

**EIGHTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COUNCIL**

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING**

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Wednesday, 28 November 2001, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: H.E. Mr. P. KARIYAWASAM (Sri Lanka)

later: H.E. Mr. R. J. MENGA (Congo)

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Agenda item 8 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE: MIGRATION CHALLENGES FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY (continued)

(c) Statements by Members and observers (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited guest speaker Ms. Gabriela Rodriguez, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants, to take the floor.
2. Ms. RODRIGUEZ (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants) congratulated IOM on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary on the work which it had accomplished to assist migrants throughout the world and ensure orderly and humane migration conditions. She also thanked IOM for its support to her in her mission as United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants. Her tasks included: the examination of ways and means of overcoming obstacles to full and effective protection of the human rights of all migrants; the review of existing bilateral and regional agreements, particularly concerning return and reinsertion of undocumented migrants or migrants in an irregular situation; and the establishment of criteria, strategies and recommendations for the promotion and application of policies for the protection of migrants' rights. If such objectives were to be achieved, relevant information was required from Member States, civil society, social and international organizations and the migrants themselves, concerning violations of migrants' rights. Special attention would be given to the situation of women migrants and unaccompanied minors, smuggling and trafficking of persons, xenophobic attacks by extremist groups, arbitrary detention, ill treatment and exploitation.
3. Following the tragic events of 11 September in the United States of America, she had issued a plea against associating terrorism with migration, especially as migrants formed a vulnerable category of persons, simply by virtue of the fact that they were non-nationals. States should improve security and intelligence systems so as to protect all those on their territories, including migrants.
4. Regularization of migrants' situations, the creation of a framework for migration management and the protection of migrants' rights and the prevention of trafficking and smuggling in human beings were among the main challenges of the twentieth century. Policies which discriminated against migrants on the basis of their national origin were unacceptable. Trafficking and smuggling in human beings was one of the most despicable violations of human rights and the cause of countless deaths. Countries of origin, transit and destination all had a duty to take vigorous measures to combat trafficking and punish traffickers, including irregular migration prevention measures. IOM's counter-trafficking programmes were of particular relevance in that area.
5. The question of counter-trafficking required deeper consideration and a framework was required to manage migration and to prevent irregular migration, starting with the countries of origin, where corruption and discrimination often led to violations of human rights, forcing nationals to leave their country. Effective integration and insertion measures and proper documentation of State nationals were required.

6. The protection of the human rights of migrants should not be dealt with in isolation but be directly linked to migration management and should also cover areas such as the return of undocumented migrants, the situation of unaccompanied minors and women migrants and the protection of asylum seekers. It should also be set clearly within the framework of the relevant international instruments. She drew attention to the recommendations of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance concerning migrants which should form the basis for international, regional and national programmes of action. Those recommendations covered areas such as access to health services, education, the prevention of discrimination against migrants and the protection of migrants against ill treatment. She also appealed to Member States to ratify the International Convention against Organized Transnational Crime and its two protocols and the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. IOM should give priority to orderly and humane migration closely linked to the protection of migrants and their rights within an appropriate migration management framework.

7. The CHAIRMAN thanked Ms. Rodriguez for her important statement and opened the floor for discussion.

8. Mr. WURIE (Sierra Leone) stressed another factor which was important in migration problems, namely the role that weapons had played in forcing many people to become refugees or displaced persons. That was an area in which IOM could coordinate its work with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Arms dealers and traffickers in human beings should be treated with the same severity as drug dealers.

9. Mr. HUSSAIN (Pakistan), noting the strong emphasis currently being placed on the need to combat human trafficking, stressed the need to identify its root causes. First, there were too few opportunities for orderly migration of individuals from high-population/density countries where employment opportunities were small and the level of development low, which led to irregular migration channels being used. Second, a certain ambiguity could be detected in the approach of the more developed countries, on account of their constant need to renew their labour force, which again encouraged workers from developing countries to use illegal channels. Third, a large population growth and migration increase was expected in the next 20 years and it was not clear whether the existing mechanisms at international level would be adequate to deal with the resulting migration problems. He asked whether existing institutional arrangements should be transformed or consolidated in order to achieve a better balance between countries of origin and destination.

