

**39<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and  
Development**

**New York, 4 April 2006**

**Item 4 – General debate on national experience in population  
matters: international migration and development**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg,  
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations**

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, I would like to acknowledge the good work done by the Commission on Population and Development in the last two years. We are also convinced that the information and conclusions contained in the reports to this 39th Session can be of great use for policy makers, researchers and non-governmental organisations. They could also serve as a useful roadmap for further discussions on international migration and development at the relevant multilateral *fora*.

Mr. Chairperson,

Brazil is committed to explore ways to deal with international migration-related issues. The very formation of our nation rested on substantial inflows of people coming from every horizon. We have always sought to promote the integration of those various ethnicities and cultures, recognising the value derived from this encounter.

It should be noted that since the 1980s there has been an inversion of the migratory flow. As a result, although we still receive immigrants in smaller number, there is, today, a net outflow of migrants from Brazil.

The main conclusions of the Secretary-General reports for this session coincide with the positions adopted by the Brazilian Government in regard to international migration and development. We consider that international migration is a genuinely global issue, which constitutes a pivotal component of the development agenda, encompassing issues that offer opportunities but also pose formidable challenges that must be dealt with in a cooperative way.

Available data point to the need to renew the international community's commitment towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, thereby creating jobs and ensuring appropriate social and economic conditions that, together with security, will ensure that migration derives from personal decisions and preferences and not from economic or security needs. To that end, although developing countries are primarily responsible for and must take the lead in regard to their own development, a global partnership is required, as spelled out in the World Summit Outcome document.

Another concern arising from the data compiled for this session is the existing asymmetry in terms of the degree of liberalisation of the different factors in the world economy. Contrarily to what takes place in the markets for goods, services and finance, there are considerable barriers to the free flow of people. Nevertheless, in those cases where the policies adopted by destination countries are selectively more favourable from the point of view of potential migrants, developing countries are negatively affected by the so-called brain drain. We are also concerned about the situation faced by migrants in regard to the respect of their human and labour rights. We look forward to fruitful discussion on these and other issues, with a view to the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development to take place at the commencement of the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairperson,

Brazil is making serious efforts towards the integration of immigrants. We are also seeking to improve the assistance to Brazilians living abroad.

On these matters, a new legislation is under final review by the Brazilian Congress. Once adopted, it will facilitate the permanence of foreigners in the country as well as the issuing of visas for those wishing to move to Brazil. Additionally, the new law ensures

access to medical and educational public services to immigrants, in a spirit of respect for the human rights of migrants, including their social and labour rights. In doing so, we are acting out of the belief that, regardless of the migratory status of an individual, the State in which the worker is performing productive activities should be able to ensure minimum international standards.

We are also starting to implement the consular registration of Brazilian citizens living abroad, inspired in a successful initiative by the Mexican Government. This will enable consular authorities to issue an I.D. that will help the government to better assist Brazilian citizens living abroad. A pilot project is being implemented by the Brazilian Consulate in Chicago.

Mr. Chairperson,

We remain committed to the exploration of ways to reduce the costs of remittances, facilitate their flow and encourage opportunities for development-oriented investment by their legitimate owners. Those objectives were also spelled out by the General Assembly through the adoption, by consensus, of Resolution 60/206 (“Facilitation and reduction of the cost of transfer of migrant remittances”). My delegation was a co-sponsor of the said resolution and looks forward to its follow-up.

Some Brazilian banks are seeking ways to facilitate migrant remittances and to improve the access of poor families to financial services in the country.

We consider that countries of destination also benefit from the prosperity induced by the work of migrants. Those countries benefit from the availability of both low-skilled and highly skilled labour to supplement their human power deficit. In both cases, migrant workers contribute decisively to the economic, social and cultural development of destination countries.

Brazil is also carrying out various negotiations on a bilateral basis with those countries to where substantial numbers of national citizens have emigrated, with the aim, for example, of seeking solutions in the area of social security in order to preserve migrants’ pension rights if they eventually choose to move back to Brazil. In our regional context, Mercosul adopted the 2004 Declaration of Santiago, which aims at ensuring the rights of migrants in the South American region.

Furthermore, programmes with the objective of providing advice to returning citizens who wish to establish new businesses with the resources accumulated during their permanence abroad have been developed. The Brazilian Service of Support to the Micro and Small Enterprises (SEBRAE), a non-profit organisation, is developing projects with Brazilian migrants who have returned from Japan.

The Brazilian Ministry of Labour and Employment is implementing innovative mechanisms to facilitate the direct foreign investment of small and medium scale from individuals who wish to invest in the country. These mechanisms have already bore fruits in terms of income generation and employment and have only been made possible because of the recent flexibilization of immigration laws.

Mr. Chairperson,

Brazil supports the promotion, by the UN, of studies that highlight the existing connections between international migration and gender concerns. Women and children are especially vulnerable groups that require policies that take into account their singularities and needs. During the recent session of the 50<sup>th</sup> CSW, our delegation reaffirmed its position that women and children should be given access to fundamental rights, such as health and education services, in the context of international migration.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the importance of dealing with international migration in a multilateral context, through inclusive and participatory processes. Unilateral measures may ignore basic rules of human rights, including social and labour rights, of migrants. We believe that migration policies should not be linked to security concerns only and that the preservation of migrants' rights should be the cornerstone of any multilaterally-inspired policy.

In that context, my delegation considers that the very fact that the discussion of these complex matters is taking place at the United Nations is significant in itself. Given the complex challenges presented by international migration, both destination and origin countries should cooperate in order to seek negotiated solutions for migration issues.

We look forward therefore to working with all delegations in the discussion of those important issues, in preparation to the September High-Level Dialogue.

Thank you.