at the Mediterranean Sea, efforts to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access to those in need and ensure protection of civilians, or calls for criminal accountability could benefit from more decisive action by the Council. Inaction by the Council cannot be substituted or rectified by others' compassion.

Furthermore, whatever we do to make life easier for refugees, it does not change the fact that the international community has already failed them. Refugees' human rights are violated in the worst manner, which makes them choose between death, torture, imprisonment or fleeing persecution. Their real human rights can be reinstated fully only in their homeland. Securing political solutions to conflicts is an imperative and we are encouraged by the latest meeting of the International Syria Support Group in this regard.

In the meantime, the international community must redouble its financial and material support to those in need and provide humanitarian aid and development assistance to host countries and communities. This would allow easier return to their homeland once the conflict is over and curb the smuggler networks that exploit human desperation. Just recently, roughly 4M EUR have been pledged by my Government for such purposes, while the EU is already spearheading these efforts.

Mr. President,

Moving away from conflicts, human mobility has all kinds of other reasons and affects all parts of the world. The current migration trends are symptoms of complex underlying causes, such as economic hardships, environmental degradation, food and

water scarcity, etc. In essence, these causes are different forms of unsustainability, be it economic, environmental, or social.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, we have clear pathways to deal with these phenomena. First, the Agenda addresses the root causes, so that migration does not have to occur and people can prosper in their own countries. If fully implemented, it will reduce tension in and among countries and will ensure that situations threatening peace and security arise less frequently.

Second, the 2030 Agenda acknowledges the role of migration in development, taking into consideration the interests of the countries of origin, transit and destination. In order to turn the current challenge into opportunity, the Agenda calls for orderly, safe, regulated and responsible migration. It also calls for planned and well-managed migration policies, which is very different from what we are seeing today together with its immediate negative consequences.

This firsthand observation shows why we cannot give up on legitimate aspects of the 2030 Agenda, neither for political expediency nor for any other reason. Doing otherwise will have serious ramifications on the Agenda, on the future of our children and our planet.

Finally, on virtuous cycles: To find comprehensive solutions to complex problems, we need synergy. Quick solution of conflicts will ensure that resources, now diverted for emergencies, can later fund sustainable development. Successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, especially in post-conflict countries, will make solutions long lasting and more robust, and lighten the burden on the Security Council. If conflict prevention efforts can gain supremacy, hard won development achievements won't be swept away by conflicts. The fight against terrorism and violent extremism requires law enforcement efforts and the effective use of the elements in the toolbox of the Council, but it will never be successful without soft power solutions, such as dialogue, understanding and inclusive development.

While we agree on these, we now have to transform our words into action. Only then can tragedies in the Mediterranean and elsewhere be avoided. Only this way can we give hope and options back to the people currently in need.