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**INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2005**

*Theme: Towards Policy Coherence on Migration*

## INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2005

### *Theme: Towards Policy Coherence on Migration*

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. International attention is increasingly focused on the opportunities of migration – for national and international growth, development and stability – if effectively managed.<sup>1</sup> While the need for policy coherence is relevant to most disciplines, it is particularly acute for migration in view of the multidisciplinary and transnational character of migration. There must be coherence between policies on different aspects of migration; for example, policies to *control* migration and policies to *facilitate* migration should be complementary rather than contradictory. In addition, there must be coherence between migration policies and the policies of other domains that address, touch upon or are affected by migration, to prevent actions in one domain from inadvertently prejudicing priorities in other domains.<sup>2</sup> More than simply avoiding inconsistency, coherence involves the seeking of synergies between distinct but related policies, while furthering the specific aims of each.

2. Without policy coherence, either within governments, between states, among other stakeholders such as international organizations, the private business sector, trade-unions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and across migration and related policy domains, migration's promise cannot be fully realized.

#### II. POLICY COHERENCE WITHIN GOVERNMENTS

3. Coherence is needed **within governments** first and foremost, to ensure that policy formulation and implementation are effective and purposeful. Achieving coherence requires consultation and coordination among ministries whose work directly or indirectly involves migration. Ministries such as justice and home affairs, labour, employment, health, trade, development, social welfare and education may be implicated, reflecting the link between migration and other policy domains and, in some states, the division of responsibility for migration between different ministries. Through consultation and coordination means can be found to advance the objectives of each ministry. For example, security and labour market needs in countries of destination can be addressed and, indeed, enhanced through the establishment of legal labour migration channels. Development and human resource needs in countries of origin can be similarly enhanced through temporary labour migration programmes that ultimately result in the return of skills and talent. Intragovernmental coherence is also needed at all levels – national, regional and local – to ensure consistent policy formation and implementation throughout. Lastly, policy coherence within governments also requires that migration policies be consistent with international obligations undertaken by the state, e.g., such as those under international human rights law. The efforts of governments as diverse as those of Afghanistan, Albania, Iraq, Ireland and Paraguay to facilitate the strategic review of their migration policies, approaches and mechanisms, are illustrative of the desire for intragovernmental coherence.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: GCIM, *Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action*, 2005, available on the GCIM's website at <http://www.gcim.org/en/finalreport.html>; the *International Agenda for Migration Management*, 2004, available on IOM's website at [http://www.iom.int/DOCUMENTS/OFFICIALTXT/EN/IAMM\\_E.pdf](http://www.iom.int/DOCUMENTS/OFFICIALTXT/EN/IAMM_E.pdf) and on the website of the Swiss Federal Office for Migration (<http://www.bfm.admin.ch>); World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects*, 2005 and 2006; IOM, *World Migration 2005: Costs and Benefits of International Migration*; IOM's International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) on *Migration in a Globalizing World*, 2003, *Valuing Migration*, 2004, and subsidiary activities such as the intersessional workshops on Trade and Migration, 2003 and 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Examples of related domains include development, trade, labour, employment, health, environment, social welfare and education.

### III. POLICY COHERENCE BETWEEN STATES

4. With the growing complexity of international migratory movements and the interdisciplinary nature of migration, cooperation and coherence are needed **between states** to enhance the prospects for successful and mutually beneficial migration. The absence of a central international legal instrument or binding structure governing the cross-border movement of people has been cited as a gap in the current institutional structure for the global economy; nonetheless, the existence of such an international framework would not necessarily of itself ensure policy coherence.<sup>3</sup> Initiatives fostering interstate dialogue and cooperation are important steps to achieving policy coherence between states. At the **regional level**, the proliferation of regional consultative processes (RCPs) on migration in the past decade is emblematic of the need for regional dialogue and cooperation. Developments such as the recent inclusion of countries of destination in the Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia, in September of this year, illustrate their potential to evolve towards meeting such needs.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, regional economic regimes and political institutions, such as the European Union (EU), the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the African Union (AU), the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) are increasingly placing migration on their agendas and integrating migration considerations into their work.