10. Mr. NEGRÍN (Observer for Mexico) stressed the functional linkage between all the international organizations involved, which approached migration from different angles. His country placed special emphasis on the human rights aspects of migration, in particular: violations of human rights on account of xenophobic attitudes; the reaffirmation of the rights of migrants as individuals; the application of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, in particular its article 36 concerning communication and contact with nationals of the sending State; and participation in civil society, with emphasis on legal, administrative and educational

aspects. It was also to be hoped that the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families would soon enter into force.

11. Ms. RODRIGUEZ (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants), referring to the question of whether existing institutional capacity was adequate to deal with future migration problems, stressed the need for coordination between existing institutions, as the rights of migrants and possible violations thereof was a multifaceted issue which could not be dealt with by any single institution. IOM's future role was particularly important, as its work went far beyond the framework of a purely operational organization. She agreed that the question of xenophobia must not be minimized, especially after the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. She also reaffirmed the importance of consular protection, as provided for under the Vienna Convention, and of achieving clear definitions of migrants' rights on the basis of such instruments.

12. Ms. APORU (Uganda) expressed gratitude on behalf of her country for IOM's assistance to internally displaced persons in Uganda, in particular its planned needs assessment research which would provide an appropriate framework for action in that field. She also commended IOM on phase 3 of the Return of Qualified African Nationals programme and its positive response to Uganda's request for a bridging phase project to enable 25 highly-qualified persons to return to their country, so as to contribute to the development of the Ugandan economy. Her Government had always believed in humane and orderly migration and in pro-active migration policies that could promote socio-economic development of both countries of origin and countries of destination. She would welcome IOM's expertise and logistic support for her Government's internal resettlement programmes. She also commended IOM and UNHCR for their programmes for the humane and orderly resettlement of refugees to third countries, which had resulted in better living conditions for refugees, who could therefore contribute more meaningfully to society. A long-term solution was also required for migrants who had lost their roots in their countries of origin and might become stateless. Following the passing of the amnesty law in Uganda, IOM, together with relevant government departments, United Nations Specialized Agencies and non-governmental organizations, had assisted repatriation and reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life. Uganda joined the rest of the world in condemning all forms of terrorism. Efforts to achieve orderly migration should continue in the midst of current globalization challenges. She expressed Uganda's full support for IOM's work in the future.

13. Mr. FELKAI (Hungary) said that IOM's success over the past 50 years lay largely in the fact that it had acted as a moral force representing strong values and contributing to the solution of migration problems with highly effective action. After the 1956 Revolution in Hungary, some 200,000 Hungarian people had found new homelands owing to the active participation of IOM and in 2000 IOM had assisted 440 citizens of 30 countries to return to their homes from Hungary. Since 1993, 3,227 people had been given the opportunity to return home to 60 countries with IOM's help. Cooperation had not, however, been limited to return but also covered information campaigns and in particular the prevention of trafficking in women. He commended IOM on its constant endeavour to achieve and assist compromise between the parties involved in migration problems in order to achieve mutually acceptable solutions. He expressed special thanks to IOM for the assistance which Hungary had received in its preparation for European Union membership, particularly with regard to harmonization of its laws with European Union regulations.

14. Referring to the lack of translation and interpretation services for migrants in certain countries, which often affected important decisions concerning their situation, he suggested that a group of translators might be set up, perhaps under the auspices of IOM, composed of people speaking the official languages of the migrants' countries of origin. It was important to find a solution to communication problems arising from lack of knowledge of little-used languages.

15. Mr. ALI (Bangladesh) said that the tendency to migrate had traditionally contributed to enriching societies and benefiting economies. Ironically, however, migration processes over the past 30 years seemed not to have kept pace with the growth of trade, services and capital flows. Restrictive migration policies had discouraged cross-border movement of people, thus creating economic asymmetries between countries. Economic globalization without an orderly migration system was not sustainable. Migration patterns changed constantly under the influence of economic imbalances, demographic changes, poverty and environmental degradation, natural disasters, lack of peace and security and violations of human rights.

