

## I. REPORT OF THE MEETING

The Second United Nations Coordination Meeting on International Migration took place at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York from 15 to 16 October 2003. The meeting was organized by the United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The objective of the meeting was two-fold: (a) to share and exchange information on international migration, and (b) to facilitate the coordination of activities among various offices, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional organizations, as well as with national institutions working on international migration. The United Nations Coordination Meetings on International Migration have been organized in response to General Assembly resolution 56/203 of 21 December 2001 which calls on all relevant organizations to continue to address the issue of international migration and development.

Mr. Joseph Chamie, Director of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations, opened the meeting. He welcomed participants and recalled that the first Coordination Meeting, held in July 2002, had discussed issues related to the collection and exchange of information on international migration. He noted that this second meeting would focus on current international migration issues, namely, workers' remittances, undocumented migration and trafficking in persons, and the relationship between international migration and security. Those aspects of international migration had been selected for discussion not only because they had gained prominence in the migration debate but also because appropriate data relative to those issues and essential for policy formulation continued to be scarce.

Ms. Marta Roig, Population Affairs Officer at the Population Division/DESA, presented an overview of the main conclusions of the first Coordination Meeting on International Migration. She recalled that, given the scarcity of data on international migration and the increasing demand for those data, different institutions in the United Nations system had felt the need to exchange information on the activities to improve data availability that they were undertaking, so as to avoid duplication of efforts, enhance coordination and facilitate the exchange of information. Before the first Coordination Meeting, there had been no forum where all United Nations offices, agencies, funds and programmes with activities in the field of international migration could meet to discuss technical issues.

During the first Coordination Meeting, representatives of United Nations offices, agencies, funds and programmes described the relevant activities of their respective institutions, identified the most urgent needs in terms of information and statistics on international migration, and discussed the key challenges faced in obtaining or disseminating that information or data. Participants reached conclusions with respect to capacity building, methodology, research and coordination. It was felt that the main challenge for international offices, agencies, funds and programmes was to assist Governments in improving their capacity to produce international migration statistics and to facilitate the wide dissemination of those data. In order to foster the standardization of information, the use of the *United Nations Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1<sup>1</sup>* was endorsed although it was recognized that more work needed to be done to ensure that the framework presented in the Recommendations was well understood and could be used properly by the generators of statistics. The Coordination Meeting identified several emerging issues that required further research and participating institutions agreed that coordination of activities among them should be strengthened.

During the second Coordination Meeting on International Migration, additional presentations and discussions were organized into the following substantive sessions:

1. Recent activities on international migration at the United Nations.
2. Current issues on international migration.
3. Review of Activities on International Migration related to the Implementation of the Programmes of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XVII.4, 1998.

The following sections summarize the presentations made and the main points of discussion in each session.

#### A. RECENT ACTIVITIES ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

This session focused on the increasing saliency of international migration at the United Nations. Mr. Michael Doyle, Howard Brown Professor of International Relations at Columbia University and former Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, underscored the Secretary General's commitment to bringing international migration to the global agenda. Thus, the report of the Secretary-General on *Strengthening the United Nations: An Agenda for Further Changes*<sup>2</sup> identified international migration as one of the issues on which the United Nations had to deepen its knowledge, sharpen its focus and act upon more effectively.

Mr. Doyle noted that international migration was an integral part of globalisation, yet it had not received the concerted international attention that other aspects of globalisation, such as the trade of commodities, had received. International migration was on the increase, partly as a result of better and cheaper transportation that facilitated mobility. International migration was the source of opportunity for all actors involved, although it also posed some problems. A particularly worrying aspect was the increase of undocumented flows, often involving smuggling or trafficking in persons, activities that were very profitable for those who organized them.

International migration flows were not expected to abate in the foreseeable future. Demographic changes, especially those stemming from population ageing, implied that many countries were already experiencing or would soon experience reductions in the potential support ratio and would likely face increasing demands for labour. Those changes were leading Governments to reassess their economic and social policies, including those related to the admission of international migrants. Receiving countries were already facing the challenges posed by cultural diversity and the need to integrate the international migrants in their midst. Given the continued outflow of persons in need of protection or asylum, receiving countries were interested in enhancing the mechanisms for burden-sharing. There was growing commitment to the coordination of actions to counter terrorism and rising interest in developing better ways to manage international migration.

Countries of origin had concerns of their own. They benefited from the flow of remittances but had not yet found the best way of channelling remittances to the promotion of development. They were also increasingly concerned about the loss of skilled personnel and the effects that such brain drain had on development. In countries of transit, the continued flows of irregular migrants, often involving smuggling or trafficking in persons, were causing social disruption.

