

## IOM'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

*International Organization for Migration*

The debate over international migration has acquired in recent years a sense of urgency not perceived before. More than ever, the very nature of international migration is in question – is it primarily due to global economic disparities, or is it increasingly a response to globalisation? Is migration desirable, and should it be facilitated? Or is it undesirable and needs to be discouraged? Issues such as the mobility of labour in a globalized economy and the resulting consequences on host and origin societies due to increased human mobility, emerging population and demographic dynamics, as well as enhanced security concerns, including issues related to human security all contribute to the view that the collective capacity to “govern” the migration phenomena is not keeping pace with these fast evolving developments.

Though progress has been made to strengthen regional and international cooperation, including the development of new legal instruments, this does not appear adequate to address in a holistic and coherent manner the contemporary challenges posed by migration. International organizations can provide a platform to facilitate the shaping of a more comprehensive policy framework, overcome existing gaps, help clear misperception and support dialogue and confidence building. The High-Level Dialogue (HLD) called for by Resolution 58/258 of the General Assembly can build on a number of notable developments that have taken place since the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was agreed in Cairo 10 years ago. These include International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s International Dialogue on Migration, the Berne Initiative, and the Global Commission on International Migration,

### A. GLOBAL MIGRATION DEVELOPMENTS AND FUTURE TRENDS

Global migration and its developments can be summarized as follows:

- More people are on the move. Migration is increasingly affecting the lives of all people and governments as the number of people on the move continues to grow. Greater population mobility is being affected by increasing economic, political and cultural globalisation. Such globalisation, especially in relation to trade liberalization, global economic integration and electronic communication, has brought about a heightened awareness of life and work opportunities in other parts of the world. In addition, moving has never been easier, with significant advances in international transport.
- There are more types of migration. Patterns of movements, already complex and multidirectional, continue to change as circumstances at the global, regional, national, community and personal level change. Migration is becoming increasingly temporary and circular. There has been an increase in skilled migration, as well as an increase in temporary programmes for lower skilled migrant workers. There is more business migration, migration for study and research and migration for family reunification. Dramatic changes in the demographic make-up of the world's population can be foreseen.
- Migration is increasingly an essential, inevitable and potentially beneficial component of the economic and social life of every State and every region. Moreover, there is an emerging consensus that governments can and must manage migration through international cooperation and policy approaches that address all facets of this complex phenomenon. States are recognising that it is no longer sufficient to address individual aspects of international migration in isolation: they must be brought together in a comprehensive framework.

- International cooperation on migration is now firmly set in train and will increase, but not without disturbances. Countries sharing common interests along geographical and/or thematic lines will form or build on dialogue mechanisms, and these will evolve as interests and alignments change.
- Competition for highly skilled labour is increasing and will continue to do so. Demand for labour at all skill levels will also increase. States, businesses and migrants will need effective mechanisms to match labour needs with supply, and efficient support services to facilitate labour migration.
- Developing countries are increasing their attention to managing the economic and social impact of migration as they benefit from migrant remittances and networks built by their diasporas, but also as they seek to resolve the skills gaps left by departing professionals. The impact of migration on development—and *vice versa*—is also an increasing preoccupation of States, not only through their aid and development sectors, but also through their trade and financial sectors.
- Questions about belonging, dual/multiple nationality, circular migration and the extent of political participation for migrants in their countries of origin, or in countries of residence, continue to increase.
- Fewer countries are homogeneous in population. Multicultural societies are increasingly the norm rather than the exception.
- A significant trend in international migration has been the increasingly visible and diversified presence of women in the various migration categories. Moreover, population ageing in certain developed countries has heightened the demand for services often mostly provided by female migrants. This noticeable role and presence of women across the full spectrum of the migratory flows impact on the role of both men and women, on the families left behind and on the communities of immigration in general. As a result, attention to gender perspectives in the migration discourse has become more pronounced, in recognition that these new patterns may offer both opportunities for empowerment as well as challenges in specifically vulnerable migratory contexts.
- There is a certain degree of constructive friction already identifiable between the need for control and facilitation of movement for trade and business purposes. Security is a contributing preoccupation, which will increase the need for work on identification, verification and integration. The issue of balancing security concerns with due regard for migrants' rights is the one of current concern, as is that of international norms and standards regulating migration.
- The relationship between health and mobility is increasingly being recognised as key to public health in general. Mobility not only affects the health of the people on the move, but also the health of communities in which they stay, whether for long or short periods, and the home communities to which they return. The role of health in successful reintegration is also becoming better recognised.
- There will continue to be population movements caused by push and pull factors such as persecution, natural disasters, insecurity, (relative) lack of economic opportunity, environmental degradation or disaster, sea level rise, shortages of water or services, the attraction to urban areas for rural populations or any combination of these. Such movements, particularly when in large numbers, will often have a substantial impact on governments and communities, including social, health and security. Measures for population stabilization, movement of populations to safety, and return will continue to be needed. This is also likely to include post-emergency activities, such as the reintegration of people, be they refugees, displaced persons or demobilized soldiers. As part of negotiated settlements, there will be specific needs for programmes to compensate people for loss, for example, of property.
- As migration management becomes more effective, there will continue to be a need for advice, for facilitation of dialogue among thematically or geographically linked groups of countries. There will be an ongoing and increasing need for services in the area of labour migration, preparation of migrants through documentation, health, cultural orientation and technical cooperation in all areas of migration management. The links between trade, labour and migration, including their impact on development, will need to be further explored. Information gathering and dissemination will increase in importance for both governments and migrants for decision-making on migration issues.