16. Migration problems could not be solved, however, without analysis of their root causes. The critical linkage between international migration and development deserved particular attention. Migrants not only provided labour in the production system of host countries but also contributed financially to their country of origin. The irregular movement of people across borders, however, reflected the deficiencies of national policies and institutions. He described a number of recent policy decisions taken by the Government of Bangladesh focusing in particular on improvement of the welfare of migrant workers through measures such as job creation, educational and legal assistance, and information for migrant workers. Despite governments' legal and regulatory efforts, however, migrants still remained vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and the increase in racism, xenophobia, discrimination and trafficking, especially in women migrants, was alarming.

17. He suggested that IOM's comprehensive strategy concerning orderly migration might focus on the following: closer linkage between migration, trade and development in the present era of globalization; the establishment of an orderly migration regime that would reflect the changing demographic profiles of both countries of origin and of destination; assistance to Member States in understanding labour migration and designing national policies with improved migration management systems; measures to increase awareness of the economic and cultural potentials of the diasporas; promotion of bilateral and multilateral migration arrangements and joint action with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations in order to foster the orderly movement of people.

18. Mr. DEMBRI (Algeria) welcomed the increased African representation in IOM's membership, including the presence as an observer of the *Union du Maghreb Arabe*. Although not yet a part of the United Nations system, IOM had shown a remarkable increase in significant activity over the past few years. Migration, a universal and multidimensional phenomenon, reflected both a certain malfunctioning of international society and the inequality of individual destinies. It touched upon a wide range of fields, covering historical, social and economic considerations and health, politics and security - all of which called for greater dialogue so as to identify the specific challenges and provide appropriate responses. The scope and urgency of those challenges and the interconnection between them placed considerable responsibility upon IOM as a coordinator between the various partners involved. At a time when information and

communication technologies were creating so many virtual links between people, barriers were being set up in the real world which generated mistrust and alienation between human beings. Globalization had brought with it an international order which gave rise to inequalities and marginalization of whole populations. It was important therefore to identify the source of migration problems. One of the most serious problems was trafficking in human beings, the third most widespread form of trafficking in the world, after arms and drugs. Another was the rise of attitudes of resentment towards migrants. Since the tragic events of 11 September in the United States of America it was even more important to protect human diversity and to prevent the negative consequences of those events which could include racism, xenophobia and intolerance. The Algerian authorities, in particular, remained vigilant with regard to possible repercussions on their nationals abroad.

19. The vulnerability of the African continent with regard to emigration was well known and efforts should continue to reduce its scope. At the base of that problem lay the question of development, without which any policy for voluntary return and successful reinsertion of migrants would be impossible. IOM's programmes of logistic aid for Africa should be more specifically targeted towards the countries or regions most affected by the adverse effects of migration. He supported IOM's proposals to work in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and with the African subregional organizations. IOM and OAU should endeavour first to set up an agreement covering regions or countries. The Memorandum of Agreement signed in 1998 between the two organizations provided an appropriate framework for such cooperation. In view of the need for North-South cooperation, Algeria supported IOM's Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme and the EURO-MED framework.

20. Algeria had always endeavoured to encourage coherent migratory policies aimed at maintaining and strengthening links between emigrants and their countries as well as protecting migrants' rights in the host countries. Recent measures included simplified administrative facilities at consular level, the opening of cultural centres and international schools, the encouragement of investment and the utilization of national skills for the development of the home countries. Geographically the strategic position of Algeria in the Mediterranean, at the crossroads between Africa and Europe, made it also a country of immigration and transit, offering considerable potential for research into migratory flows. Bilateral cooperation between Algeria and IOM would certainly be increased after the signing of the Headquarters Agreement which was in process of finalization.

21. Mr. WURIE (Sierra Leone), congratulating IOM on its fiftieth anniversary, said that although it had been assumed when the Organization was founded that its role would be limited in time and geographical scope, events in recent years had shown that it was impossible to restrict population mobility in the absence of security, peace and development. He welcomed the fact that IOM's role had evolved from that of an operational service provider to that of a technical and policy adviser on migration issues, which now constituted serious areas of concern affecting both national and regional security and stability.