Mr. Doyle noted that there was no institution at the international level that addressed international migration issues in their entirety, both ensuring the respect for the rights of international migrants and facilitating international migration. In the United Nations system, the lead institutions dealing with different aspects of international migration were the ILO, which focussed on migrant workers, and the Office of the UNHCR, whose activities focused on the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was not part of the United Nations system, although its Executive Council was considering the possibility of joining the system.

Although the United Nations had made considerable progress in establishing norms relating to international migrants, mainly through the formulation of universal human rights instruments, there was still much to be done. For instance, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which had just entered into force, had not been ratified as yet by any major receiving country. Efforts to ensure a wider ratification of that Convention needed to continue.

Given this context, Mr. Doyle underscored the need for increased coordination and enhanced political leadership in the area of international migration. Coordination, he noted, was already improving, both at the

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<sup>2</sup> Report of the General Assembly, A/57/387, 9 September 2002.

technical level, as the second Coordination Meeting exemplified, and at the executive level with, for instance, the creation of the Geneva Migration Group, which brought together the heads of ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCR and UNODC.

Mr. Doyle stated that the Secretary-General would continue to foster coordination, highlight the opportunities arising from international migration, mobilize support to combat myths and misconceptions regarding international migration, and address the problems arising from it. Governments were already responding to the need to address international migration at the global level. In this regard, Mr. Doyle welcomed the initiative of the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland, in collaboration with other interested Governments, to set up an independent Global Commission on International Migration composed of individual experts and eminent persons serving in their personal capacity. The Global Commission was expected to start work in January 2004 and produce a report by mid-2005.

Mr. Doyle's presentation prompted a discussion about the challenges faced in addressing international migration at the global level, especially regarding ways of ensuring that the interests of all countries were well served. Participants noted that non-governmental organizations and the research community could play a useful role in assisting the United Nations to achieve the goals identified by the Secretary-General. The dissemination of findings from objective and unbiased research, for instance, could contribute to combat myths about the nature of international migration or its consequences. Representatives of United Nations institutions remarked that their institutions were already engaged in conducting information and education activities to dispel misconceptions about international migration.

Participants noted that, although a number of regional consultative processes had emerged, it was not clear how they might provide guidance at the global level. Drawing from the experience of the United States Commission on Immigration Reform, a participant underscored the difficulties of achieving consensus on the various issues related to international migration.

Mr. Doyle responded by noting that the ultimate goal was to find common ground between the interests of nation States and those of international migrants. Both the laws of States and the rights of international migrants had to be respected. Societies should be better able to benefit from international migration while at the same time providing opportunities to international migrants. It was important to educate the public on the positive aspects of international migration to begin building consensus. At the international level, the Global Commission would provide a forum for the frank discussion of issues so that gaps and shortcomings in current approaches to international migration could be identified and suggestions about how to address them could be made. The report of the Global Commission would be considered very seriously by the Secretary-General.

#### *The debate on international migration and development in the General Assembly*

Mr. Joseph Alfred Grinblat, Chief of the Mortality and Migration Section of the Population Division/DESA, reported on the discussion of the Report of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development (GA/58/98) by the Second Committee of the General Assembly on 14 October 2003. The Report presented, *inter alia*, the views of Governments about the possibility of convening of a United Nations Conference on International Migration and Development. Governments had been asked to provide their views on the issue three times since 1995. The most recent inquiry had resulted in responses from 47 Governments out of the 192 that were Member States of the United Nations. Among respondents, 25 favoured convening a conference and 22 expressed reservations. Given the high level of non-response, a definitive conclusion could not be reached regarding the convening of conference.

Nevertheless, Mr. Grinblat noted that the responses obtained should not be interpreted to indicate that concerns about international migration and development were waning among Governments. About 30 Member States had delivered statements on the topic during the debate of the Second Committee of the General Assembly and many had emphasized the need to discuss at the international level under the leadership of the United Nations the many aspects of international migration linked to globalisation and development. Some Member States also called on the United Nations to foster concerted dialogue among Governments, perhaps through the convening of a meeting or another type of special event.

