

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**

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**Agenda item 3: General debate**

Thank you Madam Chair,

Your Excellency, the High Commissioner,

I'd like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to talk to you about this important phenomenon. On this occasion, I am proud to represent a Christian country which, by its nature, considers human dignity as the highest possible priority, and I am also speaking on behalf of a country which has a sizable presence of UNHCR and we are proud of that almost 1.000 staff you employ there.

Hungary is confronted with a double security related challenge nowadays, putting into consideration that we are confronted with the challenges both from the East and the South. From the East, we are a neighbouring country to Ukraine and the war in Ukraine has all its consequences on us, among others, we have received more than a million refugees. And from the South, we represent the external border of the European Union, where we are faced with a growing pressure of illegal migration. This unfortunate position of ours makes us an example how clearly a differentiation between refugees and migrants should be made, because if this differentiation takes place finally, it will be able to help when it comes to resolving the migratory crisis all around the world. This differentiation must be on the basis of international law. Which says that in case someone has to escape, then he or she can stay on the territory of the first safe country. International law does not consider the right to pick a country and in order to get there no one is allowed to cross a series of borders and a number of safe countries. So international law speaks about first safe country and does not speak about second, third on tenth.

Hungary is unfortunately a perfect example. From the East we are bordered by Ukraine. In Ukraine a war is going on and we, Hungarians have received all the refugees arriving from Ukraine because we are the first safe country. We are not only receiving more than a million refugees but we are giving them equal access to health care and education and we help them to be employed as well. All this has been made in the framework of the largest humanitarian operation in our history.

But, contrary to that, what has been going on at our Southern border, is a scandal. Because those who are arriving there have already gone through a series of safe countries, which is a violation of international law and by definition those who are crossing territories of more safe countries cannot be considered as refugees. On top of that they want to violate our border which has to be considered as a crime. So someone who comes from far away and violate our border is per definition an illegal migrant. And we have stopped 275.000 of those throughout the entire last year and this year another 150.000.

And why I mention the word scandal. Your Excellency and dear colleagues, because now the migrants and the smugglers are already carrying weapons, even automatic rifles and they are continuously shooting at the Hungarian border guards. This is unacceptable. This must not be tolerated. And it must also not be tolerated that some politicians say that we should accept that. These migratory flows are mostly fuelled by policies which encourage people to hit the road which feed the business model of the smugglers and which force sovereign countries to give up their right to make their own decision whom they are ready to allow to enter the territory of their country and whom not.

Instead of all these, we should tackle the root causes; we should make circumstances appropriate for people to continue living on the territory where they and their communities have been living. And those who are speaking in favour of the obligatory quota systems of redistribution, they create European Union as kind of a magnet for migration. We all know the impacts: parallel societies have been created, threat of terrorism is increasing, and modern age antisemitism is on the rise in the Western part of Europe as well.

So, we do believe Your Excellency and Dear Colleagues, that we have to make a clear differentiation between refugees and migrants, and we have to help all the refugees. We have to help all the refugees because they are people in need and as a first safe country we do it but in the meantime we do have to stop the migrants, as well.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.