22. Poor governments, such as his own, were highly appreciative of IOM's assistance, particularly in equipping them with appropriate legislative and administrative structures. With the impact of globalization and increasing numbers of insecure environments, IOM would continue to face an increasing workload in resettling, repatriating and transporting migrants,

refugees and internally displaced persons. He therefore appealed to donors to provide the necessary financial and logistic support.

23. His country was slowly emerging from a ten year, senseless rebel war, in which half of its population had become internally displaced and one third were still refugees in neighbouring countries. It consequently needed IOM's professional help and support and was grateful to the Organization for opening an office in Sierra Leone, even before it had become a Member of the Organization. He hoped that it would continue to benefit from IOM's programmes such as return migration, migration of refugees and the transfer of qualified human resources. Sierra Leone had long adhered to the principle of the free movement of persons; it fully supported IOM and looked forward to a fruitful partnership with the Organization.

24. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that the present session was a historic one, as it marked five decades of dedicated service in promoting understanding for and solutions to migratory problems. IOM's enlarged membership and its role in major emergencies bore witness to its growing importance and stature. The campaign against terrorism, following the tragic attacks of 11 September, had obvious implications for IOM, and humanitarian assistance would continue to be required in Afghanistan, where IOM was already playing an important role, including the provision of food and shelter to some 7 million Afghans and, subsequently, the reintegration of refugees now in Pakistan and Iran.

25. In a world where over 200 million people were on the move each year in search of safety, food or better personal prospects, migration was no longer a North-South or East-West issue, but a global one. The great benefit of orderly migration was now generally recognized. In the wake of the 11 September terrorist attacks, IOM would need to make a special effort to discourage the adoption of restrictive or discriminatory legislation relating to immigration and to combat xenophobia, racism and intolerance.

26. Attention should also be given to the impact of brain drain on developing countries and the promotion of programmes for the return and reintegration of qualified nationals. While welcoming the dialogue on migration-related issues which had been organized at the current Council session, he stressed that it should be an exceptional event and should not detract from the Council's normal budgetary and administrative role. He welcomed the presentation of comprehensive migration-related projects, in accordance with Resolution 1035 for which he hoped funding would be secured.

27. Mr. CASTRILLÓN JARAMILLO (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, expressed his appreciation for IOM's leadership and achievements during the past five decades, which he hoped would be consolidated in coming years. He welcomed the fact that the Council was to become a major forum for the exchange of ideas on migration policies and for cooperation in seeking lasting solutions to migration problems. In many parts of the world, including Latin America, governments were unable to find adequate political and social responses to migration problems – hence the need to coordinate with other countries in establishing global strategies.

28. The consideration and application of migration strategies was one of the major challenges in the new millennium, calling for a range of coordinated policies covering issues such as retaining the population to avoid emigration, regulating migratory flows, encouraging the orderly

return of migrants, particularly qualified migrants, and integrating migrants into the social, cultural, political and economic life of host countries. Further requirements included public information campaigns to achieve a better understanding of migration matters, as well as technical cooperation to develop governments' capacities to apply migration policies, especially at regional level, as in the Puebla Process.

29. Many problems were arising as a result of new forms of migration, associated with the clandestine movement of people, illegal employment of migrants, increased mobility of the workforce, the rise in temporary migration as well as unemployment among migrants, for all of which an overall strategy was essential, involving States, intergovernmental organizations and civil society. International migration had been one of the main features of the twentieth century and would undoubtedly continue to be important in the twenty-first century.

30. Mr. MENGA (Congo), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

31. Mr. HEINEMANN (Netherlands) said that IOM's fiftieth anniversary coincided with the tenth anniversary of the IOM Office in The Hague and, to celebrate that occasion, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands had recently hosted a conference on orderly migration: visions and challenges for the twenty-first century. That conference had served as a forum to stimulate dialogue on international migration in the Dutch context, while the Council was currently focusing on migration policies and challenges in a global framework.

32. Although migration had always existed, the scale, intensity, diversity and unpredictability of population movements were changing rapidly and migration management had become much more complex. Recognizing that migration matters could not be handled solely at national level, the Netherlands was actively participating in the development of a common European Union policy on asylum and migration. His country therefore welcomed IOM's intention to use the annual IOM Council session as a platform for policy dialogue on migration management. The Migration Policy and Research Programme (MPRP) was a good example of how practical experiences might be used to identify best practices and provide a framework for their application. His Government had consequently decided to make a financial contribution to that programme.

33. Since the recent terrorist attacks in the United States of America, the global migration debate had gained momentum and the humanitarian tragedy in Afghanistan had triggered off a discussion on international migration in the broadest sense of the word. However, the traditional borderline between refugees and economic migrants had become less easy to define and many countries were increasingly confronted with an inflow of migrants for which they were not sufficiently prepared. The safeguarding of national asylum systems against abuse went hand in hand with the safe, humane and orderly return of those found not to be in need of protection and, in that context, IOM played an important intermediary role, as reflected in the cluster proposals in the South Caucasus region and the voluntary return project for rejected asylum seekers from Iraq currently staying in the Netherlands. It was important to establish appropriate legislation, such as readmission agreements, in order to make the return of rejected asylum seekers and migrants in an irregular situation effective.

34. Mr. MOLEY (United States of America) said that migration issues were inextricably related to the international response to the 11 September terrorist attack on the United States, in

which citizens from more than 80 countries had lost their lives. While that event had significantly changed the United States' immigration policy, it had not curtailed its commitment to immigration itself, which would continue to be the foundation of America's prosperity, strength and identity as a nation, bringing energy to its economy and society. Indeed, America had achieved greatness as a nation partly because it was a nation of immigrants.

35. IOM would have an increasingly vital role in the years ahead in the promotion of more effective migration management. It remained the pre-eminent operational support agency for the voluntary movement of persons in need of migration assistance and its growing importance was demonstrated by its continually expanding membership. One of its strongest potential attributes was its value as a forum for dialogue among States.

36. His country was committed to working on migration issues with countries of origin, such as Mexico. In order to advance the multilateral interest in deterring illegal migration and promoting legal migration, the United States strongly supported regional migration dialogues such as the Regional Conference on Migration for North and Central American States, to develop shared strategies and agree on practical measures. His country looked to IOM to facilitate such regional cooperation and provide technical assistance to strengthen national migration management capacities, including model legislation and training.

37. During 2001, IOM had started to implement the Council decision to use some of the Organization's Discretionary Income to strengthen the migration management capacities of developing Member States, the so-called "1035 facility". The United States had made a significant contribution to that fund in 2001 and he was pleased to see that the facility was included in the Programme and Budget for 2002, although it should only be used for projects in States which were already Members of IOM when the project was approved.

38. He commended IOM on its Migration Policy and Research Programme (MPRP), the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) initiative, its cooperation with UNHCR, in particular concerning the migration/asylum nexus and the voluntary repatriation of refugees from Guinea to Sierra Leone, and its counter-trafficking activities.

39. Mr. NOIRFALISSE (Belgium) said that the present session was particularly significant for his country, as IOM had been established in Brussels 50 years ago. In celebration of IOM's anniversary, the King of Belgium would receive the Director General and the Deputy Director General. A tangible demonstration of IOM's universality and attractiveness was the fact that its membership had doubled in the past ten years. Belgium had been involved in many joint activities, the most recent being a conference on migration held in Brussels in mid-October.

40. Some of the issues which had been of particular interest to the Belgian authorities were counter-trafficking measures, assistance to inter-African migration, as well as programmes for the reintegration of migrants in their countries of origin, such as the Reintegration and Emigration for Asylum Seekers from Belgium (REAB). In May 2001, Belgium and IOM had signed a convention on the creation of a centre for voluntary return and development. It was also appropriate to mention the important role played in Belgium in the processing of requests for compensation for persons who had been subjected to forced labour or conditions of slavery under the Nazi regime.

