

**TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

United Nations Secretariat

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**INPUT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION TO THE  
TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION WITH A SPECIAL  
FOCUS ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE  
2013 HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>**

*International Labour Organization (ILO)*

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

The International Labour Office hopes that the 2013 UN High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development (HLD) will result in recognition by the international community of migrants' contributions to economies and societies and in recognition of the centrality of the world of work in relation to international migration and development.

It is a well-known fact that much migration today is driven by the search for employment and most of it is linked to the world of work, directly or indirectly: families accompany workers to foreign countries, training and educational opportunities abroad lead into employment, changed patterns of labour force participation and social reproduction in one place set off migration flows from another, etc. However, in circles dealing essentially with migration, the important links between migration and labour markets, including the quantity and quality of jobs in both sending and receiving countries, and the contribution of labour market policies to growth and development are often ignored or not well understood.

The ILO undertakes activities that are at the intersection of migration policy making and labour market issues and will contribute to the HLD in this area. Based on its constitutional mandate and the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, the focus will be on the four strategic objectives of respecting and promoting fundamental principles and rights at work, employment creation with decent work conditions, developing and enhancing social protection measures, and promoting social dialogue, all of which ILO recognizes as inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive. Knowledge development, dissemination of information, and the promotion of standards protecting migrant workers will all be tools used in this respect.

The International Labour Organization has a unique tripartite governance system where workers' and employers' organizations have decision making power along with governments, and this system has the value added that decisions usually reflect the realities of the world of work. In the area of migration, the International Labour Office (as the secretariat of the Organization) seeks to make sure that the social partners are involved in migration policy making, including at the national and local level, not only internationally; and capacity building of workers' and employers' organizations as well as Ministries of Labour (and other government entities where appropriate) is undertaken to this effect.

Specific products on the ILO's workplan for 2012-13 which could be used as background materials and tools for the HLD include the following:

- An important topic for the ILO are migrant workers' rights, in particular equal treatment with local workers to avoid situations of social dumping and labour market segmentation along the lines of nationality or ethnicity which, in turn, impedes possible gains from labour force diversity, and may even provoke social unrest. In preparation of the 2013 HLD, the ILO will bring out a report on "An International Framework on Non-Discrimination, Equality of Opportunity and Integration". This report will provide a critical perspective on the policy paradigms informing the problem of discrimination against migrant workers and their families. It will offer an overview of laws, policies, and practices supporting their social inclusion and should serve as a resource for

social justice efforts, wherever and however they unfold. It is intended as a global roadmap for action.

- Similarly, a guide titled “A Framework for Action on Maximizing the Contribution of Women Migrant Workers to Development”, to be published in 2012, will be an ILO input to the HLD. This Framework aims at advancing knowledge on the nexus between migration, gender equality and development. It will include best practices and recommendations to governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations as well as other stakeholders on how to maximize the potential contribution of women migrant workers to development, in particular by enhancing their protection.
- As concerns the issue area of social security, in the time up to the HLD it is planned to disseminate materials produced under a project on the extension of social security coverage for migrant workers in African countries; as well as a publication that appeared at the end of 2011, dealing with the protection of the social security rights of migrant workers from an international standards perspective, and the principles and practices of social security agreements and their implementation.
- Under the Millennium Development Goals Fund, ILO is involved, together with IOM and UNICEF, in a project on youth employment and migration. This project consists of case studies on the current youth employment and migration trends, policies and programmes affecting fourteen selected countries that span every region of the world, with a view to delivering a final global report that would contribute toward improved policy mechanisms in the youth employment-migration nexus. The project, in its entirety, should bear fruit in time for the HLD.
- The ILO is also committed to continue work under the EC-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (EC-UN JMDI) in partnership with UNDP, IOM, UNFPA and UNHCR. The EC-UN JMDI brings together actors across the world who work on the migration-development nexus; provides financial and technical support for the implementation of their concrete initiatives; and formulates new policy tools to deal with the links between migration and development, both in migrants’ origin and host countries. The EC-UN JMDI with its multi-stakeholder approach should not be ignored at the HLD.
- Results from a conference on “Global Talent and Development” and from a research project on “Migration, Scientific Diasporas and Development” should feed into the HLD, examining the conditions under which contributions of highly-skilled migrant workers to development both in their countries of origin and destination can be maximized and unpacking institutional issues in this respect.
- Subject to funding, the ILO will launch studies (empirical research) that will assess the skills components of a number of temporary labour migration programmes. These studies should permit to improve the design of temporary migration programmes as well as draw lessons for sectoral skills development schemes. From the ILO’s perspective, the migration and development link of

temporary labour migration programmes should go beyond remittances and filling labour market gaps. These schemes should also ensure adequate protection of migrant workers' rights and their equal treatment with nationals, and enhance human development for the migrants, e.g. increase their employability, as well as more and better quality jobs in economic sectors where this migration takes place.