5. Consultative mechanisms such as the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) and the process that led to the elaboration of the *International Agenda for Migration Management* (IAMM) foster interstate dialogue and cooperation at the **global level**. The IAMM, a non-binding international reference system and policy framework on migration management, has significant value as a basis for future interstate cooperation at the bilateral, regional and global level. For example, IOM and the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) held an IAMM-based capacity-building workshop for the countries of the South African Development Community in July 2005, furthering dialogue and cooperation in this region.<sup>5</sup>

### IV. ENGAGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

6. While migration policy is principally the domain of sovereign states, each aspect of migration concerns **stakeholders other than governments**. Consequently, policy coherence also depends on the active engagement of members of the business community, civil society, NGOs, migrant associations, and others at the national and international level. Similarly, partner intergovernmental and other institutions, such as the World Bank (IBRD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), to name just a few, need to be engaged in their areas of expertise to foster coordination and cooperation on topics such as migration data, the migration and asylum nexus, and the link between migration and development. As more organizations include migration within their scope of interests, a coordinated approach becomes an important means of pursuing policy coherence. Several organizations

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<sup>3</sup> While there is no international framework, multilateral, regional and bilateral cooperative arrangements in the management of migration do exist. For an illustration of these arrangements, see IOM contribution, Chapter 18, of T. Alexander Aleinikoff and Vincent Chetail: *Migration and International Legal Norms*, T. M. C. Asser Press, New York, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> IOM and the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) convened a joint expert meeting on RCPs in April 2005 to explore the contribution of RCPs to the governance of migration at the national and international level, among other things. The final report is available on IOM's website at [http://www.iom.int/en/know/iom-gcim/iom\\_gcim\\_200504.shtml](http://www.iom.int/en/know/iom-gcim/iom_gcim_200504.shtml) and on GCIM's website at [http://www.gcim.org/news/?sec=gcimevents&lang=en\\_US&nav=&id=2005/04/15/03](http://www.gcim.org/news/?sec=gcimevents&lang=en_US&nav=&id=2005/04/15/03) and is relevant for this session as the subject is directly relevant to the theme of policy coherence on migration.

<sup>5</sup> A similar capacity-building workshop is planned for West Africa in November 2005.

have already come together through the Geneva Migration Group (GMG), a forum of heads of agencies interested in migration, which could easily be enlarged and reinforced to fulfil the need for interagency coordination. If there were a need for a GMG secretariat, IOM would stand ready to provide it.

7. Stakeholders will have differing opinions and approaches to migration management; their voices and perspectives need to be heard. Critical to this is identifying key stakeholders; building trust between governments and relevant stakeholders; institutionalizing partnerships; devising incentives for stakeholders to participate in partnerships; encouraging ownership of partnerships; structuring capacity building to include all relevant stakeholders, and enhancing information exchange among and between stakeholders. Reflecting this recognition, IOM has recently created a Business Advisory Board, comprised of chief executives representing a broad cross-section of industries and interests in all parts of the world to identify and exchange ideas on global issues relevant to migration and business, and to endeavour to develop practical solutions. IOM is eagerly looking forward to the valuable contribution of the Business Advisory Board to the development of migration policy and resulting improvements in policy coherence on migration. Similarly, IOM values its dialogue with the NGO community and looks forward to broadening and deepening the NGO community's participation in migration policy development.

## **V. COHERENCE ACROSS MIGRATION AND RELATED POLICY DOMAINS**

8. Below are a few key areas in which policy coherence is especially important.

### ***Migration and Development***

9. Interest in the relationship between migration and development is at a historic high.<sup>6</sup> Both the migration and development communities are seeking answers to questions such as whether migration fosters or impedes development, whether development leads to an increase or a decrease in the volume of migration and, perhaps most important, how to ensure that migration is a positive force for development.

10. Just as migration has an impact on development, development has an impact on migration, and the implications of both require attention. Economic migration theories suggest that migration has the potential to bring gains to virtually all involved: countries of origin find outlets for their excess labour supply and benefit from remittances and investments made by migrants and diasporas, as well as the knowledge and skills-transfer that occurs when migrants return home; countries of destination are able to meet their labour market needs, and maintain or improve productivity levels; and migrants benefit from higher wages and better working conditions and by acquiring new work-related skills and knowledge. Only through coordinated efforts can migration and development communities maximize the positive development potential of migration, and minimize its costs.

