



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON
INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON
MIGRATION**

IC/2008/2

Original: English
Geneva, 15 February 2008

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2008

Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities

26 February 2008

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2008 *Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities*

1. This discussion note provides a brief summary of the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) in 2007, including the IDM session at the 94th Council Session, and information about the IDM for 2008.

IDM 2007: *Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy*

2. In 2007, the International Dialogue on Migration's overarching theme was "Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy", as endorsed by the Membership during the informal consultations on IDM in 2006. Intersessional workshops in 2007 were convened on the subjects of "**Free Movement of Persons in Regional Integration Processes**" (18-19 June) and "**Making Global Labour Mobility a Catalyst for Development**" (8-9 October). Relevant presentations, statements and background documentation are available on the IOM website (www.iom.int/idm).¹

IDM at the 94th Session of the IOM Council

3. The IDM sessions at the 94th Session of the IOM Council, held in Geneva on 27 November and 28 November 2007, opened with the launching of the **World Migration Report (WMR) 2008: "Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy"** by its co-editors **Gervais Appave** and **Ryszard Cholewinski**, who presented the Report's key findings and conclusions. The Report's overview and regional profiles were distributed to the Membership. Several Member States expressed their appreciation for a report that they found comprehensive, topical and reflective of their national, regional and international migration policy interests.

4. The following session on **Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy** provided a chance to examine the opportunities and challenges involved in managing increasing cross-border movements of people as an integral part of globalization. **Ali Abdullah Al-Ka'abi**, Minister for Labour, the United Arab Emirates, announced the holding of Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin and Destination in Asia, to be held in Abu Dhabi in January 2008 - the first meeting of the Colombo Process countries with key destination countries in the Gulf and Asia to be hosted by a country of destination, marking a watershed in regional cooperation. **Arturo Cabrera**, Deputy Secretary of International Migration Policy, National Secretariat for Migrants, Ecuador, highlighted respect for the human rights of migrants as a central tenet of migration management and explained several of Ecuador's initiatives to this end. **Maxime Tandonnet**, Advisor on Immigration and Integration, Cabinet of the President of the Republic of France, outlined the key orientations of the French Government's immigration policy as well as the migration-related priorities of the upcoming French Presidency of the European Union. **Moremi Soyinka-Onijala**, Senior Special Assistant to the Nigerian Vice President on Migration and Humanitarian Affairs, presented the measures taken by the Nigerian government to further improve its management of migration, including the restructuring of the National Commission for Refugees into a national agency for migration, resettlement and refugee matters, and called for greater international efforts to accommodate

¹ Additional information on these workshops can be found in the Discussion Notes for the IDM Informal Consultations held on 2 March 2007 (IC/2007/1), 21 June 2007 (IC/2007/7) and 18 October 2007 (IC/2007/17).

needs for migrant labour in a manner that provides opportunities for the migration of qualified persons of all nationalities. **Konstantin Romodanovskiy**, Director, Federal Migration Service, Russian Federation, subsequently made an intervention from the floor as a Special Guest of the Director General and presented a demographic plan to be launched in Russia, with a strong migration component including promoting voluntary returns of Russians living abroad and facilitating migrant integration. The ensuing discussions, moderated by **Ikram Sehgal**, Chairman, Pathfinder Group, and member of the IOM Director General's Business Advisory Board, revealed that protecting the human rights of migrants and addressing irregular migration were issues of concern to countries of origin, destination and transit.

5. During the **Migration Highlights** session, the panellists and Membership interacted on a selection of recent and forthcoming migration developments. **Vladimir Naumov**, Minister of Internal Affairs, Republic of Belarus, presented the newly opened *International Training Center on Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings* in Minsk. **Mohammed Aneur**, Delegate Minister to the Prime Minister, in charge of the Moroccan Community Resident Abroad, Kingdom of Morocco, announced the forthcoming launch in Rabat of the Mediterranean edition of the Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies and discussed the need for dialogue and cooperation on migration management between countries of origin, destination and transit. **José Magalhães**, Deputy Minister of the Interior, Portugal, explained that migration was a priority of the Portuguese EU Presidency in 2007, with Portugal hosting the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Migration as well as the EU-Africa Heads of States Summit in December 2007. **Erlinda F. Basilio**, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva, updated the Council on the preparations for the second Global Forum on Migration and Development to be held in Manila in October 2008.

6. The session on **Migration and the Environment** was opened by **Michele Klein Solomon**, Director, Migration Policy, Research and Communications (MPRC), who proposed a working definition of environmental migrants and presented a series of scenarios illustrating the two-way relationship between the environment and migration as well as the related key policy challenges. The session was moderated by **Janos J. Bogardi**, Director of the Institute for Environment and Human Security, United Nations University, who emphasized the pressing need to better understand migration as a coping strategy in the face of environmentally-induced threats to lives and livelihoods. **Qiao Zonghuai**, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, highlighted the importance of considering the linkages between migration and the environment in the context of broader sustainable development strategies, and emphasized the need for inter-State cooperation to this end. **Abdul Bari Khan**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, People's Republic of Bangladesh, discussed displacement resulting from environmental degradation and outlined the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships for disaster prevention and rehabilitation. **Theodoros Skylakakis**, Secretary General for International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece, noted that effective migration management and collective preparedness for, and burden-sharing in response to, climate change-related disasters would be required to cope with the significant population movements expected in the next forty years. **Nguele Dieudonné Tolo**, Director General, National Forestry Development Agency, Republic of Cameroon, described the policy measures implemented by the Agency to address the consequences of internal, unplanned migration for the environment, especially with regard to massive deforestation. **Jaifa Mezher**, Director, *Programa Colombia Nos Une*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Colombia, presented the *Temporary and Circular Labour Migration (TCLM)* initiative designed in collaboration with IOM to offer agricultural workers confronted with natural disasters with temporary employment opportunities abroad until the affected zone is safe and its agricultural productivity is restored. **Christophe Bouvier**, Director, Regional Office for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme, encouraged reflection on several key issues including the paucity of data in this field and the importance of questioning the effectiveness of traditional development, security and humanitarian aid models as they apply to addressing the environmental causes and consequences of migration.