- Further outputs will be produced and contributions made under the GFMD process.

### Contributions to the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2011 and 2012

2011:

The International Labour Office contributed to a number of the thematic meetings which took place during the course of 2011 leading up to the Concluding Debate. ILO officials provided technical support to the preparation of several of the thematic meetings, and contributed as speakers or participants.

ILO was represented at the meeting in Abuja, Nigeria providing technical inputs to the discussion on South-South labour migration. ILO provided technical inputs as speakers on the topic of migrant domestic workers in the meetings in Kingston, Jamaica and Accra, Ghana. Presentations were in particular centred around the new international standard on domestic workers, Convention 189 adopted at the ILO International Labour Conference in June 2011. Inputs were provided to the preparation of the meeting taking place in Chisinau, Moldova on mainstreaming migration and ILO specialists participated and made presentations at the meeting. ILO was represented by specialists participating as expert discussants from ILO offices in Dhaka and Beirut for the meeting on lowering the costs of migration which took place in Dhaka. A team of cross-sectoral and regional experts from the ILO participated at the Dubai meeting on recruitment of workers for overseas employment, and ILO experts were also speaking at the meetings in Bern and Istanbul. For the GFMD meeting in Manila, the Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) made a presentation on the Migration Information System in Asia (MISA). MISA is developed in close collaboration between the Scalabrini Center and ILO. The presentation focussed on the aim of the MISA project; to establish a regional data base and a system for the reporting, updating and dissemination of government-generated international migration data.

ILO provided technical assistance as requested by the organizers for the planning of the Civil Society Days. ILO was represented by the Chief of the International Migration Branch as one of the discussants in the Opening Debate of the meeting and an ILO migration specialist participated as a resource person in the discussion on rights-based labour migration policies.

At the Concluding Debate, the ILO Regional Migration Specialist for the Arab States participated as a discussant in the Common Space, talking on the issue of sustainable development, job creation and safe and legal avenues for migration. ILO representatives provided technical inputs on the issue of domestic workers and the new ILO Convention 189 on domestic workers in the roundtable discussing Global Care Workers at the Interface of Migration and Development.

2012:

In 2012, the ILO will continue to make contributions to the GFMD process under the auspices of the Global Migration Group (GMG). As concerns the thematic work programme currently proposed by the Government of Mauritius as GFMD Chair, a number of topics are especially relevant for the ILO. Roundtable 1 on Workers' Mobility for Inclusive Development, which looks at skills development and recognition and supporting migrants as agents of change, is at the core of ILO concerns. And the same can be said about Roundtable 4 on Gender, Human Rights and Migration, dealing among other things with the protection of migrant domestic workers and explicitly referring to ILO Convention 189. In relation to domestic workers, the ILO plans to organize a number of regional meetings to advance knowledge about and promote the ratification of C189. Although these regional gatherings will deal with larger issues than migrant domestic workers, these meetings could certainly make a contribution to the 2012 GFMD.

The ILO will use its office in Madagascar, responsible for the sub-region that includes Mauritius, particularly to ensure that the social partners are being informed about the GFMD process and can participate to the largest extent possible.

#### Discussion of new initiatives in the area of international migration

The ILO would like to propose a discussion on the role of the Global Migration Group (GMG), on how to possibly strengthen it and transform it into a true coordination mechanism. The ILO would find it useful if the GMG were given statutes beyond the current common law rules, e.g. concerning the chairing process of this Group.

Members of the GMG would need to discuss issues of accountability and of responsibility. The GMG is composed of agencies with different legal natures and whose composition of their highest decision making bodies is quite dissimilar. Some are members of the UN system, others are not. Among the members of the UN system, some are sub-organizations directly reporting to the UN Secretary-General whereas others are specialized agencies with distinct governing structures.

In terms of responsibilities, the ILO would like to suggest that it be clearly established which are the lead agencies on what issues, in accordance with the mandates of the respective organizations. This would ensure that the best expertise is applied to the different aspects of the migration phenomenon, and it would help agencies to effectively accomplish their mandate.

It would perhaps be interesting to create a common GMG fund from which joint products (events, publications) could be paid; and it would be good if the agency chairing the GMG would receive financial support from this fund (e.g. the equivalent of a full time P staff at standard costs for 6 months). Agencies chairing the GMG should however be free to choose their support staff; ILO would not consider it useful to have a permanent secretariat staffed by personnel who are not familiar with the structures and working methods of the various agencies.

MIGRANT, 3 February 2012