41. IOM's fiftieth anniversary had highlighted the importance of IOM as a forum for dialogue relating to migration policies – an additional aspect of its work which should be evaluated in the coming months. Regarding budgetary matters, his Government reaffirmed its commitment to the policy of zero nominal growth in the Administrative Part of the Budget, and reiterated its concern over the recurrent problem of arrears in contributions. With regard to funds for developing countries and countries in transition, his Government welcomed the fact that the Director General was intending to hold informal consultations on the matter, as further consideration should be given to the criteria for distribution of funds under the 1035 facility.

42. Mr. BEKE DASSYS (Côte d'Ivoire) said that today, no country could remain indifferent to the question of migration, which was an essential concern in Côte d'Ivoire. The challenges were numerous and included the control of migratory flows as well as increased protection for migrants. An information office on naturalization had been opened in his country, with a view to facilitating integration of migrants. Côte d'Ivoire had always been a host and transit country in the West African subregion. Its policy of openness and its economic attractiveness had traditionally drawn to the country large numbers of migrant workers, mainly from neighbouring countries, as well as refugees from Liberia. Migration was, however, increasingly difficult to contain in his country and had resulted in a demographic imbalance, despite the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS. His Government was deeply concerned and was convinced that national migration plans should be consolidated by regional and international cooperation. He welcomed the fact that a meeting would shortly be held in Dakar to seek long-term solutions for the entire subregion.

43. Côte d'Ivoire was drafting legislation to identify nationals and protect migrants, in line with its commitments as a hospitable country and with its international obligations. He expressed his appreciation for the MIDA programme, which would make a significant contribution to solving migratory problems in Africa. His country also welcomed the initiative taken by the Swiss authorities who had organized a recent meeting in Bern which would lead to the signing of an agreement between Switzerland and Côte d'Ivoire concerning the return of Ivorians in an irregular situation in Switzerland.

44. That example might well be followed by other countries, as a means of preventing the return of migrants in degrading circumstances. He expressed his gratitude to IOM for its assistance with the first phase of his country's new migration programme. Côte d'Ivoire had ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and had signed a bilateral cooperation agreement with Mali on measures against trafficking of children, which was moreover the subject of a recently finalized national plan. Côte d'Ivoire was also about to ratify ILO Conventions 138 and 182 on child labour. It would be desirable for such useful initiatives to be followed up by measures in countries of origin to prevent innocent young victims being sent to Côte d'Ivoire, without the authorities in his country being aware of their presence on its territory. In that connection, a Headquarters Agreement would shortly be signed with IOM, which should facilitate the search for a solution to those problems in the subregion.

45. In accordance with its international obligations, Côte d'Ivoire had repealed its law of 1998 to permit the free circulation of undocumented migrants for a period of up to three months, after which a five-year renewable residence card would be issued at a reduced cost. Migrants' security depended on their identification and his country would welcome IOM's expertise in that field.

46. Mrs. LAOHAPHAN (Thailand) said that IOM's role and expertise in supporting migrants, refugees and displaced persons, as in the current humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, were being increasingly recognized within the international community. Thailand's partnership with IOM had begun almost three decades previously and IOM, in cooperation with UNHCR, had done much to assist Thailand in easing the plight of refugees and displaced persons from Indochina, one of the most remarkable of IOM's successes. IOM's role had developed in order to handle the increasing trend of irregular migration in the South East Asia region. In particular, Thailand welcomed IOM's counter-trafficking activities and the extension of its action to include promotion of regional dialogue and cooperation on migration issues. In 1999, IOM and her Government had jointly organized the International Symposium on Migration which had established an unprecedented regional framework for cooperation on irregular migration in the region, embodied in the Bangkok Declaration. Subsequently, Thailand had moved towards regularization of migrants in an irregular situation. Under that scheme migrants would be entitled to health insurance coverage, temporary work permits and legal protection against trafficking and exploitation.

47. Thailand welcomed the establishment of the IOM Mission with Regional Functions in Bangkok, which would provide fresh impetus to the process of implementing the Bangkok Declaration. She noted with interest the Berne Initiative aimed at promoting dialogue and cooperation in migration-oriented issues. Her Government supported IOM's project on primary health care services and communicable disease control among migrants and Thai host communities, to reduce the incidence of such diseases, including HIV/AIDS, among mobile populations.