In 2003, the Second Committee of the General Assembly had also discussed international migration under the agenda item on globalization and interdependence. Mr. Alberto Padova, Economic Affairs Officer of the Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination/DESA, introduced the report entitled “Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence”<sup>3</sup> considered by the Second Committee. The report examined, among other things, the linkages between international migration, trade and financial flows, especially workers’ remittances. It confirmed that globalization is a key factor driving the movement of people across borders. Therefore, international migration should be recognized as an important element in the overall management of globalization. Furthermore, facilitating international labour mobility would increase remittances and related financial flows to developing countries. In this regard, the temporary international movement of workers under mode 4 (movement of natural persons) of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) should be actively pursued during the Doha Round of trade negotiations.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Gonnot, Chief of the Inclusive Development Section of the Division for Social Policy and Development/DESA, presented an overview of the activities associated with the Third International Forum for Social Development held in New York from 7 to 8 October 2003. The theme of the forum was “International Migrants and Development” and its main objective was to foster dialogue on the topic. The forum consisted of two events: (a) a closed-door seminar attended by experts and representatives of Governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations, and (b) a debate open to all delegates attending the General Assembly. The Seminar focused on the human dimensions of international migration and shed light on the current situation of international migrants and the role of international cooperation in building an orderly regime for international migration. Mr. Gonnot noted that participants had agreed on the urgent need for all stakeholders to address the following gaps: (a) between reality and public perceptions; (b) between rhetoric, action and knowledge; (c) between the views of the North and those of the South; and (d) between the vulnerabilities of international migrants and the enforcement of their rights. The Forum concluded that the United Nations should assist by conducting research on international migrants—emphasizing their role as assets and actors in development—, by disseminating its findings, and by assessing how certain aspects of the issue, particularly the protection of the rights of international migrants, could be better addressed. The Forum also concluded that the United Nations should provide a forum for the discussion of those issues that could not be addressed adequately at the bilateral or regional levels.

During the discussion, some participants questioned the use of closed meetings, noting that the dissemination of findings, by being restricted, would have a limited impact. Others noted that closed meetings fostered a frank discussion of issues among those participating in their official capacity and helped in advancing the political debate. Participants also noted that current debates at the United Nations, as reflected in the reports of the Secretary General, had not fully addressed the development aspects of international migration which deserved more attention. The focus should be on strategies that maximize the benefits of international migration on development. UNHCR, for instance, always tried to ensure that short-term humanitarian assistance programmes could lead to longer-term development initiatives and was actively pursuing strategies to contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

## B. CURRENT ISSUES ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The second session of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of three key issues on international migration: (1) workers’ remittances; (2) undocumented migration, with special attention to human trafficking; and (3) international migration and security.

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<sup>3</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, A/58/394.

## 1. *Workers' Remittances*

Mr. Dilip K. Ratha, Economist of the World Bank, made a presentation on the role of workers' remittances. He showed that remittances to the developing world had increased steadily since 1975 and that they were less volatile than the flows of foreign direct investment (FID) or official development aid (ODA). Because remittances were used to provide direct support to families in developing countries, workers abroad kept them flowing even during periods of economic downturns, therefore their lower volatility. Mr. Ratha thought that remittances would continue increasing because more people were likely to seek employment abroad given the widening income gap between developing and developed countries, the effects of population ageing in developed countries, and the anticipated increases in short-term international mobility for the provision of services. In addition, security concerns and the fear of deportation among certain groups of international migrants, both of which had increased in recent years, seemed to be increasing remittance flows and the transfer of migrants' savings to countries of origin.

Mr. Ratha noted that migrant remittances were important revenue sources for developing countries, especially the least developed countries. The funds remitted by migrants did not create liabilities and increased directly the incomes of recipients, who usually used the money for consumption or investment. Indirectly, remittances could be a source of funding for education or public infrastructure. However, remittances might also finance unproductive spending and foster the long-term dependency of households on labour migration. The evidence indicated that migrant remittances increased inequality among households and that they might lead to currency appreciation.

Noting that remittances were often sent through informal channels, Mr. Ratha stressed the need to improve the banking system of countries of origin to facilitate its use by migrants and their families. It was equally important to improve the investment climate in the countries of origin. Informal channels for the transfer of remittances were popular because they provided secure, cheap and efficient services. Banking institutions had to increase their efficiency, reduce transaction costs and make their services accessible to migrants and their families, especially in the rural areas of countries of origin. International actors could assist the countries involved by providing information on best banking practices.

The discussion that followed focused on the measurement of remittances. Many aspects of financial transfers between migrants and their families in the country of origin were not reflected adequately in existing statistics. Available data on remittances did not distinguish between transactions made by skilled and unskilled migrant workers. It was generally thought that unskilled migrant workers were more likely to remit part of their earnings. The data available did not differentiate remittances made by refugees from those made by other migrants. Even in OECD countries, the accurate measurement of remittances had not been achieved and methods to estimate reliably the flow of remittances through unofficial channels were lacking. It was noted that the level of coverage of the statistics available depended on the reporting system and the classification of the data in countries of origin. Some countries classified remittance transfers under the category of "compensations of employees" in the national accounts, whereas others put them under the category of "workers' remittances". Participants concurred that the definition of workers' remittances in national accounts needed to be revised and that an effort had to be made to improve the international comparability of data on remittances.

