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EIGHTY-SIXTH SESSION

MIGRATION IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

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1. Migration is one of the **defining global issues** of the early twenty-first century. Approximately 175 million people, including 10.4 million refugees,² reside outside their home country, or put another way, one out of every 35 persons in the world is a migrant. There is no longer a single State that can claim to be untouched by human mobility.

2. The reasons behind this increase in population mobility are numerous, but globalization is often held up as a convenient (although not necessarily satisfactory) explanatory coverall for factors as diverse as the development of cheap and accessible transnational means of transport, the creation of real-time networks of electronic communication, the redefinition of individual and family identities across continents, and the income differences between developed and developing countries.

3. But while in the field of trade enormous steps have been taken towards liberalization of the exchange of capital, goods and services, there have not been equivalent advances in the field of migration.³

4. An analysis of the nature – both present and future – of the relationship between globalization and migration is needed, as well as the necessary policy responses. This analysis can be facilitated by clustering issues into major policy areas for migration management: **(1) migration and development; (2) facilitated migration; (3) migration control; and (4) forced migration.** While forced and abusive types of migration should be prevented, most migration, if properly managed, can be positive for individuals and societies. Regular/facilitated migration is an established feature of today's mobile world. In terms of the global impact of migration, nowhere is this more strikingly apparent than in the area of migration and development where the potential of migration is attracting renewed attention.

5. Below is a small sample of the wide range of issues in each of the management areas that bear further examination and discussion:

Migration and Development

- Globalization can be seen as a facilitator for migration and development. Through advances in communications technology and the decline in travel costs, globalization has made it easier for migrants to “keep in contact” with their country of origin and to establish lasting links with **diasporas and transnational networks.** There is a growing focus on return of talent and

¹ This Paper serves as a brief introduction to the theme chosen by Member States for the International Dialogue on Migration at the Eighty-sixth Session of the IOM Council: “Migration in a Globalized World”. For the purposes of this paper, globalization is broadly understood as a phenomenon characterized by the rapid movement of capital, goods, services, and an unprecedented growth in communication and transportation technologies across the world.

² UNHCR, *Refugees by Numbers 2003*.

³ James F. Hollifield, “The Emerging Migration State”. Paper prepared for a conference on Developments in the Study of International Migration, Princeton, NJ, May 2003, forthcoming in the *International Migration Review*.

skills, even where individual migrants may not necessarily physically or permanently return to their countries of origin.⁴ How can the circulation and return of knowledge, that qualified nationals hold, be furthered? How can links with migrant communities be developed, maintained and usefully promoted?

- Globalization is seen by some, however, as playing a role in reinforcing **disparities** in economic structures, social conditions and political stability between industrialized countries and most of the rest of the world.⁵ If this is the case, what will be its likely long-term impact on the magnitude and nature of migratory flows?
- In the emerging global labour market, the migration of highly-skilled individuals and their families can have positive and negative consequences for both countries of origin and destination. For example, countries of origin might benefit from the transfer of remittances and skills gained abroad, while deploring the **loss of home-grown talent**. On the other hand, countries of destination might welcome the arrival of highly-skilled workers as a way to satisfy growing demand for qualified personnel while acknowledging that excessive reliance on the importation of skills may discourage investment in national training systems. How can policy makers manage better the movement of highly-skilled workers between developing and developed countries to ensure that benefits are maximized and disadvantages minimized?⁶
- In a globalized world, migratory movement is increasingly **circular**. While many migrants still make a permanent unidirectional move with their families, an increasing proportion of migratory movements is temporary in nature. Increasingly countries of origin expect that migrants will maintain financial, cultural and sometimes political links with their home country, which may be difficult to reconcile with the expectation for migrants to integrate on the part of the host country. How can these expectations be balanced? How will individual migrants and their communities meet the challenge of managing multiple identities? Will it be necessary to define and design integration programmes differently in future?
- **Remittances** have become a more prominent source of external funding for developing countries and now surpass official development assistance and, in many cases, foreign direct investment in their contribution to the economies of countries of origin. The total value of remittances transferred through official channels worldwide more than doubled between 1988

⁴ One example of this is the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme which aims to transfer vital skills and resources of the African diaspora to support the development of their countries of origin. This IOM programme is an institutional capacity-building programme in Africa based on a synergy between the profiles of migrants and the demand from countries. For more information, see the publication *MIDA – Migration for Development in Africa*, IOM 2002.

