

**ADDRESS BY
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“WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP ON MIGRATION-RELATED
ISSUES: ACP PERSPECTIVES”**

**Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great honour and privilege for the ACP Secretariat to take the floor at this important International Symposium on Migration and Development, organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, in collaboration with the Fondazione Rosselli and with the support of the Italian Government. This Symposium comes at an opportune time, and indeed builds on preparatory work for the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, scheduled to take place in New York during the period 14 – 15 September 2006. The ACP Group will participate in this global event, and has all the intention to take up its rightful place in the global debate on migration.

I would like to thank the principle development partner of the ACP Group, the European Union, for the invitation to participate in this session on “EU policies on Migration and Development”. The ACP Group of States, the largest organised entity for developing countries with a membership of 79 covering the African continent, Caribbean and Pacific regions, and with an estimated population of over 700 million, has as one of its core objectives the alleviation of

poverty. This objective, coupled with the promotion of sustainable development, is also at the heart of our Cotonou Partnership with the EU, which interlocks 103 countries and represents the most advanced and innovative North-South formalised development cooperation arrangement.

Today, we are gathered here at a time when the global community faces numerous challenges, together with related effects and transformations at continental, regional and country levels. In a global partnership centred on human dignity and mutual respect, issues of Asylum, Migration and Mobility are central to the development of our countries, and indeed are cross-cutting issues to almost all the Millennium Development Goals.

Processes of regional integration around the world are putting the value and usefulness of state borders increasingly into question. Yet migration issues are still largely framed in Westphalian terms. While a liberal trade agenda is being pushed forcefully, the liberalisation of the movement of persons is still highly controversial. At the same time, we claim that liberalising trade is supposed to benefit (and reduce the poverty of) persons. The processes of globalisation and regional integration challenge us to think outside of the Westphalian paradigm of state borders and to think in terms of persons. This is what the concept of 'human security', in contrast to 'state security' is all about, yet we still need to apply it to our thinking on migration and mobility.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Population migration and mobility in ACP States is not a myth, but a simple and concrete fact. It has always been a feature in human development, and yet it has always been changing in time and context. Today, movement of people, forced or voluntary, legal or illegal, constitute an increasingly complex process owing to the inter-related twists of history, geography, economic systems, sociological mores and political ideologies. In recent years, the management of population mobility was too often limited to the regulation of international migration.

Population mobility is essential to migration issues, and migration and mobility constitute one of the major challenges to ACP States and their development partners. The intensification of the movement of capital, goods and services stimulated by an unprecedented growth in communication and transportation technologies, has accelerated population mobility and generated new patterns thereof. Poverty, political conflicts and war continue to adversely affect migratory flows.

These movements have contradictory effects: The existence of large numbers of migration workers brings socio-economic benefits to the host or countries of origin, but the presence of large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers indexes to the existence of political instability in the countries of origin. The ACP Group is committed to deal with all these migratory forms, especially within the framework of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, and notwithstanding the current trend in developed countries for articulating policies aimed at preventing the flow of people from ACP States.

Migration will continue to play a dominant role in the development process of ACP States. However, ACP States have to address the following challenges, and we need to:

- ensure that people are able to freely and safely exercise their right to move legally between places;
- fight against the phenomenon of illegal immigration;
- engage actively in political dialogue to address the challenges of population mobility;
- ensure the mobility of students and human resources to enhance capacity building for sustainable development in our States;

- identify solutions to the negative impact of brain drain; and
- enhance intra-ACP cooperation on issues related to migration and mobility.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addressing the afore-mentioned challenges, the ACP Group can ensure that migration positively influence development. The ACP Group of States is considering these issues in a coordinated manner within its institutional framework. In this regard, our Heads of State and Government have consistently underlined the need to follow closely the migration and development nexus in the formulation of development policies, programmes and projects. The Nadi and Maputo Declarations, adopted by the 3rd and 4th Summits of the ACP Group in 2002 and 2004 respectively, are a testimony to this fact as they have specific recommendations on this subject matter.

Our Ministers have also insisted on putting into place the necessary means to support capacities in ACP States for the management of migration flows. As such, they decided to create an ACP Migration Facility that will finance capacity building in ACP States to deal specifically with South-South Migration, and migration flows to Western countries. Under this Facility, the ACP Group will create a Migration Observatory that will assist the Group to, inter alia, collect and analyse data on migratory flows.

The ACP Group held the 1st Meeting of ACP Ministers responsible for Asylum, Migration and Mobility in Brussels on 13 April 2006. The main objective of this meeting was to formulate concrete ACP policies on Asylum, Migration and Mobility. To this end, ACP Ministers issued a substantive Brussels Declaration on Asylum, Migration and Mobility and a Plan of Action for its implementation. The 2nd ACP Civil Society Forum, which took place in Brussels during the period 19 – 21 April 2006, complemented the ACP position on Migration and Mobility issues, and underscored the importance of Non-State Actor involvement in the global debate on migration. Furthermore, the outcome of the Ministerial meeting will serve as a basis for the preparation of the ACP participation at the UN High-Level Meeting, and the ACP-EC Council of Ministers, held in Port Moresby on 01 and 02 June 2006, endorsed the presentation of a joint ACP-EU position on Migration at the UN-level.

I would also like to urge the organizers and the participants to collaborate closely with one of the joint Institution of the ACP-EU Partnership, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. The relevance of the Parliamentary debate on the issues at hand being

discussed, cannot be over-emphasized. To this end, the 11th Session of the JPA, which was held in Vienna during the period 19 – 22 June 2006, agreed to compile a comprehensive report and Resolution on Migration and Development that will be adopted during its 2007 Session in Germany. I encourage the involvement of Parliamentarians in the implementation of the recommendations that we will draw from the global debate on Migration and Development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to pose a few questions regarding the mobility of people. How many of us are living outside our countries of birth? How many of us are enticed or forced to migrate and eventually find means of subsistence outside our countries of birth? How many of us are willingly leaving our countries of birth to get a better chance to study, work, and settle in a new environment?

All these questions should not remain unanswered, and as such, the ACP Group is actively working at defining a common strategy that is people-focussed, based on alleviation of poverty and the eventual promotion of sustainable development. I am also a migrant, and so

are most of us. Therefore, we should all endeavour to develop policies and programmes that are focussed on the well-being of our peoples. This is why the focus of the global debate on Migration and Development is so important - to look at possible solutions in a new, innovative and, overall, **positive** way. Let us join hands, and together formulate concrete policies and programmes on migration and mobility that will complement efforts to effectively address poverty and the challenges of sustainable development.

**Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

All these activities manifest the commitment of the ACP Group in addressing the critical issues of migration in relation to sustainable development, and by implication addressing the MDGs. We are convinced that our close collaboration with the EU, will result in policies and programmes that are in the interest of all parties involved, and most importantly, our peoples

I thank you for your attention.

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