### ***Migration and Trade***

11. It is difficult to envisage a world where there is an increasingly free flow of capital, goods and services without the concomitant increase in the movement of people. Yet, as economies and labour markets are further integrated through the process of globalization, barriers to the movement of people continue to be cited as a major impediment to potential global welfare gains that would benefit developing countries, developed countries and individual migrants and their families. Even a modest

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<sup>6</sup> For example, the UN General Assembly will convene a High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at its sixty-first session in 2006. In addition, in February 2005, IOM convened an IDM intersessional workshop on *Migration and Development: Mainstreaming Migration into Development Policy Agendas*, in partnership with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Documents relating to this intersessional workshop, including background papers, presentations and the final report, are available on the IOM website at <http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/iswmd%5F200502.shtml>.

liberalization of the temporary movement of persons to provide services under Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) – by all accounts only a small percentage of annual cross-border movements – has been projected to produce annual global welfare gains of between USD 150 billion and USD 200 billion, outstripping gains expected from further liberalization of trade in goods.<sup>7</sup>

12. Despite the potential benefits of liberalizing the temporary movement of persons under GATS Mode 4, countries have made relatively limited commitments under Mode 4, largely as a result of problems presented by substantial incoherence between trade and migration regimes (both within and between countries). Mode 4 concepts and definitions are often not found in domestic migration regulatory frameworks, and are not uniformly defined at the national level.

13. Trade and migration policy makers must understand one another's terminology, priorities and viewpoints in order to identify their shared interests and the value of greater cooperation and coordination.<sup>8</sup> Any solutions to reduce barriers to the movement of people need to benefit all parties involved – whether in the context of Mode 4 negotiations or in parallel or complementary efforts to manage labour migration more generally.

### ***Migration and Security***

14. Traditional notions of state security relating to the protection of its territory and citizens have broadened in recent decades, reflecting changes in the national and international environment and events, such as the September 11 terrorist attacks, and the London and Bali bombings. Broadly defined, the concept today encompasses, *inter alia*, state security and human security.

15. Recent efforts to combat terrorism have put security concerns at the forefront of the discussion of international migration, yet terrorism is not the only link between migration and security. Irregular migration (including human trafficking and smuggling), which undermines a state's capacity to regulate the entry and stay of migrants, can also pose a security threat.

16. A key challenge faced by states is to increase security without stifling legitimate and needed movement, including the need for a mobile international workforce, and without imposing serious constraints on the individual rights and liberties of migrants and asylum seekers. It is not possible to meet this challenge unless coherence is achieved between security policies, migration policies and human rights obligations, at a minimum.

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<sup>7</sup> World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*, 2004; WTO, *World Trade Report 2004* (citing Winters and Walmsley, 2003, and Rodrik, 2002). These projections of global gains from freer movement of labour do not take account of gains from visitors, students and others who contribute billions of dollars annually to countries of destination.

<sup>8</sup> In 2003, IOM convened an IDM intersessional workshop on Trade and Migration in partnership with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank, bringing trade and migration officials together internationally for the first time for an informal exchange of views on the relationship between migration and trade. In 2004, IOM convened a follow-up IDM workshop, held in partnership with the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO), taking the dialogue further, with emphasis on what can be learned from existing approaches to managing temporary labour migration. Documents relating to these intersessional workshops, including background papers, presentations and the final reports of the workshops, are available on the IOM website at [http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/tms\\_200311.shtml](http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/tms_200311.shtml) and [http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/tms\\_200410.shtml](http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/tms_200410.shtml).

### ***Migration and Health***

17. As global migration flows increase, the health of mobile populations and the societies they come into contact with is becoming a major public concern.<sup>9</sup> As more tourists, visitors and migrants travel more quickly to more destinations, these individuals connect the health environments of their home, transit and host countries.<sup>10</sup> The re-emergence of tuberculosis (TB) in parts of the world where it had been vanquished, the rapid spread of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the proliferation of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and concerns regarding a possible avian influenza pandemic are just a few examples of the relationship between population mobility and health. These examples demonstrate the importance of integrating global public health concerns into a strategy of comprehensive population mobility management for the benefit of individuals and societies alike.