⁵ For example, by proponents of the “global city-dual city hypothesis”. See, for example, Saskia Sassen and Kwame Anthony Appiah (eds.): *Globalization and its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*, New Press, New York 1998. The 1996 *Human Development Report* by the United Nations Development Programme estimated that, between 1960 and 1991, the share of global income of the richest 20 per cent of the world's people rose from 70 per cent to 85 per cent while that of the poorest declined from 2.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent.

⁶ Such as the Commonwealth Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health Workers, in which it is agreed that recruitment should not take place at the cost of depriving source countries of knowledge, skills and expertise.

and 1999. According to the World Bank, in 2001 officially recorded workers' remittances amounted to USD 72.3 billion. The total amount of resources remitted may, however, be two or three times higher, since a large number of transactions are effected through informal channels. In low-income countries, remittances are on average about 1.9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and can be as much as 26.5 per cent (Lesotho), 16.2 per cent (Nicaragua), and 16.1 per cent (Yemen).⁷ Remittances come from both highly-skilled and lower-skilled migrants and therefore both contribute to the development of countries of origin. How can the use of remittances for local development be enhanced? How can migrants' resources be attracted through local investment opportunities? How can the development potential of remittances be maximized?

Facilitated Migration

- A growing number of countries are pursuing policies of **increasing and facilitating the flow of regular labour migrants** as a response to migration pressures, in recognition of real labour market needs and to service an increasingly global economy. The dynamism that migrants can bring to economies and societies is likely to become more important, especially as demographic trends in some countries project a sharp rise in the demand for workers and professionals.⁸ How can regular labour migration be established and managed to be positive for individuals and societies?
- The emergence of **new global partners** involved in managing migration – official and private – are affecting every region of the world. This can be seen in the international recruitment of labour and the increasing, often unregulated, role of private agencies and the business community in this process. How can these new players be identified and encouraged to cooperate in effective migration management and in respecting migrants' rights? How might private agencies, such as recruitment and employment agencies, be better included in policy development?
- In addition to the issues raised above with regard to the migration of the highly skilled, a set of competing interests may exist with regard to the migration of **lower-skilled individuals** and families. Often they accept jobs that nationals do not want, or do so at lower wages and with fewer social benefits than nationals. What global approaches might be needed to reduce the level of vulnerability of these migrants and to ensure that their human rights are protected?
- Once migrants live in a new society, new challenges arise in terms of **integration** – and are relevant for some temporary as well as most permanent migrants. The challenges are multiplied where there is migration of both highly-skilled and lower-skilled migrants or temporary and permanent migrants at the same time. Particular problems can arise when large numbers are involved and migrants are concentrated in certain geographical areas, straining

⁷ *Global Development Finance. Striving for Stability in Development Finance*, The World Bank 2003, p. 157.

⁸ For most Western European countries, a sharp decline in the working-age population is projected to the year 2025. Until 2050, decreases of up to 40 per cent of the working-age population are predicted for, among others, Germany, Poland, Italy and Spain, because of consistently low fertility rates in these countries. *Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?*, United Nations Population Division, New York 2000.

host communities' capacities to provide housing, water, education and health care. Flourishing cultural diversity can be one result; inter-ethnic conflict and xenophobia can be another. How can systems, such as those developed by States but also, for example, those at the local or city level, deal with the number and variety of migrants they are receiving?