Answering a question on the impact of remittances on development, Mr. Ratha noted that workers' remittances could contribute to a reduction of poverty in the communities of origin. Even small amounts of remittance income could have a major impact on the local economy of a community in a poor country. Yet the various ways in which remittances affected development prospects needed to be explored further. Household survey data, for instance, could be used to investigate what proportion of household income was constituted by remittances and how income allocation to consumption, education or investment was affected by the availability of remittances.

The representative of the International Migration Policy Programme (IMP) drew attention to a recent International Conference on Migrant Remittances, organized jointly by the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom and the World Bank, and held in London. The Conference was attended

by representatives of key institutions, including banks, international agencies and associations of international migrants. It was the first major conference of its kind and it reflected the growing interest in developing mechanisms to improve the flow of remittances and maximize their benefits. The Conference called for better statistics on remittances, particularly relative to African countries, and for policy-oriented research to assist in devising a global strategy to realize the development potential of remittances. Participants noted that remittances could provide a useful means of combating poverty, since they were channelled directly to families. Mention was made of the difficulty of ascertaining whether financial flows through unofficial channels represented remittances from workers abroad or included also money laundering and other illegal financial transfers. Since unofficial transfers were clearly useful in channelling remittances to families that needed them, it was suggested that unless formal transfer mechanisms were enhanced, security concerns alone were unlikely to lead to the disappearance of those informal channels.

## *2. Undocumented migration with special attention on human trafficking*

The presentations of three panellists introduced the discussion on undocumented migration and trafficking in persons. Mr. Laczko, representative of IOM, noted that trafficking in persons had gained visibility in the international agenda relatively recently. In the early 1990s, the term “human trafficking” was rarely part of debates on international migration. Over the decade, it had become a major concern for many Governments and a priority for those working in human rights, health, gender, law enforcement and social services.

Despite the growing attention given to trafficking in persons, information on the subject remained weak. Statistics on the magnitude of the problem were scarce. Existing data on trafficking often lacked comparability over time and between countries. Mr. Laczko explained that quantifying the scale of human trafficking had been difficult because until fairly recently an internationally accepted definition of trafficking in persons did not exist and national authorities did not give priority to combating human trafficking.

Ms. Emanuela Calabrini, Associate Legal Officer of the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)/DESA, discussed the problem of trafficking in persons from a gender perspective. She emphasized that the majority of those trafficked were women and children, two groups that were in need of special protection. Trafficking in women and girls for prostitution was one of the most serious violations of human rights. The issue of combating such trafficking had been addressed in both the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. DAW was in charge of reporting regularly to the General Assembly on advances made in combating that insidious form of exploitation.

Ms. Calabrini stressed that protecting the human rights of trafficked persons and promoting gender equality had to be at the core of any strategy to combat trafficking. National legislation related to trafficking in persons should conform to international human rights instruments, particularly in those respects. The problem in dealing with trafficked persons was that there was a fine line distinguishing them from undocumented migrants. Whereas undocumented migrants were persons who willingly accepted to pay and took risks to be transported across international borders, trafficked persons were victims of criminal groups and often found themselves in situations akin to slavery.

Ms. Lisa Kurbiel, representative of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), described UNICEF’s approach to the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly children. She noted that children who migrated under difficult conditions—as undocumented migrants, seeking asylum, or being trafficked—were very vulnerable. Consequently, any child who was smuggled, trafficked, seeking asylum or migrating illegally with or without guardians was of concern to UNICEF. Ms. Kurbiel pointed out the importance of dispelling confusion about the term “trafficking” in promoting policies to protect children. Despite the definitions established in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), the terms “trafficking” and “smuggling” were often used interchangeably. Consequently, trafficked children were often seen as young offenders by authorities, rather than as victims in need of protection. UNICEF worked closely with Governments to ensure that the necessary legislation was in place to provide protection for children who were trafficked.

The general discussion focused on the validity of available statistics on trafficking. It was thought that, because of its clandestine nature, trafficking in persons was unlikely to be easily measured in its totality. The best indicators of its magnitude were based on the number of apprehensions and the number of victims found. Authorities had an interest in protecting victims, since convictions of those responsible for trafficking depended on the testimony of those victims. Persons fearing retribution or under threat of deportation were unlikely to cooperate with the authorities.

In dealing with victims, it was not always easy in practice to distinguish between people who were smuggled and those who were subject to trafficking. For instance, undocumented Chinese migrants were transported to the countries of destination by syndicates who treated them as indentured workers, ensuring that they would get a job to repay the fees the syndicate charged for smuggling the worker. The worker was forced to comply because lack of compliance could jeopardize the well-being of relatives in China who were at the mercy of the syndicates. In some cases, the workers had to pay some sum in advance to obtain transportation but still ended losing the freedom to choose their place of employment. Under those circumstances, it was not clear whether the migrants involved were smuggled or trafficked. Furthermore, when the migrants involved were minors, would they be considered criminals or victims? It was thought that identifying who benefited from the act of introducing a person illegally into a country would help determine responsibility. Ms. Kurbiel underscored that it was crucial to catch minors before they were trafficked (that is, before they had left their home country) and were forced to engage in criminal activities.

There was interest on knowing what type of data on trafficking in persons were available and could be shared among different agencies. Panellists noted that UNESCO and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) had established systems to gather national data and had begun to work on improving the quality of information related to trafficking. IOM had developed a Counter-Trafficking Database and was compiling in a standardized way programme-specific information from IOM field missions working to combat trafficking. Exchanges of information on trafficking were already under way among relevant agencies and would be encouraged to expand. IOM was planning to organize an inter-agency meeting on trafficking statistics, tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2004 in Rome.

### *3. International migration and security*

The presentations of three panellists introduced the issue of international migration and security. Ms. Gallya Lahav, Associate Professor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, began by noting that the term security had many interpretations, ranging from the security of countries or nations to human security and the security of individuals. Although issues of security related to international migration were not new, there was as yet no consensus on the scope of the concept in the context of international mobility. Her talk focussed mostly on the growing security concerns in liberal democracies and their implications for international migration. She noted that Western liberal democracies were facing conflicting goals: to improve the functioning of global markets by removing barriers to movement, on the one hand, and to control borders so as to ensure security, on the other. As a result of the tension between the two, Western States were curtailing international migration and strengthening mechanisms to control it. Although the methods used were not new, they were being pursued with added vigour. These methods included: accelerated procedures to return undocumented migrants, the use of databases to identify expeditiously persons who should not be admitted, and a more thorough screening of visa applicants. In addition, States were developing closer cooperation with non-state actors who were effectively taking responsibility for the control of migration, including airline and hotel operators, university authorities, health-care workers and faith-based institutions. In Europe, agreements between the European Union and neighbouring countries had effectively created a buffer zone protecting EU countries from the direct arrival of undocumented migrants and asylum-seekers. The privatization of some of the aspects of migration control had facilitated the implementation of security checks while short-circuiting judicial constrains. Public perceptions about the importance of maintaining security had accelerated such developments and made possible the passage of laws or regulations curtailing certain civil liberties in the name of security.

Mr. Michael Teitelbaum, representative of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, began by noting that national security had traditionally meant freedom from an external threat of armed attack and freedom from internal threats to political, social and economic stability. From that perspective, there were many instances of

international migration movements that had posed threats to security and not only to receiving States. Countries of origin were legitimately concerned about the implications to their security of movements involving opponents of the regime in power who settled in neighbouring, often hostile, countries. Massive inflows of refugees or their massive repatriation could be destabilizing to the countries receiving the inflows. Furthermore, migrants sometimes engaged in activities aimed at destabilizing their country of origin—by launching cross-border attacks, for instance—or they were involved in carrying out attacks on third countries. In those cases, international migration might strain relations between countries of origin and those of destination or even with third countries. Despite these instances, security concerns in relation to international migration were often broader than the potential threats posed by migration and were not necessarily based on an objective assessment of threat potential. The debate on security issues was shaped by the perceptions of States or groups within their populations about their own vulnerability. Often, the views of elites and those of the public differed. The public was less apt to perceive the benefits associated with the presence of international migrants in the country. Anxieties were likely to increase when rapid changes in the size or composition of the migrant population were occurring.

Mr. Andrew Schoenholtz, Associate Professor of Georgetown University, discussed concrete actions that States might take to prevent terrorists from misusing legal channels to enter a country. He identified three tools to prevent the issuance of visas to terrorists. First, good intelligence should allow the identification of the terrorists by the time they applied for entry. Second, it was important to share intelligence among law-enforcement agencies within a country and among the appropriate authorities of partner countries to facilitate the expeditious screening of visa applicants. Third, biometric identifiers could be used for detection at the border. However, the latter task was very challenging since, in the United States alone, there were nearly 5 billion border crossings per year. Once terrorists entered a country, they were more difficult to detect. Yet, their detection could be more effectively achieved by targeting efforts, as the United States had done by focusing on the enhanced monitoring of persons admitted under student visas.

Mr. Schoenholtz considered how States could prevent a backlash against immigrants. After the attacks of 11 September 2001, a number of hate crimes against migrants occurred although there was no evidence that the groups attacked had been in any way connected to the terrorist attacks. Mr. Schoenholtz credited strong national and local leadership for controlling such reactions and protecting the rights of migrants. Leaders had the responsibility of persuading the public to see international migrants as valuable members of society and protecting them from abuse.

During the discussion, it was suggested that the notion of threat could be expanded to include a perceived threat from growing communities whose members spoke languages or practiced religions different from those of the native population.

The representative of UNHCR noted that the security needs of refugees were different from those other persons moving internationally, since refugees needed protection at different stages of their search for asylum. He regretted that asylum-seekers were increasingly being seen as potential terrorists. He emphasized that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees established that persons who had committed criminal acts had no right to asylum and were to be repatriated. Furthermore, refugees were subject to the national laws of the country of asylum, including those dealing with criminal activities.

It was widely recognized that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 had put the spotlight on migration control and the rights of foreigners. Since then, a number of studies on security and international migration had been completed. MPI, for instance, had analysed policy developments in the United States after the event, making a parallel with other historical events and assessing the impact of the changes made. The study had concluded that the new enforcement measures had not improved the security of the country. In addition, the U.S. General Accounting Office reported that it had issued a report to Congress on visa over-stayers and terrorism.

There was some discussion of the problems involved in gathering and exchanging appropriate information on international migrants for security purposes. Although it was generally agreed that sharing data and developing databases were useful and necessary tools in identifying terrorists or potential terrorists, concerns about privacy issues were raised.



C. REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION RELATED  
TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Representatives of participating institutions reported on the activities of their respective institutions in the field of international migration, highlighting their relevance in relation to the goals, objectives and actions called for in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The wide range of activities presented by the different speakers proved that interest in international migration issues and concrete actions to address them had grown very significantly since 1994, the year when ICPD was convened.

1. *Statistics on international migration*

Many representatives reported on new initiatives to gather statistics on international migration or improve their availability. Since the first Coordination Meeting, collaboration between certain institutions had been established or reinforced, and relevant data were being shared more widely. The IMILA Project—Investigation of International Migration in Latin America—of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which disseminated special tabulations on the foreign-born population enumerated by the censuses of Latin American countries, was in the process of updating its basic information by including the results of the 2000 round of censuses. The data available were posted on the internet.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was launching a project to compile data on the foreign-born or the foreign populations enumerated by the censuses of OECD countries. The aim was to obtain special tabulations on those populations according to a number of key variables. One expected output of this initiative was to obtain data on the number of expatriates of OECD countries living in other OECD countries. OECD was collaborating with the National Statistical Offices of OECD countries to obtain and process the relevant information.

The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) continued to expand its Migration Information Source, a web-based information hub focusing on the analysis and dissemination of international migration data. Provided suitable data were available, MPI was prepared to work on such issues as: a comparison of migration policies in EU countries; security and international migration, or the nexus between international migration and development. MPI relied heavily on the availability of data produced by others so its representative stressed the importance of improving the public accessibility to data.

The representative of UNHCR reported on the continued efforts made by the Office to improve the availability, quality and reliability of statistics on refugees and asylum-seekers. The data gathered by UNCHR with the aid of its field offices had become more detailed, containing classifications by sex and age, and were being disseminated on a more timely basis both through publications and via the internet. The data on refugees were useful for the analyses of diasporas.

It was recalled that the first Coordination Meeting had concluded that the *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration: Revision I* was a useful tool to guide the standardization of statistics on international migration. The United Nations Statistics Division reported that it was preparing a handbook on the collection and compilation of international migration statistics to provide a practical guide on how to implement the United Nations Recommendations. In addition, the Statistics Division, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), had organized a Workshop on Improving the Compilation of International Migration Statistics held in Geneva in 2003. It was noted that a Task Force on Statistics on International Trade in Services had been set up to address the need for statistics on trade in services, including under mode 4—movement of natural persons—of to the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

## *2. Initiatives to promote inter-governmental dialogue on international migration*

Participants reported on the creation or expansion of consultative processes to promote dialogue among stakeholders in the area of international migration. International organizations, such as the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and IOM had provided substantive and logistic support for the functioning of a number of consultative processes in several world regions. ICMPD had established an informal network of EU and Mediterranean States whose aim was to prevent irregular migration in the region. A consultative meeting among Ministers of the Interior of the countries concerned had taken place. Also in the Mediterranean region, IOM had facilitated the exchange of views among countries located on the southern and northern shores of the Western Mediterranean by convening a Ministerial Conference in 2002.