7. Should the membership so wish, discussion could take place at the informal consultations on the respective allocation of time to IDM and governance issues at the Council.

IDM 2008: *Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities*

8. Based on the informal consultations with the Membership held in 2007, in 2008 the IDM will have the overarching theme of **“Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities”**.

9. While return has been on international agendas for some time, the various and multifaceted aspects of return migration and, in particular, how return migration relates to development is just beginning to receive the attention it deserves. For example, return migration holds the potential for bringing about triple-win solutions – for individual migrants, host and home societies. Drawing on IOM’s research and programmatic experience, the subject of “Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities” will be explored from the point of view of the role of return in contemporary migration dynamics, patterns and policy; the reasons for and impediments to return; the human rights of migrants; and the policy and programmatic actions stakeholders can take to facilitate, sustain and enhance the benefits of return migration, particularly working in collaboration. The overall aim will be to identify potential challenges and how they can be met and managed through enhanced cooperation among all relevant stakeholders. In addition, effective practices can be shared in order to identify policies and practices that provide for the greatest convergence of interests. The results of the IDM 2008 events could serve to inform policy and programming by governments in this area, intergovernmental dialogue and cooperation, as well as IOM’s programmatic and research activities. The Administration is exploring further ways to respond to the Membership’s request to enhance the links between the IDM and IOM’s programmatic work and would welcome proposals from the Membership in this regard at the informal consultations.

10. During the informal consultations on 18 October 2007, four potential workshop topics for the intersessional workshops were offered. **“Enhancing the Role of Return Migration in Fostering Development”** was the first choice of the Membership, and will be held as the second workshop of the year, on 7-8 July 2008. As the Membership’s preferences were evenly divided among the remaining proposals, **“Managing Return Migration”** will be the theme for the first workshop in 2008, to be held on 21-22 April. Elements from the other topics offered, - i.e. (a) return as a critical element of migration management systems and (b) return when stay is not authorized – will be incorporated where possible.

Managing Return Migration (21-22 April 2008)

11. While return migration attracts the attention of policy-makers and other stakeholders involved in migration issues, it is rarely approached in a holistic manner or analysed in a broader context of migration management. A more comprehensive understanding of return has the potential to help reconcile and balance the interests of different migration stakeholders and facilitate cooperative migration management approaches.

12. This workshop will look at the concept of return migration and the current state of thinking on the issue both from a policy and programmatic perspective. It will also provide the IOM Membership with the opportunity to discuss return when entry or stay is not authorized, with a focus on the means by which the return can be managed in a safe, dignified and sustainable manner in such cases. Different government experiences with return migration will be shared, the key issues and policy areas that form part of a comprehensive return migration framework will be highlighted and the relationship between migration and related policy domains such as development, trade, human rights and health will also be addressed.

Enhancing the Role of Return Migration in Fostering Development (7-8 July 2008)

13. It is now widely recognized that long-term foreign residents at all skill levels can contribute substantially to home-country development, including through temporary and circular mobility, investment, skills transfer and joint human resource development. This workshop will explore potential visa, travel, tax and investment incentives and policies that can stimulate such mobility, while looking at the implications of dual nationality, multiple entry/work/residence systems and social security portability.

14. The workshop will look into ways to enhance potential contributions of nationals living abroad through public-private and inter-State partnerships as well as diaspora mapping and engagement. Realizing the development potential of migrants' contributions could help to ensure that returns are more sustainable. The discussions will also explore the policy and practical implications of mainstreaming return management into national plans for poverty reduction and development.

Funding approach

15. Starting in 2006, the Administration began pursuing funding for the intersessional workshops on a yearly basis for the entire IDM workshop programme in order to use its human resources more rationally and cost-effectively and reduce operational costs. However, the Administration wishes to remain flexible in its fund raising approach to take into consideration particular interests and priorities donors may have. For this reason, while the Administration encourages donors to support the IDM annual programme as a whole, it also understands that some donors may wish to earmark their contribution to a specific workshop. A project document and two separate budgets have been developed and will be made available to the Membership at the informal consultations.

Capacity building and training activities

16. In the context of the existing partnership between the IOM and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies² and with the kind support of the Swiss Government, two training sessions on return migration will be organized within the IDM framework in 2008. Based on the *Essentials of Migration Management* (EMM), an interactive and modular capacity building tool developed by IOM, these training sessions, provided in all three of IOM's official languages, are meant to inform representatives from the Permanent Missions on policy and programmatic issues relevant to the overarching theme of the IDM this year. The topics for each session (*Managing Return Migration* and *Enhancing the Role of Return Migration in Fostering Development*) will be consistent with the agendas of the respective intersessional workshops.

² The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies is a fusion of the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI) and the Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED).