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**SIXTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

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**ACTIVITIES OF ESCAP IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL  
MIGRATION**

*United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*

## **Activities of ESCAP in the Area of International Migration**

The issue of international migration continued to receive high priority in the work of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). In recognition of the complex linkages between migration and development, particularly the contribution of international migration towards poverty alleviation and overall socio-economic development, ESCAP continues to promote better understanding of the phenomenon and further cooperation in migration management at the regional level.

### *1. Activities relating to the 2006 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and the 2007 Global Forum on International Migration and Development*

ESCAP, at its third session of the Committee of Emerging Social Issues held in Bangkok, from 12 to 14 December 2006, considered “Regional Challenges in Managing Migration for Development” as one of the agenda items, and examined key issues of international migration in the ESCAP region. The Committee reviewed the activities undertaken by ESCAP in advance of the High-level Dialogue as well as the outcome of the Dialogue. It was also informed of the establishment of the Global Forum. The Committee recognized international migration as an emerging cross-border issue in the Asian and Pacific region, and requested ESCAP to coordinate regional follow-up actions to the outcome of the High-level Dialogue. It urged ESCAP to provide a forum for regional dialogue and to facilitate discussions on the multidimensional aspects of international migration and its linkages with development. To this end, the Committee called for the establishment of a regional consultative process on international migration and development.

As a follow-up activity to the High-level Dialogue, the ESCAP Commission, at its sixty-third session held in Almaty, Kazakhstan from 17 to 23 May 2007, considered the challenges and opportunities of international migration and development, with particular emphasis on the situation in least developed countries, land-locked developing countries and small island developing states. The topic was vigorously discussed among the delegations of ESCAP members and associate members. The Commission adopted a resolution on international migration and development which provided further mandate for the work of ESCAP and called on the secretariat to compile and analyze information on international migration, continue to provide a forum for dialogue among members and associate members and to convene a high-level meeting on international migration and development, preferably in 2008<sup>1</sup>.

In view of the first Global Forum on International Migration and Development, held in Belgium in July 2007, the Asia-Pacific Conference on International Migration and Development took place in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, from 25 to 26 June 2007. The meeting was organized and hosted by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea in collaboration with ESCAP and International Organization on Migration (IOM). Bringing

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution 63/7.

together the representatives of 26 countries in the ESCAP region, the conference saw vigorous exchange of views, concerns and experiences in migration management. The discussion centred on the topics of the Global Forum; namely, 1) inter-linkages between international migration and socio-economic development; 2) remittances and diaspora resources as tools for development; 3) promoting partnerships and policy coherence. The outcome of the conference, in the form of a Chairman's Summary, was forwarded to the Global Forum, ensuring the expression of Asia-Pacific perspectives and concerns.

## *2. Research and training*

The social dimension of international migration, despite its importance, often receives marginal focus in the migration debate as well as in policy framework. Hence, ESCAP will be publishing a study entitled "Social implications of international migration in Asia", as an issue of the Asia-Pacific Population and Social Studies series. The study will explore the impacts of international migration on family and children, gender roles and health. It will also discuss the growing trend of international marriages. The forthcoming ESCAP Economic and Social Survey 2008 will also devote a chapter on social dimensions of international migration.

ESCAP is also taking a lead in a situation analysis, being undertaken by the Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration, including Human Trafficking. The Group has conducted research on the situation of international migration in East and South-east Asia and plans to publish it as a report, with a view to making available to policy makers and practitioners a comprehensive reference material and policy recommendations. The publication will provide an overview of the multidimensional aspects of international migration, thereby indicating the scope and status of knowledge on the issue. It will also provide a regional perspective on migration, including comparative information and statistics, and covering cross-cutting thematic topics such as gender, health and regional cooperation.

Using the information gathered for the above-mentioned publication, ESCAP organized a workshop entitled "Policy Dialogue on International Migration and Development in East and South-east Asia" from 8 to 9 November 2007. Resource persons delivered lectures on a wide range of migration issues, in addition to country overviews presented by participations. Attended by senior government officials of 12 countries in the region, the meeting was an effective venue to enhance understanding of migration issues, promote constructive dialogue and exchange of good practices.

## *3. Collaboration with other international and inter-governmental partners*

ESCAP continued to coordinate its activities on international migration with relevant United Nations agencies and bodies, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and promote cooperation at the regional level. Since 2005, ESCAP has co-chaired with IOM the Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration, including Human Trafficking, whose members consist of 15 United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations. The group met four times in 2007 and shared

information on recent activities undertaken by the respective organization. As mentioned above, the Group is currently preparing a situation report on international migration in East and South-east Asia, drawing upon the expertise of member organization in the area of international migration.

On 20 June 2007, ESCAP formalized its long-standing collaboration with IOM on the issue of international migration by signing a memorandum of understanding. The agreement established a general framework for cooperation and coordination on international migration issues. It would also enable ESCAP and IOM to develop joint initiatives as well as harmonize their respective activities.