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**STATEMENT BY H.E MR. ISIKIA SAVUA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
DURING THE HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT
UNITED NATIONS, 14-15 SEPTEMBER 2006**

Mr. President,

This first multilateral attempt to address the issues of migration and development on a global level should begin the sustained constructive dialogue and cooperation to identify appropriate ways to accentuate benefits and remove deleterious factors.

Fiji supports meaningful efforts to promote a balanced and comprehensive approach to international migration and development, by building partnerships and ensuring coordinated actions to develop capacities, including the management of migration.

Mr. President,

The Secretary-General's report outlines a number of important observations. It identifies migration to be a key component of the globalization process. It also states that international migration is a constructive force for development, both in countries of origin and in countries of destination, and calls for sustained dialogue. We endorse the SG's sentiments that international cooperation is indeed crucial if we are to achieve a win-win situation through the establishment of a United Nations based Forum for dialogue on international migration.

We believe that such forum would stimulate Governments to look at the issues of migration and development in a holistic manner, and add value to activities undertaken at the bilateral and regional levels.

Mr President,

The complexities and inter-linkages between migration, development and security call for careful consideration of its impact. Migration policies should be focussed on comprehensive security and must be complementary to sustainable development policies.

Developing countries need pragmatic solutions to their development challenges to ensure the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We reiterate that poverty, population growth, under-development and lack of opportunities contribute to the 'pull and push' factors in migration.

Mr. President,

Remittances, one of the developmental impacts of international migration, and which has great potential as a development impetus, should be facilitated in a reliable, quick, economical and legal manner. The need to address and promote conditions for cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances should be seriously addressed. On the other hand, remittances should never be considered as a substitute for investment, trade, aid and debt relief to address the MDGs and underdevelopment.

Allied to this is the need to strengthen the Diaspora communities and ensure their involvement in the development process. Also important, and would require our continued attention are, amongst others, how to manage temporary labour migration; how to increase the benefits while mitigating the costs of the migration of skilled personnel; how to engage transnational communities in the development process of countries of origin; how to make return migration an asset; how best to collaborate in reducing and preventing the smuggling of and trafficking in persons; and how to benefit from the opportunities of the globalization of education and the prevention of the exploitation of migrants and the importance to foster a secure, regular and orderly process of migration.

Mr. President,

The dialogue must ensure that ample opportunities are accorded to migrants to ensure their rights and freedoms are not compromised. They should continue to be the focus of the migration debate. Women and children constitute the majority of migrants. They continue to be disadvantaged and this dialogue must adopt measures to reduce their vulnerability, exploitation and abuse.

Mr. President,

Migration is a global issue and will grow in importance. We must address it as such, neither downplay its significance nor ignore it completely as this will only worsen the already challenging situation. The success of the dialogue will depend on how we can achieve a win-win situation that benefits the migrants and account for the needs of both the countries of origin and destination.

Thank you.