As a contribution to discussions on how to effectively address the above issues, IOM has developed a schematic model for migration management which clusters migration management activities in the four broad areas of migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration, and addressing forced migration. Crosscutting activities include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants' rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration. IOM's own activities, including policy guidance, research, promoting international cooperation, capacity building and technical cooperation activities fall within each of the four boxes identified in the model.

## B. SUGGESTED THEMES FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

The High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration and Development can carefully build upon a number of governmental and intergovernmental initiatives which have been supported or promoted by the United Nations, IOM and other relevant institutions since Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, and could make use of the expertise, savoir faire and networks which have been developed in the course of these initiatives to prepare and organize the HLD, and pursue eventual follow up action if appropriate.

IOM in particular would suggest the following areas as useful themes on which the HLD could focus some of its deliberations.

1. The importance of moving from a uni-dimensional approach to **a comprehensive and cooperative approach to migration management** must be seen as a priority and has been a significant theme of IOM's approach to migration management for several years. Identifying essential component parts of a national migration policy is one important step in the development of a strategy to manage migratory flows. The development of a comprehensive approach would require consideration, among others, of policy elements such as: opportunities for legal migration, effective border management arrangements (for the security of borders, protection against crime, maintenance of the integrity of the asylum system), and acceptance and participation of migrants in the host society. But beyond that, the various component policy elements should be developed to take account of the impact one has on the other, and integrated into a comprehensive whole, capable of managing migration in an orderly manner. The HLD would provide an ideal opportunity for the international community to identify issues of common interest and to provide impetus for more effective coordination at the national level of the numerous government agencies involved in the migration management process. Beyond regional mechanisms, there is obviously an ideal opportunity to assess and consider progress achieved through the significant broader global processes mentioned earlier.
2. An increasingly important element of the Organization's work has been in contributing to better **understanding and dialogue at the regional level, through regional consultative mechanisms or processes**, including in partnership with International Organizations. IOM's involvement in promoting, creating, supporting and contributing to such regional mechanisms has meant that there are now active processes covering virtually the whole world. These mechanisms play a crucial role in strengthening international cooperation by promoting the sharing of information and experiences, and building confidence and partnerships for collaborative action to address issues of common concern. A review of on-going regional processes could be a relevant area for the HLD to consider, particularly as a need has emerged to take stock of their respective agendas and priorities and examine achievements in a cross-comparative manner. On the basis of its well-rooted experience on this subject, IOM could collaborate in the preparation of related agenda inputs and background information papers.
3. The two-way link between **migration and sustainable development** has long been recognized and utilized by some actors in various regions, but for many others this is only now being properly understood and supported. IOM's overall goal with regard to migration and development is to substantively contribute to the work of the international community to harness the development potential

of international migration for individual migrants and societies, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals. This includes the promotion of the role of the diaspora in home country development and the importance of the relationship between countries of origin and their diaspora.

Increasingly, the international community is recognizing and emphasizing the positive effects of international migration for home country development. In December 2003, the General Assembly, at its 58<sup>th</sup> session adopted resolution A/RES/58/208 urging Member States and the United Nations to continue strengthening international cooperation in international migration and development with a view to integrating migration issues more coherently within the broader context of implementing agreed economic and social development goals. Today, migrants are considered as potential agents of development who strengthen cooperation between home and host societies. Migrants contribute to development through remittances, investment and expenditure and can contribute as well through the application in their home country of newly-developed skills, entrepreneurial activities, and support for democratization and human rights.

