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

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON  
INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE  
ON MIGRATION**

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**INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2010**

*Migration and social change*

18 February 2010

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1. This discussion note provides a summary of the 2009 International Dialogue on Migration (IDM), particularly the IDM at the Ninety-eighth Session of the IOM Council, and information on the IDM for 2010.

**IDM at the Ninety-eighth Session of the IOM Council: Human rights and migration: Working together for safe, dignified and secure migration**

2. In 2009, the IDM was guided by the overarching theme selected by the membership during informal consultations held in 2008: Human rights and migration: Working together for safe, dignified and secure migration. Two intersessional workshops were convened in 2009 based on the membership's preferences: Effective Respect for the Human Rights of Migrants: A Shared Responsibility (25–26 March 2009) and Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants: Ensuring Protection of Human Rights (9–10 July 2009).<sup>1</sup>

3. The IDM panel on human rights and migration at the Ninety-eighth Session of the IOM Council presented an opportunity to gather and consolidate the principal lessons learned and effective approaches that had emerged during the discussions among policymakers and other stakeholders throughout the year.<sup>2</sup> One important conclusion was that human rights are a fundamental element of migration governance. Kyung-wha Kang, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, reaffirmed the commitment of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights to assist States in anchoring the management of migration more firmly in a human rights approach. Governments need to develop robust legal frameworks that incorporate international human rights standards and consider the situation of migrants explicitly. It is the implementation of such standards that requires particular attention – creating relevant institutions, raising awareness and building capacity are among the most important steps to ensure all relevant actors have the knowledge and tools to apply human rights principles in their daily interaction with migrants. For instance, Fatima Mohammed Al-Balooshi, Minister of Social Development of Bahrain, spoke of her Government's effort to ratify international human rights conventions in view of the large population of migrant workers in the country, to incorporate these provisions into Bahraini law and to implement them through public campaigns, monitoring and enforcement. In this context, the importance of applying the principle of non-discrimination to migrants was stressed repeatedly. Jean-Louis de Brouwer of the Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security of the European Commission highlighted combating discrimination, racism and xenophobia and tackling irregular migration and trafficking in persons as priority areas of action in future migration management policies in the European Union.

4. Another set of conclusions pertains to the situation of the most vulnerable migrant groups, in particular migrants subject to exploitation. While regular migrants are not immune to human rights abuses, irregular migrants and trafficked persons tend to be most at risk. The “four-P approach” – prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership – has served

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<sup>1</sup> For further information on the intersessional workshops, including reports, agendas, background papers, the list of participants and additional material, please visit [www.iom.int/idmhumanrights](http://www.iom.int/idmhumanrights) and [www.iom.int/idmtrafexp](http://www.iom.int/idmtrafexp).

<sup>2</sup> Further information on the IDM at the Ninety-eighth Session of the IOM Council, including the presentations made by the panellists, can be found at [www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/human-rights-and-migration-2009](http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/human-rights-and-migration-2009).

numerous governments as a basis for their policies and programmes on the issue. Drazen Maravic from the Ministry of Interior of Serbia gave an overview of a large-scale awareness campaign conducted by means of a television series entitled “Modern Slavery” aimed at preventing human trafficking. Elly Anita, Trafficking in Persons Report hero of the year for 2009, recounted her own experience as a victim of trafficking and exploitation in the Middle East.

5. The latter speaker also mentioned the need to empower migrants so that they can assert their rights. This point was reinforced by the President of Liberia, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who delivered a keynote speech on the topic of migration, human rights and the economic crisis by video in the afternoon of the first day of the Council. She stressed that, instead of labelling migrants as a problem at worst, or a factor of production at best, migrants are first and foremost human beings with rights, needs and agency. In this context, several speakers and delegates also raised the issue of terminology and advocated for an abandonment of the use of the term “illegal migrant”.

6. Throughout the IDM year, policymakers from around the world recognized that a segmented approach to protecting the human rights of migrants is unlikely to succeed. Instead of looking at different abusive situations or specific migrant groups in isolation, a coherent approach that ensures respect for the human rights of all migrants – regardless of their status or specific situation – at all stages of the migration cycle is needed as a solid basis for protection. Additional measures targeting particularly vulnerable groups, such as trafficked persons, work best if they can build on such a foundation.

7. A proactive, comprehensive strategy that considers the migration life cycle in its entirety also forms the basis of IOM’s approach to irregular migration and mixed flows. This was the subject of a dedicated discussion at the Council in which the IOM Administration laid out its thinking and activities in the area of mixed flows, following from a panel discussion on this subject at the Ninety-sixth Session of the IOM Council in 2008. During the discussion, delegates highlighted the timeliness and importance of the topic and thanked IOM for its important work in responding rapidly to the challenges of irregular migration and mixed flows, helping States to develop coherent policies and promoting capacity-building. In particular, delegates underlined IOM’s important contribution in providing technical assistance and strengthening cooperation, above all at the regional level.

8. Lastly, many speakers and delegates at the IDM panel brought to the fore some of the most critical social and economic challenges to the protection of the human rights of migrants, including the issues of detention and criminalization, racism and xenophobia and the impacts of the global economic crisis on migrants. Many of these issues will be taken up during the IDM in 2010, in the context of its consideration of migration and social change.

### **IDM at the Ninety-eighth Session of the IOM Council: International Dialogue on Migration – Highlights of global and regional migration dialogues**

9. In accordance with the IOM Constitution and the IOM Strategy (activity 7), the IDM aims to promote, facilitate and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration. The IOM Council traditionally serves as an opportunity to highlight selected significant developments in the area of dialogue and cooperation on migration issues. First, regional cooperation often appeals to States as a large proportion of migration occurs intraregionally and countries tend to have similar migration experiences, face common challenges and

sometimes share economic, cultural or political ties. The proliferation of regional consultative processes (RCPs) on migration and the growing importance of migration issues on the agendas of different regional integration bodies are a testimony to this. Malusi Knowledge Nkanyezi Gigaba, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs of South Africa, updated the membership on recent developments in the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa. Minna Ljunggren, State Secretary on Migration and Asylum Policy of the Ministry of Justice of Sweden, in view of Sweden's capacity as holder of the European Union presidency, gave details on the Stockholm Programme, which would replace the Hague Programme, and reported on the three high-level conferences held by the Swedish European Union Presidency in October 2009. Regional initiatives have also proved to be an important stepping stone towards global cooperation. This point was stressed by Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Permanent Representative of the Government of Thailand, who summarized the outcomes of the Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, held in June 2009. RCPs could benefit from learning from each other and share their experiences at other multilateral forums.

10. Second, in terms of migration dialogue at the global level, the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is now entering its fourth year and a phase of consolidation. Presentations were delivered by George J. Kaklikis, Permanent Representative of Greece (Chair of the GFMD in 2009), and Alejandro Poiré, Under-Secretary for Population, Migration and Religious Affairs, Ministry of the Interior of Mexico (Chair of the GFMD in 2010).

11. Third, at the inter-agency level, the Global Migration Group (GMG) used the IOM Council as an opportunity to provide governments with an update on the Group's goals and activities. The Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Carlos Lopes, speaking on behalf of the GMG in his capacity as its Chair, highlighted the Group's contribution to the GFMD in Athens in 2009 and the significant progress the GMG has made in the past year to increase its internal coherence. In the ensuing discussion, delegates stressed the need for continued communication between the GMG and governments and expressed their support of stronger GMG involvement in the GFMD.

### **IDM 2010: Migration and social change**

12. Through the process of informal consultations and a follow-up survey, the membership has selected the overarching theme of "Migration and social change" to guide the IDM in 2010.

13. While current approaches to migration tend to focus on the economic dimension of human mobility, with the economic drivers for migration and the impact of migration on the labour markets of countries of origin, transit and destination being widely documented, the intrinsically social and cultural nature of migration is no less important. In 2010, the IDM will consider migration primarily as a social phenomenon connecting and transforming people and places. It will focus on the social and cultural transformations induced in both societies of origin and destination by the temporary, circular or permanent movements of individuals and families, as well as the challenges posed by the changing notions of belonging and identity. As mobility is an essential feature of today's world, IDM 2010 will try to identify what measures can be taken by all stakeholders to make the social implications of migration as positive and beneficial as possible, particularly in the context of the current global economic crisis.

