

**FIRST MEETING OF THE ALMATY PROCESS SENIOR OFFICIALS
STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR**

21 November 2014

Almaty, Kazakhstan

1. The Republic of Kazakhstan, the Chair of the Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration, hosted the first Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the Almaty Process in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 21 November 2014.
2. The Meeting was attended by the National Coordinators and Senior Officials of Member and Observer States, including the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Turkey and Turkmenistan, as well as representatives from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Resource Persons from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA).
3. The topic of the Meeting was "Mixed Migration Movements from Afghanistan Post-2014", and the purpose was to review current analyses of the situation in Afghanistan.

The Meeting intended to share good practices on profiling and referral of migrants and asylum-seekers, on border management and emergency preparedness and discuss regional cooperation on mixed migration flows within Central Asia and neighbouring States.

The meeting also aimed to agree on the next steps in the Almaty Process.

4. Participants recognized the significant strides made by the participating countries to advance work on refugee protection and international migration, including the 2011 Regional Conference on Refugee Protection and International Migration in Central Asia, the development of the 2012 Regional Cooperation Framework and Regional Action Plan, the operationalization of the Almaty Process in 2013 and the 2014 Ashgabat International Conference on Migration and Statelessness.
5. Participants acknowledge that the refugee issue in Afghanistan and its neighbouring States, which has been developing over the last 35 years, deserves attention. Participants acknowledged the generosity and great experience of Iran and Pakistan in hosting populations of Afghan refugees during this time. Participants also congratulated Afghanistan on its recent peaceful democratic transition. Participants concluded that while it is difficult to estimate as to whether there will be a significant increase in

the future, population movements will likely remain a feature of the region.

6. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as access to basic rights for all migrants regardless of their status as much as possible. Participants commended the extraordinary efforts and long experience of some participating States in hosting refugee populations, and in enhancing the protection of migrants' rights.
7. Participants noted the difficulty of addressing mixed migration movements when people with different motives move along the same paths. The challenge is particularly great when this movement is irregular and when it takes place in an emergency setting. To address this, participants recognized the importance of continuing work on the identification and profiling of individuals in a timely and appropriate manner and ensuring the protection of persons with specific needs.

Identification systems that differentiate between various categories on the move can assist States collect information on the profile and intentions of those entering their territory, and thus strike an appropriate balance between the humanitarian and protection needs of people on the move and national security considerations.

They also help States to ensure that individuals with specific needs are quickly identified and their needs are addressed as soon as possible after the arrival in the host State.

8. Participants commended the notable achievements of some States in establishing mechanisms for profiling and referral of migrants and refugees. Participants acknowledged the importance of continuing this work and discussed the efforts that are still required to improve mechanisms for profiling and referral.

This includes coordination between relevant governmental bodies and cooperation with international organizations and other relevant partners. States committed to advancing their work in this direction and welcomed the active involvement of UNHCR, IOM and relevant partners.

9. Participants agreed to advance their work as much as possible and enhance their emergency preparedness so as to enable a more effective operational response to address mixed migration flows in emergencies, and welcomed the support of UNHCR and IOM.
10. Participants reaffirmed the importance of the Almaty Process as a regional consultative process for further dialogue and regional cooperation on mixed migration flows in Central Asia.