More attention is also being given to the potential benefits of diaspora involvement in home communities. While a few governments have a long history and a sustained vision of enhancing diaspora engagement in home country development, most governments have only recently begun to examine policies and articulate strategies to enhance these positive linkages.

International migration has fostered the development of transnational networks, which facilitate important cultural, political and economic exchanges that span across borders, and ensure sustainable links between countries of origin and destination. All of these factors (remittances, diaspora and transnationalism) have caused the relationship between migration and poverty to be re-examined. Both ECOSOC and the United Nations General Assembly have increasingly been paying closer attention to the role of the diaspora, also in conjunction with the implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico in 2002.

IOM has been encouraging and supporting the development of networks and programmes among expatriate communities for development purposes and could help identify and organize the participation of representatives from diaspora organizations to the HLD. This could also take the form of an interactive side-event with participation of both government representatives and selected relevant associations.

4. Greater international cooperation is needed to build more **effective regimes to protect the human rights of migrants**, with special attention to the protection of those affected by trafficking and smuggling. It has been remarked that while the existing international architecture for the promotion of human rights principles and laws appears solid, there is a need for advocacy and actual application/implementation of existing instruments. IOM has recently established an International Migration Law (IML) department to strengthen IOM's growing involvement in the field of international migration law at regional and global levels. Special emphasis is placed on: compilation of IML; dissemination and understanding of IML; implementation of IML; training and capacity building on IML; and promotion of IML as part of comprehensive migration management frameworks. The HLD could serve as a forum to promote at the highest level the need for ratification of or accession to the applicable international legal instruments.

The need for action is particularly urgent in the area of smuggling and trafficking. The entry into force of the Protocol on Trafficking in Persons and the Protocol on Smuggling of Migrants both supplementing the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime represents a significant development, also considering the relatively speedy pace of ratification of these instruments. Yet the size and scope of both of these phenomena have not shown sign of abating and the establishment of national legislative and administrative measures required for their effective implementation will necessitate considerable investment in both short and long term measures. To this end IOM is actively in counter-trafficking

efforts. It also supports initiatives that would ultimately facilitate the replacement of irregular flows with orderly migration channels. In addition, it offers capacity building and technical cooperation activities to enhance capacities of border managers through the operation of passport and visa issuance systems, using biometric information where necessary. HLD may wish to focus on capacity building activities needed in this field.

5. **Migration is linked to policy in the economic, social, labour, trade, health, cultural and security domains**, among others. In the longer term, effective migration management cannot be planned and developed without reference to important adjoining policy fields. For example, the issue of skilled migration that has now become of relevance to trade negotiations; and the question of human mobility impinges increasingly on the development of health policies at both national and international levels. One consideration is the need to enhance commonality of purposes and to avoid duplication between agencies. In this context, IOM was a joint initiator of the Geneva Migration Group (GMG) which brings together the heads of six agencies dealing with migration: IOM, ILO, UNCTAD, UNHCR, UNHCHR, and UNODC. The Geneva Migration Group's aims are to share information and ideas, improve understanding, make effective linkages and provide direction and leadership in a system-wide context. HLD could consider ways of improving and enhancing such efforts.

ANNEX

**MANAGING MIGRATION**

**MAIN AREAS**

**MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Return of Qualified Nationals  
Exchange of Expertise  
Remittances/ Money Transfers  
Overseas Communities  
Micro-credit Schemes  
Targeted Assistance  
Brain Drain and Gain

**FACILITATING MIGRATION**

Workers and Professionals  
Students and trainees  
Family Reunification  
Recruitment and Placement  
Documentation  
Language Training  
Cultural Orientation  
Consular Services

**REGULATING MIGRATION**

Systems for visa, entry and stay  
Border Management  
Technology Applications  
Assisted Return and Reintegration  
Counter-Trafficking  
Counter-Smuggling  
Stranded Migrants

**FORCED MIGRATION**

Asylum and Refugees  
Resettlement  
Repatriation  
IDPS  
Transition and Recovery  
Former Combatants  
Claims and Compensation  
Elections and Referenda

***Cross-cutting Activities***

*Technical Cooperation & Capacity Building*

*Migrants' Rights and International Migration Law*

*Data and Research*

*Policy Debate and Guidance*

*Regional and International Cooperation*

*Public Information and Education*

*Migration Health*

*Gender Dimension*

*Integration and Reintegration*