



THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**OPENING REMARKS AT INFORMAL INTERACTIVE
HEARINGS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF NON-
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

New York, 15 July 2013

**Mr. President,
Special Representative of the Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Thank you for inviting me to be with you today. The Secretary-General who is on travel, sends his best wishes for you and this important meeting.

Seven years ago, I presided over preparations for the first High-level Dialogue on international migration.

It turned out to be a milestone event, a true “game-changer”.

For civil society, it signalled a new era of constructive engagement with Member States.

And for Member States it demonstrated that migration could be widely and deeply debated at the highest level.

We now have a global forum for informal dialogue and cooperation on this critical issue. And the United Nations system is working ever more closely with the International Organization for Migration.

The benefits of migration can only be fully harnessed, and the situation of migrants tangibly improved, if we establish sustained and strong partnerships as well as strategic cooperation between different actors.

The role of civil society is fundamental.

Labour unions and employers' organizations play a critical role in immigration reform.

Advocacy groups ensure that the voices of migrants are heard and heeded.

Diaspora organizations are showing us the the diversity of many contributions which migrants can make to societies.

And the academic community has greatly contributed to refuting long-held myths and prejudices by grounding the migration debate in evidence. "Knowing the facts is the source of wisdom", a Finnish President once said.

The challenge is to share this evidence with the public at large to dispel negative perceptions and often-stated stereotypes.

We need to engage the media to make the public and policy makers aware of the vital and positive role migrants can play in helping build and invigorate nations, economies and cultures.

**Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would also like to highlight the importance of migration for the post-2015 UN development agenda.

The 2013 General Assembly High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development is an opportunity for Member States to lay the foundation for improved local, regional and international migration policies which could form part of the post-2015 development agenda.

I commend your proposal to consider the High-level Dialogue as the beginning of a five-year action agenda, with benchmarks and indicators to monitor progress.

International migration is a complex set of issues which call for comprehensive and collaborative solutions.

By definition, no government can address the migration issue alone.

Migration affects every region, with movements from South-to-South as significant as those from South-to-North.

We need a reshaped and reinvigorated global partnership where the contributions of migration flows help create jobs, trade and wealth.

I see five areas of priority.

First, we must improve engagement within and cooperation between States.

Second, we need to ensure that migration policies are based on facts. We must therefore continue to strengthen research and data gathering.

Third, we must promote the integration of migrants into our societies and our economies.

Fourth, we need to coordinate our national migration policies to ensure that labour market and development considerations are taken into account when planning future migration. This means that we are to mainstream migration into national sectoral policies and plans.

Fifth and finally, we must develop a framework for managing migration from countries and regions affected by crisis and violence.

Friends in civil society, you work with migrants on a daily basis – helping them to find a home, a school, a doctor or legal representation.

You are fighting for equal treatment and fundamental human rights and labour rights for more than 200 million international migrants.

This meeting is your opportunity to be heard by Member States, to share your insights, and, not least, to give our discussions a human face.

Migration is a reality of the 21st century.

More people live outside their countries of birth than ever before.

Migration is a truly global challenge which requires a global response.

We need a coherent, humane, rights and facts-based global agenda which addresses the realities of this “era of migration”.

Today's meeting can substantially contribute to this objective, to this crucial task.

I wish you fruitful discussions and look forward to your contribution in October -- and beyond.

Thank you.

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