

PORTUGAL

46th Session of the Commission on Population and Development

Agenda Item 4 - General debate on national experience in population matters: new trends in migration — demographic aspects

Statement by His Excellency Alvaro Mendonça e Moura

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

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Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your election, and to wish you a successful working session. You can count on the collaboration of Portugal.

I would like to align this statement with the one made earlier by the European Union.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm Portugal's support for the entire agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo, in 1994, as well as the key actions for the further implementation adopted at the ICPD+5, approved in 1999 and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Concerning the main theme of this session, Portugal would like also to recall its commitment to international migration and share some of our experiences and views that are of particular importance to us in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

According to the World Bank and IOM figures, in 2011 over 215 million people, about 3% of the world population, is living or working outside their country of origin. We must

remember that international migration is a complex phenomenon that entails different dimensions and factors.

The reality today is not one in which only people from poor countries migrate to rich countries; we are increasingly witnessing movements from the so-called "developed societies" to emerging economies, bringing new challenges and opportunities and seeking innovative answers and policies to international migration.

However, "South-South" migration movements that occur precisely between developing countries remain responsible for approximately 60% of all global migration. This represents an important area of analysis and discussion.

Mr. Chairman,

In Portugal, during the first decade of the 21st century, there was a noticeable and sustainable growth of immigrants. In 2011, immigrants represented around 3.7% of the total population.

Our 2011 Census reports that in the past ten years Portugal's population grew by 1.9%, mainly as a consequence of the net migration. This tendency reflects the positive demographic contribution that immigrants are making to Portuguese society.

Mr. Chairman

Portugal has successfully implemented measures on migration management in the fields of assisted voluntary return and reintegration, counter-trafficking, with particular attention to women and children, migration and development, labour migration and integration.

Our second National Program for the Integration of Migrants for the period 2011-2013 continues to promote, *inter alia*, secure long-term residence, labour market mobility, including recognition of foreign qualifications, and ensures non-discriminatory access to health and education by migrants.

Indeed, Portugal's integration policies have been consistently acknowledged as a good example by the international community in recent years, including by the World Migration Report (2011) and also by independent studies, such as the Migration Integration Policy Index (2010). These reports and studies underline, for instance, that 66% of the Portuguese society "agrees that immigrants contribute a lot to the country", and that despite the economic and financial crisis and the loss of jobs in Portugal, immigrants are recognized as being equally affected by the crisis.

In this context of reduced investment and a shrinking jobs market, Portugal has been witnessing a reversal of the growth trend regarding immigration. This can be explained also by an increase in the number of persons acceding to Portuguese citizenship under

a new legal framework on nationality, and the reversal of the migratory flows of certain countries of origin, namely from Portuguese Speaking African Countries and Brazil.

The future dynamics of migration in Portugal also seem to indicate a trend of flows linked to family reunification, to international students, and to highly qualified workers, in line with policies and legislation created to this effect, both at EU and national levels. The impact of short term migration, seasonal migration, and particularly circular migration are increasingly important in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

Like other countries, Portugal is facing changes in migration flow trends, including an out-migration surplus. The Secretary-General's Report 9/2013/3 acknowledges the increase of emigration flows in Portugal. In addition, we can say that those emigration flows are estimated to have reached 43,998 individuals in 2011. Around 65% had an EU country as their destination and the remaining 35% migrated to a non-EU country.

Nowadays, the most important destination countries for Portuguese nationals outside Europe is Angola, as well as Mozambique and Brazil. The emergence of new emigration countries is also visible by the increasing volume of remittances.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal promotes safe and secure migration that assures the protection of migrants' rights, supports the most vulnerable among them, and approaches Portugal to its Diaspora.

Portugal has taken initiatives with the purpose of studying the portrayal of Portuguese emigration. In this context, Portuguese authorities are developing contacts and working with several organizations and institutions, including the International Organization for Migration. Our purpose is to better devise a set of policies that will allow for a better integration of Portuguese nationals in the host countries and promote a greater connection between those communities and Portugal, in particular by boosting trade and investment opportunities, as well as to strengthen business networks and cultural ties amongst them.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal greatly values the important role that Diasporas have been playing in terms of national development strategies, namely as far as poverty reduction and economic growth is concerned.

Indeed, we believe that development issues should increasingly be seen as important elements of migration policies, while they should also become an integral part of the development agenda.

In this regard, issues such as employment, labour mobility, population imbalances, exploitation and human trafficking, migration and climate change, the role of remittances in development and the issue of brain drain are included in the agenda of international migration and development. Therefore, denying the deep connection between all these dynamics would not be a responsible perspective.

When managed effectively migration can benefit substantially both countries of origin and destination, as well as migrants themselves. This contributes to the process of development.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Portugal is pleased to be part of this Commission and recognizes that this year's theme is definitely relevant in view of the Second United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that will take place in October. Portugal will continue to be engaged in debates on development matters taking into account the future of the development agenda framework.

Thank you for your attention.