14. Also through the process of informal consultations, two intersessional workshops have been selected by the membership and are planned for 2010, subject to available funding. The first workshop, *Migration and Transnationalism: Opportunities and Challenges*, as requested by the membership during informal consultations on 20 October 2009, incorporates elements of another originally proposed workshop. While this workshop focuses on the migrant as the agent and subject of transnationalism and the appropriate and necessary policy interventions of States in this regard, the second IDM workshop in the series, *Societies and Identities: the Multifaceted Impact of Migration*, will primarily approach the issue from the perspective of the societies of origin and destination, revolving around central ideas such as social remittances, diversity, xenophobia and integration.

***First workshop: Migration and Transnationalism: Opportunities and Challenges  
(9–10 March 2010)***

15. Migration is, on the one hand, an important aspect of social change and, on the other, one of its key consequences. While human mobility makes a significant contribution to shaping the world as it is today, ongoing socio-economic changes – and indeed major events such as the global economic crisis – have also made contemporary migration increasingly varied in terms of its patterns and composition. Transnationalism – people belonging to or having ties with more than one society over the course of a lifetime – is a key aspect of this debate: while international mobility is making transnationalism a more prevalent phenomenon, its patterns are also being shaped by new transnational realities. Transnationalism serves as a way to conceptualize the policy matters arising from the cross-border social and cultural connections between societies resulting from migration and to focus policymakers' thinking and action on innovative responses to the realities of international mobility.

16. The workshop will consider the implication of transnationalism for the political, civic and social participation of migrants in communities of origin and destination. Policy issues relating inter alia to nationality, voting rights, and access to and portability of social security provisions and banking services have become a major focus for countries of origin and destination.

17. The impact of transnationalism on families has come to the attention of policymakers across the world. Transnationalism implies changes and challenges to family unity and can affect children, gender and generational roles as families migrate or when some family members move and others stay behind. Policies on family unity and reunification, marriage migration or so-called “second- and third-generation migrants” are only some of the issues of interest to home and host governments. The workshop will outline new policy challenges that result from an extension of family ties across borders and will help governments identify innovative solutions to make transnationalism beneficial for migrants and their families.

18. The workshop will also look at the role of transnational networks in shaping migration and migrants' interaction with home and host societies. A key feature of transnationalism is the cross-border activity of migrants and migrant organizations, which not only seek to maintain ties with the countries of origin, but also develop transnational linkages between two or more societies and thus influence global migration patterns in significant ways. The workshop will therefore examine the ways in which the participation of migrant networks and

partnerships with migrant organizations and diaspora groups can support States' efforts to address the implications and maximize the benefits of transnational social dynamics.

***Second workshop: Societies and Identities: the Multifaceted Impact of Migration  
(19–20 July 2010)***

19. Migration is a catalyst for change and development – it has the potential to enrich not only the economies, but more importantly perhaps the culture and societies, of both countries of origin and destination. For example, while financial remittances are now widely recognized as a product of migration, social remittances, including the transfer of ideas, behaviour, identities and social capital, have received much less attention. At the same time, migration transforms notions of national and personal identity and some societies struggle with the process of re-defining their collective identities and maintaining social cohesion in the face of increasing diversity. Lastly, migrants themselves may bring new ideas to their host countries; while at the same time some migrant communities may hold on to lifestyles and traditions they associate with their places of origin, even if those places have since changed. Any resulting tensions need to be eased in daily social interaction.

20. This workshop will examine the social and cultural implications of contemporary migration and address the following questions: How can the beneficial impacts of social remittances be strengthened, for instance in societies emerging from conflict? How do countries respond to the social transformation of gender roles brought about by migration? How do societies manage growing diversity, such as religious pluralism, and what does it mean for integration policies? What are the most effective practices in fighting racism, discrimination and xenophobia? How can the potentially negative impacts that growing and changing mobility may have on the continuity and stability of social and community structures be mitigated?

**Funding approach**

21. In 2006, IOM began to pursue funding for the intersessional workshops on a yearly basis for the entire IDM workshop programme in order to utilize its human resources more rationally and cost-effectively and reduce operational costs through early preparation, in particular regarding logistical arrangements linked to the participation of representatives from developing countries (which represents on average two thirds of overall expenses due to the IDM's capacity-building approach). However, IOM would like to remain flexible in its fund-raising approach so as to take into consideration any particular interests and priorities that donors may have. For this reason, while IOM encourages donors to support the IDM annual programme as a whole, it also understands that some donors may wish to earmark their contribution for a specific workshop.