The League of Arab States had established a network consisting of representatives from Arab National Population Councils, Governments, and non-governmental organizations concerned with international migration.

The Berne Initiative, launched in 2002 by the Swiss Federal Office for Refugees, was described as a global consultative process for inter-State cooperation on migration management. Its goal was to provide a forum where States from all world regions could discuss their different policy priorities, identify their long-term interests in the area of international migration, and develop a common orientation to the management of international migration, based on co-operation, partnership, comprehensiveness, balance and predictability. In this regard, the Berne Initiative was trying to implement the blueprint provided by the ICPD Programme of Action. A Second Symposium on International Migration was being planned for 2004, being organized with the assistance of IMP, a member of the Steering Group of the Berne Initiative.

Better coordination and collaboration among international organizations with respect to international migration activities was being achieved by the establishment of an informal Geneva Migration Group, which met first in early 2003 and brought together the heads of ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCR and UNODC. The Group was planning to hold regular meetings. It was suggested that the heads of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations and of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) might also be invited to attend the regular meetings of the Group.

A number of regional and international conferences on international migration had been held in 2002 and 2003. In November 2002, ECLAC convened the Hemispheric Conference on International Migration: Human Rights and Trafficking in Persons in the Americas, organized in collaboration with IOM and seven international organizations. The main objective of the Conference was to strengthen cooperation among Governments with regard to international migration and to identify mechanisms to protect the human rights of international migrants, combat and prevent trafficking in persons, and contribute to the fulfilment of relevant international mandates and commitments, including the ICPD Programme of Action.

The League of Arab States convened a Regional Conference on Arab Migration in a Globalized World held in Cairo, Egypt, from 2 to 4 September 2003. Organized in collaboration with IOM, this was the first conference on international migration held in the region since 1990. The main conclusions of the Conference related to ways of improving the availability of data on international migration in the region; strategies to reduce the brain drain and foster the transfer of knowledge, and steps to rationalize national policies related to international migration while taking into account the regional context.

The IOM's Council provided a global forum to promote dialogue on international migration among the 101 Member States of the organization and its 37 States with observer status. In 2003 the theme addressed by the Council was "Migration in a Globalized World".

OECD and the European Commission organized an International Conference on the Economic and Social Aspects of Migration, held in Brussels, from 21 to 22 January 2003. The Conference analysed the social and economic challenges posed by international migration in relation to the demographic structure and the economic situation of OECD Member States, as well as their labour market needs, and the prospects for the integration of migrants.

The Metropolis Project had held its Eighth International Metropolis Conference in Vienna in 2003. The Conference attracted more than 300 participants, including representatives of Government—at local and national levels—international organizations, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations. The next Metropolis Conference, scheduled to be held in Geneva in September 2004, would include discussions on global security and the economic impact of international migration.

### 3. *Research on international migration*

Representatives of various institutions reported on research activities on international migration. The Center for Migration Studies (CMS), which had undergone a major institutional change, continued to be committed to promoting research on migration from an inter-disciplinary perspective mainly by publishing one of the best known journals in the field, *International Migration Review*.

The International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), a global scientific network of professionals in the field of population, was well positioned to contribute to the improvement of statistics on international migration and to carry out comparative studies on the determinants and consequences of international migration. The Union had produced major publications on international migration, including the book entitled *Worlds in Motion: Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium*. The Union provided objective and scientifically based research that not only increased understanding of the complex interrelations between international migration and other socio-economic processes but also helped dispel myths about international migration.

The OECD continued to focus its research on international migration, the labour market and migrant integration. The Department for the Advancement of Women/DESA was preparing a world survey on migrant women.

Participants underscored the importance of carrying out more research on undocumented migration and trafficking in persons. Transit migration was also thought to be a relevant topic that was not often studied. Nevertheless, it was recognized that all these topics could not be studied well due to the paucity of information and, at least in the case of transit migration, because of a lack of clear and measurable definitions.

There was broad agreement among participants that research on international migration had to be used as more than an educational tool. Research papers were plentiful and it was difficult to synthesize their findings and get from them practical conclusions that could guide policy formulation. Researchers needed to make an effort to disseminate any policy-relevant conclusions that their research might have. Adequate research to answer a number of policy questions was still lacking. Although it was recognized that the media had an important role to play in disseminating research findings or calling attention to them, it was also noted that the media had a tendency to simplify issues and might be misleading.

Towards the end of the session, Mr. Chamie posed three questions to the group: (a) “Is the international community moving forward on the issue of international migration?” (b) “How can we make results of research easy to reach?” (c) “What is this group’s particular concern in the area of international migration?”

