

**FIFTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat
New York, 20-21 November 2006

**UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR
THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

(UN-OHRLLS)

The Programme of Action of the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 emphasizes a crucial importance of mobilizing domestic and external financial resources for achieving its objectives, goals and targets. Although the Programme recognizes that Official Development assistance (ODA) will remain critical for the development of LDCs it encourages them to promote innovative financial mechanisms and improve access of the poor to financial services.

The 2004 High-Level segment of the Economic and Social Council “Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme for the Decade 2001-2010” concluded that micro-finance intermediation (savings, credits and remittances) could have significant impact on poverty eradication and stimulate growth in LDCs. Furthermore, the Ministerial Breakfast Roundtable “Towards Enhancing the Development Impact of Migrant Remittances in the Least Developed” held within the framework of the High-Level segment has identified several priority areas for action by governments and other actors that could enhance the development impact of remittances in LDCs and improve remittance services.

As a follow-up to the 2004 ECOSOC High-Level segment and upon the request of Benin, Chair of the LDC Group, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized the Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) on 8-9 February 2006 in Cotonou. The two-day conference examined current flows, patterns and trends of the migrant remittances as well as policies and practices governing remittances in the LDCs and concluded by the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration¹ which proposed concrete and practical recommendations to all stakeholders, both in sending and receiving countries, on how to enhance the development impact of workers remittances in LDCs.

The Conference provided an important impetus both to the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development and the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the global midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

As a follow-up to the conference, the UN-OHRLLS and IOM prepared a joint publication which provided an overview of remittances in LDCs, a compendium of remittances practices in LDCs and included presentations of the participants. It also included the Ministerial Declaration of LDCs, the outcome document of the conference. The publication has been disseminated among all UN member states and observers.

In July 2006, the UN-OHRLLS, in collaboration with OSAA organized a Ministerial Breakfast Roundtable: “Migrant workers remittances in Africa and LDCs” and held a press conference during the 2006 ECOSOC substantive session. In collaboration with UN Regional Economic Commissions and OSAA, it also organized the roundtable on labour migration during the same period.

¹ Circulated by Benin as document A/61/230 under item 54 (b) of the provisional list of agenda of the 61st session of the General Assembly

Following the High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Dialogue, the UN-OHRLLS, in collaboration with the UNDP, is organizing a regional consultation with Diaspora on the remittances and development in Africa. The meeting is tentatively scheduled in January 2007 in Ghana. The main objectives of the meeting is to promote an inter-African dialogue on migration and remittances, develop practical recommendations to all stakeholders and assist UNDP in integrating migration policies in its country programmes.

Pursuant to the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference of the LDCs on Migrants' Remittances and within its mandate for the implementation of the Brussels Programme, the UN-OHRLLS will also assist the Government of Benin in the establishment of the International Migrant Remittances Observatory for LDCs which will serve the purpose of collecting remittances data, sharing information on remittances flows, trends and patterns, transfer mechanisms and service providers, lessons learned and best practices, as well as assist LDCs in remittance-related capacity building, research, analysis, policy making , with the view of improving their remittances services and facilitate access of the poor.