48. She appreciated IOM's role in the assisted return of irregular migrants and their reintegration, as well as assistance to Thai migrants returning from abroad, and looked forward to an expansion of IOM's assistance to migrants returning from Myanmar. Thailand had benefited from IOM's information campaign against irregular migration and trafficking from Thailand which would target vulnerable migrant populations through increasing their understanding of opportunities and conditions abroad. A similar campaign might be launched for would-be immigrants and migrants from neighbouring countries. She also expressed appreciation for IOM's contribution to the conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children between Thailand and Cambodia.

49. She welcomed the proposal put forward by the representative of UNESCO the previous day to initiate a joint project with IOM for migrant and host communities. IOM's cooperation with United Nations Specialized Agencies was particularly constructive. Her country also supported the strengthening of IOM management and human resources developments and considered that the Administration should be allowed sufficient flexibility to meet Member countries' urgent needs.

50. She stressed the importance of the following priorities: development of measures to reduce poverty and redistribute income equitably so as to prevent irregular migration and encourage sustainable return and reintegration; assistance to developing countries in terms of resources and better understanding of migration trends and situations; recognition of the contribution of migrants to host societies and of their particular vulnerability; and promotion of regional and bilateral dialogues.

51. Mr. METSCHER (Germany), joining previous speakers in congratulating IOM on its fiftieth anniversary, said that IOM had for several decades been one of Germany's most important partners in migration management. It had provided assistance in particular with the resettlement of German nationals who had been displaced as a consequence of World War II, the migration of skilled workers from Germany to Latin America, the transfer of professionals, technicians and skilled workers from Germany to developing countries and the return of Chilean refugees to their home country. Since the late 1970s, IOM had been Germany's implementing partner for programmes in support of voluntary return of refugees and rejected asylum seekers, in particular from Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as from Kosovo.

52. Welcoming IOM's enlarged membership, he said that the Organization was making an increasingly important contribution to assisting the victims of humanitarian crises, the most recent case being that of Afghanistan. New areas of cooperation between IOM and Germany were emerging, for example IOM's handling of claims for compensation on behalf of former forced labourers under the Nazi regime.

53. Although Germany had for many years become a country of immigration, that fact had only very recently been officially acknowledged by the independent commission for migration set up by the Federal Government in 2000. On the basis of its recommendations and conclusions, the German Government and Parliament had decided to make substantial changes in Germany. The so-called "Green Card Programme" providing for the employment of up to 20,000 foreign information technology experts had been established and the comprehensive draft legislation on migration had been introduced, providing *inter alia* for the possibility of permanent residence for highly-qualified professionals and for the protection of refugees, in line with Germany's international obligations. A special government agency was to be set up to advise on migration policy, with responsibility for admission procedures.

54. Migration questions were undoubtedly one of the most important political issues of the twenty-first century and cooperation within the European Union was of particular importance to Germany. At the international level cooperation and joint action between IOM, UNHCR and other organizations in the United Nations system was important.

55. Ms. RUIZ DE ANGULO (Costa Rica) commended IOM on its 50 years of achievement aimed at ensuring that migration was beneficial to all and reducing the risks inherent in migratory movements. Migration was a fundamental component of all societies and Costa Rica, like other nations of the Latin American and Caribbean region, represented an intermingling of the cultures of the old and new worlds. As migration was enriching for both countries of origin and countries of destination, it was important to ensure respect for migrants' rights and the rights of the nationals of the receiving and the sending States, between which collaboration on migration matters was essential. IOM should facilitate that dialogue to achieve appropriate solutions.

56. Costa Rica supported the establishment of clear migratory policies which provided migrants and their families with an opportunity to improve their lives and ensured respect and promotion for human rights. Migration was a global, complex and historical phenomenon with many causes, including imbalances between economies and labour markets, rapid population growth, natural disasters, political and social factors, armed conflict or urban insecurity. Such

problems called for an objective, long-term and comprehensive approach in order to reduce the negative and increase the positive aspects of migration.