Migration Control

- Over the last decades, the ability to ensure the free-flow of *bona fide* visitors and migrants, while also ensuring effective control over the entry and stay of migrants, has become more complex. Irregular migration is escalating and technological advancements provide more refined tools for trafficking and smuggling networks to circumvent government efforts to monitor and control movement. In addition, challenges to national security have become more complex. Recent efforts to combat terrorism have put State security concerns at the forefront of the discussion on international migration. The involvement of transnational organized crime in facilitating irregular movement is also affecting strategies and policy responses.⁹ While the flow of persons across borders has always been monitored with respect to State security, the current discussion is focusing on the possibilities of pre-checking personal profiles and more meticulous efforts to prevent persons identified as possible security threats from crossing borders. How can these security concerns be satisfied while fully respecting migrants' rights and the need for a mobile international workforce?

Forced Migration

- **Refugees and displaced persons** remain a distinct category of people on the move deserving special attention. These issues have been and are being addressed in different forums. But even in the field of forced migration new challenges are emerging in a globalized world. Internal conflicts have overtaken international ones as major threats to international peace and security.¹⁰ How can adequate solutions be found for internally displaced persons (IDPs)? How can effective programmes for post-conflict recovery be established?

6. Numerous issues cut across each of the above four pillars of migration management. The challenges posed by these issues should be addressed in the context of each pillar.

Cross-Cutting Issues

- Women are migrating at increasingly high proportions independently or as heads of family. Governments are recognizing their contribution in terms of remittances and as prime actors for change and development. While migration can empower and emancipate women, **female**

⁹ *The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* are important in this regard. Adopted November 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly, and presented for signature in December 2000 in Palermo. (The Convention came into force on 29 September 2003. The Trafficking Protocol will come into force in December 2003. The Smuggling Protocol will enter into force in January 2004.)

¹⁰ *Human Security Now. Protecting and Empowering People*, New York 2003, Commission on Human Security.

migrants are also in many cases more vulnerable to human rights abuses because of the very fact of being women and foreigners. A particular policy challenge affecting an increasing number of States is the rise in the trafficking of women and children. How can employers and States ensure that women migrants are not cornered in gender-segregated and unregulated sectors of the economy, such as domestic work, entertainment and the sex industry? How can it be assured that female migrants are protected by labour legislation or policy?

- Globalization has introduced new health patterns and is affecting cultural understanding of health prevention and treatment. Modern migration **health** calls for identifying and managing cross-cultural health issues, while reducing disparities, and moving beyond infectious disease control, to include non-communicable organic diseases and psychosocial well-being. Health and social conditions of vulnerable groups such as migrants in an irregular situation, internally displaced persons and trafficked persons are aggravated, and often compounded by lack of access to health care and prevention services. How can policy makers establish a global public health system inclusive of all migrants and mobile populations, to effectively bridge public health policies and health management strategies between source, transit, destination and return countries?
 - There are a growing number of migrants in an irregular situation, and others who are not clearly protected by a specific legal regime. This is often coupled with abuses of rights as a consequence of exploitation and discrimination. How can partners involved in migration management work towards the effective respect of **migrants' rights**?¹¹ How can awareness be increased of the difficulties migrants often face and of the rights to which they are entitled?
7. From a more systematic perspective, it is possible to analyse and study the impact of globalization on migration at several distinct levels.

The individual level

8. The migration process, which can also be thought of as a **life cycle process**, has **different implications** at each stage of the life cycle for each individual migrant. It begins with the decision of the individual or family to migrate, moving typically through the various stages of travel, entry, and settlement, acquisition of nationality and/or return and reintegration. Highly-skilled migrants might find themselves welcomed and valued in their new communities with opportunities for integration and advancement and the opening up of labour markets in the highly-skilled sector.¹² At the same time, comparatively few opportunities may be available for the lower-skilled workers. Their services are needed but few legal channels of immigration are open to them. As a

¹¹ In Asia, for example, consultations for Asian labour-sending countries were held at the ministerial level in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2003. The protection and provision of services to migrant workers, optimizing the benefits of organized labour migration, capacity-building, and data collection were discussed as activities for regional cooperation.

