



**REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**  
**President**

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**Address by the**  
**President of the Republic of Macedonia,**  
**His Excellency Dr. Gjorge Ivanov,**  
**at the UN High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large**  
**Movements of Refugees and Migrants**

**New York, September 19, 2016**

**Distinguished President,  
Distinguished Secretary-General,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are living in the real 21st century, in a time of hope and fear.

On one hand, we have hope for a better life, education, economic development, protection of the life of citizens and their property.

On the other, there is fear of the consequences of regional conflicts and crisis regions.

Movements of migrants and refugees have been triggered by both the pursuit of happiness and running away from fear.

20 million illegal migrants and refugees are located near the external borders of Europe and are being motivated to use certain corridors to reach Europe.

We need a common approach in terms of handling the migration crisis and reducing security risks by making a clear distinction between the legal and humanitarian, political, economic, social and security aspects of the crisis.

This new era of the cruel 21st century requires new leadership and resettlement of institutions that would then be able to manage crises and risks.

The threat of illegal migration is a perfect tool for exercising non-military pressure in crisis and conflict management. It is simple – it is enough to just export migrants and direct them to the path towards their final destination.

The challenges of European Union's security increasingly depend on **leadership, political stability and crisis management by governments of third countries** that are at the **main exit and entrance corridors**. However, these so-called "third" countries are situated at a geographic position that enables them to control the gates of the corridors. The **Union needs stable and secure third countries** that would be capable of protecting those corridors.

**Macedonia's approach to managing the migrant crisis is a proactive and preventive one. We were the first country to declare a state of crisis and deploy Army troops at the borders, establishing a joint military-civilian HQ to increase border security protection and channel the movement of migrants without them entering in cities and having contact with radicalized persons and returnees from conflict zones in the process.**

One might compare the migrant flow to a flood. It is necessary to activate the crisis management and deploy army to support civilian services in order to handle that flood.

The crisis management system must therefore develop contingency plans and make use of "the strategy of eliminating the consequences of the flood (migrant flow) involving a defense system with so-called dams at the external borders, a cleaning process with hotspot approach and the securing of channels and control of the pipes at the entrance and exit corridors and routes used by refugees, migrants and foreign terrorist fighters.

We have assumed the responsibility to be the gatekeepers of Europe. The deployment of army troops in support of police forces protecting the border resulted in the interruption of movement of illegal migration through the so-called Balkan corridor. We must therefore support the revision of legislation concerning the participation of the Army in the protection of borders, national security and countering terrorism.

As regards the requested assistance related to the security aspects of the crisis, several partner countries responded with secondment of police officers, border protection equipment and financial assistance, namely: Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Poland. Currently, Macedonia hosts 110 foreign police officers that protect our border.

The Republic of Macedonia has been left without access to EU databases for input and comparison of data on migrants and foreign terrorist fighters; there is a lack of cooperation among intelligence services, all of this in circumstances of a negative media perception when it comes to the implementation of the decisions of the Union.

Despite the internal political crisis, Macedonia proved that it had stable institutions in the management of the migrant crisis and reducing security risks.

In this sense, I wish to convey a message to the European Union: Macedonia needs help in order to help you.

You cannot protect your external borders unless you secure the corridors encompassing the countries outside of the EU.

Macedonia will act to protect national security. Any solution that involves housing migrants and creating refugee camps in non-EU member countries will not be sustainable and cannot be allowed. We do not have capacity or resources to deal with the expected volume of migrants alone. State instability would be highly likely in such a case.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today in Europe, courage is expensive and rare. Macedonia has shown it has the courage to face the threats in a permanent political crisis.

**The following challenge we need to tackle is the one of mega cities and their diversity.**

**Tolerance for diversity must be substituted with respect for diversity.**

**Thank you.**