In addressing these questions, many participants agreed that the relevance of international migration had changed quickly. In the early 1990s, international migration had received little attention at the United Nations and was generally perceived negatively. By 2000, international migration has become an accepted reality. The international community was increasingly focusing on the phenomenon and the United Nations was moving toward more effective ways of addressing the challenges posed by international migration.

In the United States, the approach towards international migration issues had changed dramatically since the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development was held in Cairo. In the ESCWA region, a similar transformation had taken place, as Governments gained a better understanding of the complexities of international migration and its related issues. A serious commitment to deal with the challenges posed by international migration was manifested, for instance, by the creation of a Ministry of International Migration in several of the North African countries.

Participants identified certain areas of concern that might be considered in future meetings. Data issues and the limitations and opportunities provided by existing data were still considered of major importance. Discussion of trends of international migration and recent changes in them was also of interest. In the area of policy, identification and description of best practices in the management of international migration would be useful.

It was further suggested that other institutions, particularly those dealing with legal aspects of international migration, might be invited to attend future Coordination Meetings. Furthermore, the participation of development agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme, was strongly recommended. Lastly, it was suggested that the next Coordination Meeting be held earlier in 2004 so that its outcome could feed into the process of consultations undertaken by the Global Commission on International Migration.

#### D. CLOSING

In the closing session, Ms. Keiko Osaki, Population Affairs Officer of the Population Division/DESA, summarized the main points of the Meeting and provided an overview of the discussions. After her presentation, the draft conclusions of the Meeting were reviewed and agreed to by the group.

Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for DESA, addressed the Meeting at its closing. He expressed his long-standing interest in international migration and said he would make international migration a key concern in the work of DESA, as it had been for ECLAC. He stressed that international migration was inextricably linked to globalization and development. Migration was important not only for North-South relations but also from a South-South and South-North perspectives. He noted that the work of DESA in the area of international migration included the improvement of statistics on international migration, the analysis of levels and trends of international migration, research on the root causes of international migration, trafficking in persons, workers' remittances, migration and security, and the integration of migrants. The brain drain and its impact on human capital was also a topic of importance. Mr. Ocampo stressed that DESA would increase its efforts to improve understanding of international migration issues in collaboration with interested partners within and outside the United Nations system.

Mr. Chamie reaffirmed the value of an open dialogue among concerned organizations, thanked participants for their interventions and closed the Meeting.

## II. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

Participants showed appreciation for convening the Coordination Meeting in conjunction with the debate on international migration and development at the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly because they were able to observe the debate and take note of the issues raised by Member States. Participants took note of the report of the first Coordination Meeting on International Migration and reaffirmed its conclusions. In addition, they expressed support for the following conclusions:

### **Coordination**

Participants took note of the General Assembly resolutions calling for the coordination of activities in the area of international migration. They agreed to continue convening coordination meetings at regular intervals to: (a) facilitate the coordination of activities within their respective mandates; (b) identify critical issues of concern, particularly for Member States; (c) share and exchange information; (d) foster collaboration; and (e) discuss future activities.

### **Information on international migration**

Participants stressed the importance of continuing to work toward improving the availability and dissemination of timely, comparable and comprehensive information on international migration, including statistical information on different types of international migrants, on asylum-seekers and refugees, and on workers' remittances.

### **Research agenda**

Participants expressed their willingness to assist Member States in their initiatives to investigate the issues raised by the nexus between international migration and development, including a better understanding of the root causes of international migration and its linkages with the globalization process. Participants expressed their interest to collaborate with Member States in developing and testing strategies that maximize the beneficial effects of international migration on development and that strengthen international and regional cooperation.

Participants underscored the importance of fostering the widespread dissemination of the results of analytical research, especially in the form of distillations or syntheses of key findings relevant for policy formulation.

### **Basis for policy development**

Participants reiterated the importance of analytical research to fill the information gaps identified by Member States. Collaboration among the bodies, agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions of the United Nations system, as well as with inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, was considered crucial in the process of identifying and documenting best practices that could provide guidance in policy development. Participants recognized the usefulness of debating salient issues on international migration so as to find ways of addressing the needs and concerns of Member States, particularly through research that is relevant for policy and the dissemination of reliable information.

Areas of policy relevance that were thought to require further attention were: (a) the analysis and quantification of migrant smuggling and trafficking; (b) transit migration; (c) the use of remittances; (d) migrant integration or adaptation; and (e) the implications of international migration for security.

To deal with those issues, participants recommended fostering collaboration between experts on international migration and those working on other areas, including statisticians working on trade in services involving the movement of natural persons (mode 4) or experts on border security.