



UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
POPULATION DIVISION

SECOND COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Population Division organized the second Coordination Meeting on International Migration that took place from 15 to 16 October 2003 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The purposes of the meeting were: (a) to share and exchange information in the area of international migration and (b) to facilitate the coordination of activities among various offices within the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional organizations as well as national institutions concerned with international migration. The meeting was the second in the series. The first Coordination Meeting, which took place at the United Nations Headquarters in July 2002, focused on issues related to the collection and exchange of information on international migration.

The Coordination Meeting comprised three items: (a) a review of recent debates on international migration at the United Nations Secretariat; (b) a discussion of selected current issues of international migration; and (c) an exchange of information among participating organizations on their recent activities related to international migration. In the first item, participants were informed of the increased saliency of international migration at the United Nations Secretariat. The item included a keynote presentation noting that the Secretary-General identified international migration as one of the global issues that the United Nations should pay more attention, while welcoming the establishment of the Global Commission on International Migration as an initiative taken by the Governments. The session also reviewed recent debates on international migration at the United Nations General Assembly.

The second item of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of three current topics of international migration: workers' remittances, undocumented migration, with special attention to human trafficking, and the relationship between international migration and security. For each topic, presentations by experts and relevant organizations were followed by exchanges of ideas and relevant information among participants. The group saw that despite the growing attention that these issues have drawn, the understanding on the phenomena remains weak. Difficulty in obtaining the appropriate data and lack of standard concepts were common concerns raised by participants. Hence, the group called for better statistics and policy-oriented research on these aspects of international migration to devise a global strategy.

In the third item, representatives of participating organizations reported on their recent activities in the field of international migration. The wide range of activities presented by different organizations point to the fact that international migration has become an issue of central concern for the international community. Many organizations reported their new initiatives in data gathering, and their continuing efforts to improve the availability of data, especially by increasing collaboration with other offices that collect relevant data. The group also observed that efforts to create or expand the networks and dialogues among stakeholders in the field of international migration had grown. For example, the Geneva Migration Group was established in 2003 to bring together the heads of five international organizations active in the field of international migration. The League of Arab States convened in 2003 the first regional conference since 1990. Many organizations that participated in the meeting had also strengthened research activities on various aspects of migration as a means to gain a better understanding of the complex migration issues.

At the end of the meeting, participants reached several conclusions. Recognizing the usefulness of having open discussion among concerned organizations, participants agreed to continue convening coordination meetings at regular intervals. Participants also stressed the importance of continuing to work toward improving the availability and dissemination of timely, comparable and comprehensive information on international migration. With regard to the research agenda, participants expressed their willingness to assist Member States in their initiatives to investigate the issues in the area of international migration and development, and develop and test strategies that maximize the benefits of international migration on development. It was also agreed that collaboration among relevant organizations was crucial in the process of identifying and documenting best practices that could provide guidance in policy development.