57. Regional mechanisms, such as the Regional Conference on Migration or the Puebla Process, provided substantial results both for dialogue and for action, in particular in the areas of development, migration policy and management, human rights of migrants and development and cooperation policies. Costa Rica was a major receiving country and migrants, many of whom came from Nicaragua, now represented 12 to 15 per cent of the population. Her country had provided health, cultural, educational and labour facilities for migrants but required international assistance in order to sustain that process. Her country fully supported IOM's counter-trafficking programme and called for adequate legal protection of migrants and severe sanctions against the international criminal groups which organized such trafficking.

58. Ms. BERAÚN ESCUDERO (Peru) commended IOM on the work which it had accomplished in the past 50 years to assist over 13 million refugees and migrants through human and emergency aid, assisted returns, training and education, technical and advisory services, as well as its constant efforts to encourage cooperation and dialogue. She also fully supported the views expressed by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of GRULAC.

59. Globalization was offering many new opportunities for trade and investment, expansion of information and communication and economic development and represented a vast potential for eradicating poverty. At the same time, however, it could be a source of imbalances and tensions. It was therefore important to bear in mind that migration problems were not due to any one particular cause but should be seen within that general global context. Effective cooperation should also be established between regional and international organizations.

60. One of the main causes of cross-border migration was the search for better employment and living conditions. Those migrant workers were often in an irregular situation, which affected their fundamental rights in society. Although migration could have positive effects on society, it could also give rise to xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance against migrants – one of the main topics for discussion at the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban.

61. Peru was contemplating ratification of the 1990 United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which was so far the most complete and comprehensive instrument for establishing respective rights and obligations. The increase in migration was closely linked to the problem of economic and social development in countries of origin. However, neither countries of origin nor countries of destination had full control over migratory flows – hence the urgent need for more effective migration management. The Eleventh Summit of Ibero-American Countries had underlined the need for bilateral and multilateral dialogue to achieve equality of treatment of migrants and full respect for human rights, the encouragement of non-discriminatory attitudes and the eradication of trafficking in human beings. Peru welcomed the opportunity provided by IOM's fiftieth anniversary to promote high-level dialogue on migration and analysis of its causes, with specific reference to poverty, the protection of human rights and the harmonization of migration policies between countries of origin, transit and destination.

62. Mr. KESSEDJIAN (France) said that IOM was becoming the leading forum for a global debate on migration and structured dialogue between countries of origin, transit and destination such as the dialogue organized within the current session of the Council. In that context, his Government would appreciate information from IOM on whether a second World Migration Report was to be published and on the work of the recently established MPRP group of reflection on migration.

63. Regarding migration policies in general, his Government considered it essential for the European Union to define a common migratory policy as a consequence of the abolition of frontier controls between most of the European Union member countries.

64. Regarding the panel discussion on demography, trade and globalization and integration of migrants which had proved particularly informative and interesting, he said that migration was an increasingly important factor of demographic change. France was pursuing its own balanced policy, taking into account economic and social constraints and the need for integration, as a basis for guidelines for regularizing migrants and providing access to the labour market.

65. Regarding trade and migration, France had opened its labour market to qualified workers from other countries who had skills not easily found on the national market. There was, however, a substantial grey market of irregular migrants whose number was difficult to estimate. The migrant population nevertheless benefited from the medical coverage and schooling for children which was available to all residents in France. His Government favoured closer cooperation and the harmonization of European legislation to punish traffickers.

66. Integration and the combating of xenophobia were a constant concern and were considered to be essential in overcoming the flaws in society. France tried to encourage integration and mutual understanding around the core values of its national identity - democracy, the secular system and use of the French language. In addition, the Government stressed its respect for diversity and conducted campaigns against racism and discrimination, supported by an increase in sports and cultural activities organized by local communities.

67. At the European Council in Tampere, a policy of partnership for co-development had been advocated, with a view to enhancing the role of migrants in the development of their countries, incorporating their movements in a legal framework and encouraging active cooperation with the countries concerned. Co-development favoured migrant involvement in the economies of the countries of origin, partnership between business firms, local authorities and training institutions, as well as the signing of co-development conventions. It promoted the enhancement of migrants' professional skills and qualifications. In that context, France was particularly interested in the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme and welcomed the international seminar on migration policies in West Africa, to be held in Dakar, to which it would be sending an observer.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.