18. Linking migration health and public health calls for the bridging of all phases of a migrant's progress: departure, transit, arrival and return, whether the journey is permanent, temporary or seasonal, and whether it is international, transnational, inter-regional or internal.

### ***Migration and the Environment***

19. Natural disasters that displace large numbers of people, such as the devastating Asian Tsunami of December 2004, and the more recent hurricanes in the Americas and earthquake in Pakistan and India, have called renewed attention to the relationship between migration and the environment. In recent years, disaster response has occupied the international community while comparatively little attention was paid to the long-term migration consequences of predictable environmental forces, such as global climate change, the greenhouse effect, deforestation, desertification, erosion and other identifiable climatic and environmental trends.

20. While environmental factors can influence migration patterns, migration can also affect the environment. For example, significant inflows of migrants, whether from abroad or internally from rural to urban centres, can increase the pressure on often already strained infrastructures, such as housing, drinking water, power, transportation, communications, etc. in host communities.

## **V. CAPACITY BUILDING**

21. Possessing the capacity to effectively manage migration is vital to achieving policy coherence, and *vice versa*.<sup>11</sup> States must have the ability to analyse the impact of migration and other policies to identify incoherences and contradictions, and to formulate strategies to achieve coherence. States must also have the infrastructure required to ensure consultation and coordination at the national, regional and local level.

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<sup>9</sup> Public health is understood by IOM as protecting populations from disease and as establishing policies and programmes that promote healthy living conditions for everyone. The health of an individual migrant is understood to go beyond infectious disease control, towards inclusion of chronic conditions, mental health concerns, cultural beliefs and understanding of health and human rights issues.

<sup>10</sup> At the IDM intersessional workshop on Migration and Health, held by IOM in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2004, health and migration policy makers and practitioners came together to investigate the link between migration and health and to consider strategies for improving migration health management. Documents relating to this intersessional workshop, including background papers, presentations and the final report, are available on the IOM website at [http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/smh\\_200406.shtml](http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/smh_200406.shtml). As a result of this workshop, IOM and WHO have been undertaking collaborative work in this field, including research and other activities together with the International Labour Organization (ILO). In addition, the workshop has resulted in a wide range of IOM field-based initiatives and activities, including on the important issue of the migration of healthcare workers.

<sup>11</sup> Several panelists and participants at the IDM's September 2005 Intersessional Workshop on *Developing the Capacity to Manage Migration* emphasized that the objective of policy coherence is critical when formulating capacity building strategies. Documents relating to this intersessional workshop, including background materials and presentations, are available on the IOM website at [http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/idm\\_28092005\\_en.shtml](http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/idm_28092005_en.shtml).

To actively and meaningfully engage in interstate dialogue and cooperation, states must achieve at least a basic level of competence in migration and migration-related issues. As was demonstrated at the IDM intersessional workshop on *Developing the Capacity to Manage Migration*, migration management is a new or changing administrative field for many governments which requires dedicated attention to creating the necessary legal and administrative structures, competence, and coordination between relevant ministries to adequately address the full range of migration issues. Lastly, states must have the capacity to identify and effectively engage relevant stakeholders.

## VI. CONCLUSION

22. The objective of policy coherence is particularly important to migration management because of the close connection between migration and other policy fields. Now more than ever, international attention is focused on migration and coherence in migration management. In October 2005, following 18 months of consultations, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) presented its report to the UN Secretary-General.<sup>12</sup> In its report, the GCIM addressed, *inter alia*, the need to strengthen coherence in the work of international agencies active in the migration field. In addition, the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, planned for the UN General Assembly's sixty-first session in the fall of 2006, will explore among other things the possibilities of generating policy coherence on migration at the international level.

23. This international attention presents a unique window of opportunity: to discuss the challenges of migration-related policy coherence; to reflect on the institutional architecture necessary to achieve policy coherence at the international level and to mobilize the national and global political will to ensure that due consideration is given to migration and its linkages to other policy domains. The international community may now be ready to acknowledge that migration and migration policy should routinely be factored into the agendas of related policy domains and *vice versa*, just as environmental issues and the observance of human rights are factored into development and other agendas.

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<sup>12</sup> See the GCIM's website (<http://www.gcim.org/en/>).