
Statement
of
Mr. Fisseha Yimer, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of
the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

94th Session of the Council of the International Migration Office
Geneva, 27-30 November 2007

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the Ethiopian delegation. As I am taking the floor for the first time, I would also like to congratulate you and the other members of the bureau on your election to the respective offices during the 94th session of the Council. We are confident that under your able leadership, the Council will successfully undertake its important tasks incorporated in the Agenda. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for preparing the necessary documents for this Council which we have received well in advance.

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia attaches immense importance to the nexus between development and migration. For us, the intimate relationship between migration and development is not rhetoric but a reality. The Government of Ethiopia has designed national policies and programs to maximise and effectively harness the positive contributions of migration to development. Institutions have been established, both at the federal and local levels, that assist Ethiopian nationals and people of Ethiopian origin living abroad invest their money and skills for the development of their own country.

These domestic programs have continued to result in visible benefits. In 2007, foreign direct investment has shown Ethiopia has shown a significant increase. Quite remarkably, more than 60 percent of this investment comes from Ethiopians living abroad.

This, however, does not mean that we do not face challenges in harnessing and maximising the potentials of migration. On the contrary, there are problems which require partnership and coordinated action at various levels. Our institutions suffer from lack of capacity and resources. Hence, we support IOM's initiative to address migration within the context of changing and dynamic global economy. However, not all countries are equal players and participants in emerging global economic relationships and processes. This is indeed why development of human capital, with the view to ensuring that migration does not privilege global demand at the expense of domestic needs, is critical. There needs to be a robust international collaborative platform for supporting particularly educational institutions in developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia holds IOM with the highest esteem. IOM is indeed an institution which has proved its relevance to countries across the spectrum. The policies and programs it implements are quite complementary to our developmental needs. Ethiopia has now become IOM's major beneficiaries of the latter's assistance and programs in Africa. Recently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the IOM signed a memorandum of understanding, under 'Migration for Development in Ethiopia' involving four year migration program. This program is designed to contribute to strengthening institutional capacities for the mobilization and utilization of human, financial and other resources of the Ethiopian diaspora, with a particular focus on the health, education and water and sanitation sectors.

Mr. Chairman,

The various decisions to be taken by 94th Council is indicative of the fact that the organisation is increasingly engaged with issues that are critical for socio economic development particularly in developing countries, and for the protection of the welfare of individuals and groups. Ethiopia will continue to supporter IOM in its future endeavours.

I Thank You