

Statement by Ambassador Francis Lorenzo  
Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations  
at the  
Panel Discussion on International Migration and Development  
United Nations, 7 June 2006

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly as well as the speakers for such informative presentations. Also my delegation would like to align itself with the statement by the distinguished representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The report of the Secretary General emphasizes the important nexus between migration and development as well as the opportunities for co-development. The Report of the Global Commission on International Migration also underscored the need for migration to be an integral part of the national, regional, and global strategies for economic growth, in both the developing and developed world. In exploring the opportunities for co-development, as highlighted by the SG's report there is a critical need to learn more on the role of individual migrants and Diaspora associations in making financial and other investment in their homeland, strengthening the economy, serving as conduits for new ideas, and enriching understanding between countries of origin and destination.

International migration, a fundamental feature of today's global system, is leading to the creation of transnational communities. In order for the countries to achieve the MDGs, progress must happen at the local level. This progress is not measured by economics alone but also by social, cultural, and political factors. Accordingly, effective development strategies particularly at the local levels must reflect the transnational communities created by the integration of Diasporas with their countries of origin and the global economy. It is therefore time to catalyze coordinated policies on migration and development that are built on evidence to contribute towards achieving the MDGs.

Mr. Chairman, as you know the Dominican Republic has a large diaspora and their contribution is very significant to the economy of the country. In order to learn more about the role played by migrants and Diaspora at the local level, UNDP, Special Unit for South South Cooperation and the Government of Dominican Republic are organizing a regional consultation on migration, remittances and development from 27-28 July 2006. The consultation is being hosted by the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development at its headquarters in Santo Domingo under the patronage of the President, Dr. Leonel Fernandez.

The consultation designed to bring together representatives from home-town associations, migrant leaders, community leaders, private sector entities, local policy makers, as well as experts from 13 countries in LAC region will address both supply and demand side of remittances and provide practical recommendations for governments and international development assistance agencies.

The consultation will focus on encouraging new options to engage the Diaspora in development; creating a knowledge-sharing network on projects, best practices and partnerships; and identifying financial products to further promote savings, credit, safety net mechanisms, business opportunities and other productive uses of remittances. The outcome consisting of recommendations for actions from the consultation will be presented at the Secretary General's High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the General Assembly on September 14 and 15 in New York. The report of the consultation will help bring valuable input from the community perspective and Diaspora, and the recommendations of the stakeholders will assist UNDP in sharpening its plans for future work in this area at the country level.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.