¹² For example, in 2003, Germany's green-card programme for the admission and employment of foreigners, launched in August 2000, was extended until the end of 2004, and the limit of 20,000 cards removed. Furthermore, a new immigration law that continues to allow the admission of highly-skilled non-European Union (EU) foreigners is under negotiation in Germany. European Union leaders including the British and Swedish Prime Ministers, are calling for the opening of EU States to immigration.

consequence, they might find themselves trapped in a situation where they can neither achieve regular migration status in the host country, nor easily return to their country of origin, because they lack the means, fear home community pressure, or may face fines or other penalties.¹³ Accompanying dependants may find themselves facing yet other challenges during the migration process. How can these **different situations** for individual migrants be addressed effectively in terms of migration policy? How can the migration process and migration opportunities be made more transparent to individuals?

The national level

9. While migration is about individual people, people make up society. Migration touches many different aspects of society, including education, health, social welfare, employment, trade, security, development, integration and culture. The **variety of stakeholders** involved in various capacities and at various stages of the migration process includes not only different levels of government, but also civil society organizations and the business community, adding complexity to migration policy development and migration management. With globalization, not only are there more people on the move, but these people come from more diverse countries, thereby posing additional challenges.

10. Because of the variety of stakeholders and the complexity of the migration process, there may be differing opinions and approaches to migration management depending upon the focus of the agency involved. This means that there might be an agency which promotes trade in services and is looking at labour agreements; an agency, which deals with integration issues for all categories of migrants or an agency dealing primarily with migrants in an irregular situation and developing mechanisms to control those flows. In a world where complex migratory situations coexist, internal communication and cooperation to develop comprehensive and effective migration management policies and programmes are increasingly recognized as vital.

The international level

11. By its very nature, international migration involves more than one country. With the increase in mobility and in particular the increase in irregular migration, international cooperation in migration management is seen more and more as a necessity. There is, however, **no global framework** for international migration management, notwithstanding the existence of numerous bilateral agreements and examples of regional and international cooperation in managing certain aspects of international migration.¹⁴

12. Cooperative methods to manage international migration are largely still at a preliminary stage, although currently there are several efforts under way to explore needs and identify options for action. At the regional level, the last ten years have seen a rapid expansion of regional consultative

¹³ This situation can also be seen as explaining the pressures in some countries on asylum systems, which are often the only available channel for migration.

¹⁴ For an illustration of multilateral, regional and bilateral cooperative arrangements in the management of migration, 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.

mechanisms on migration.¹⁵ At the global level, IOM's International Dialogue on Migration, the Berne Initiative and the forthcoming Global Commission on International Migration each have a different specific focus and purpose, but share a common desire to improve understanding of international migration and to enhance international cooperation in this field.

CONCLUSION

13. The global liberalization of trade and the magnitude of capital flows impact directly on people. Even if borders are transcended easily by information and capital flows, the same is not true for people. And the issues surrounding the movement of people are, by their nature, far more complex and multifaceted than those involving the movement of goods or capital.

14. Large numbers of people move freely, without help and without need of protection. There are, however, many aspects of migratory movements that still need attention to **make the system work better**, to ensure that aspects such as health are not neglected, to improve and facilitate authorized movements, to assist with effective border control, and to maintain the support of public opinion for migration-friendly policies and successful integration. At the same time, the protection of migrants' rights, policy debate, information gathering, research, advocacy, public information and education are themes which cut across each of the four pillars of migration management.

15. How can the international community ensure compatibility between the major changes and adjustments being made on an international scale and the impacts on communities and individuals? The fostering of economic and social stability and development worldwide, while also respecting the rights and integrity of migrants, is one of the major challenges of the globalized world of the twenty-first century as the international community sets a course for managing migration in today's mobile world.

¹⁵ For more information on this topic, see "IOM's Role in enhancing Regional Dialogues on Migration" prepared for the Eighty-sixth Session of the IOM Council.