

**Fourth Ministerial Conference of the Prague Process**  
**“Migration Partnerships – Way forward in the times of new challenges”**  
**24 – 25 October 2022, Prague, Czech Republic**

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*Prague, 24 October 2022*

Mister Chairman, Dear Commissioner, Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to once again thank you for inviting ICMPD to participate in the fourth Prague Process Ministerial Conference. It is a great honour to be here today, but also a great honour that we were able to support our Member State, the Czech Republic, during the Presidency of the European Union and in preparation of this important meeting.

Our world is in a serious situation, in terms of the geopolitical situation but also in terms of migration, flight and displacement. War and instability, a severe energy and supply crisis, natural disasters linked to climate change and the continued effects of the Covid-19 pandemic affect us all and have displaced more people than ever since the end of the Second World War. No country and no region will be able to solve the challenge alone. This makes it even more important to invest in partnership and cooperation. Migration dialogues are a key instrument in this regard, as is acknowledged by the EU's New Pact on Asylum and Migration as well.

Since the first Ministerial Conference in 2009, the Prague Process strives for achieving exactly this. It always tried to link migration dialogue, policy-making and very concrete operational cooperation. And it always based this cooperation on the principles of partnership, of carefully listening to each other and of respecting each others' priorities and challenges.

Today, we have to integrate these principles in our thinking on crisis-response and on crisis prevention. We have seen that situations develop faster than in the past, and that they come from directions that we cannot always anticipate and prepare for.

At the same time we have to continue or joint work in the more traditional fields of migration governance. I think we all agree that the Prague Process has supported remarkable progress in all of its six pillars – the fight against irregular migration and migrant smuggling, the promotion of readmission, return and reintegration, mobility and labour migration, integration, international protection and the link between migration and development. The Joint Declaration and the Action Plan, that we discuss today and tomorrow, are a vivid proof of the

achievements made so far and a more than solid basis for the way ahead. More than 50 concrete priorities have been developed by the Prague Process partners, regarding broader policies but also addressing the many details and little steps that are necessary to make these policies deliver on the ground.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am convinced that this Ministerial Conference will be an important milestone along this path. Today and tomorrow provide a great opportunity to deepen and broaden our partnership, to have frank and honest discussions and to take an important step forward. At ICMPD, we hope that our work as Secretariat has made a small contribution to the achievements of the Prague Process and will continue to do so in the future as well. Let me conclude by thanking once more the Czech Republic, all Prague Process partners and the European Commission for their continued support and cooperation.

Thank you.