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EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION

YEAR IN REVIEW

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1. Migration is a key policy priority for the international community. Developments in 2004 underscore the growing recognition of migration as a process that is not only inevitable in the context of globalization, but one that also carries significant benefits for States and individuals, if well managed. Renewed attention has been given to cooperative strategies for migration management reflecting the notion that successful approaches are based on shared interests at inter-State and global levels. Multilateral initiatives, processes and strategies described in this paper, including the International Dialogue on Migration, the Berne Initiative, the Global Commission on International Migration, the Strategic Framework for a Policy of Migration in Africa, the International Labour Conference, the 5+5 Dialogue, the Ministerial Consultations on Labour Migration in Asia, the European Union-Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-LAC) dialogue and others, are all signs of a new readiness to look for opportunities for cooperation and true partnership among States, migrants and other stakeholders in the pursuit of more orderly and beneficial migration worldwide.

2. Trends in 2004 have also highlighted the growing recognition of migration as a phenomenon that is inextricably linked to other key policy areas including security, development, trade, health and environment. For example, the continued remarkable growth in migrant remittances has underscored the importance of the link between migration and development, a fact recognized at the G8 Heads of State Summit Meeting in June 2004, and reflected in its action plan.¹ Not surprisingly, in 2004 an increasing number of actors have called for greater policy coherence across the wide spectrum of policy areas that affect, and are affected by, migration.

3. This paper serves as background to the Year in Review session of the International Dialogue on Migration, at the IOM Council in 2004. As the scope of the paper does not permit comprehensive treatment of all noteworthy developments, this paper will focus on: (1) a brief overview of recent trends in international mobility as reflected in data made available in 2004; and (2) describing the two major policy developments identified above, namely, the increased interest in cooperative approaches to migration management, and the growing recognition of the interconnectedness of migration with other key policy areas.

I. RECENT TRENDS IN MOBILITY

4. A salient trend in contemporary international mobility is the increasing number of people moving for employment reasons to a country other than their own, especially on a temporary basis. Significantly, the Ninety-second Conference of the International Labour Organization in

¹ The document pledges to facilitate remittances to help families and small businesses in developing countries, see *G8 Action Plan: Applying The Power of Entrepreneurship to The Eradication Of Poverty*, Sea Island, Georgia, June 2004.

Geneva, held in June 2004, highlighted the fact that **labour migration** is now the concern of virtually all countries in the world as active participants in a globalized labour market.²

5. Demographic trends in developed countries, including **population decline**, have made foreign labour recruitment increasingly necessary to meet domestic labour market needs, and have prompted widespread recognition among governments that labour migration constitutes an essential component of comprehensive migration management systems. **Ageing** populations have also created unprecedented demands in the health-care sector, in particular, at all skill levels. As one tool to support the increasing demand of ageing populations, governments have begun to consider more seriously ways of increasing the labour force participation rates of immigrants who are already present in their countries through strengthened integration policies. A recent European Commission Communication states that migrant integration will be one of the keys to “mastering (the) economic transformation” in the European Union.³ Equally important, migrant integration is an essential ingredient for social cohesion.

6. In developing countries, **population growth** coupled with high rates of unemployment and under-employment continues to prompt governments to seek opportunities for their nationals abroad. A continuing concern of these countries is the protection of the rights and welfare of their nationals abroad.

7. The ever growing **mobility of highly-skilled** migrants is perhaps one of the most significant trends in contemporary migration dynamics. While the average increase for all categories of migrant labour in OECD countries between 1995 and 2000 was 3 to 4 per cent, the skilled migrant workforce increased annually by 35 per cent in the United Kingdom and 14 per cent in the United States.⁴ This trend continues today as more countries reform their immigration frameworks to accommodate the demands of their knowledge-based economies for highly-skilled workers, particularly in the IT, health, teaching and science sectors. For example, the groundbreaking German immigration law creates avenues to facilitate the recruitment of highly-skilled foreign nationals. This is the first legislation acknowledging Germany as a country of immigration.

8. Concerns over “**brain drain**” remain high in many developing countries, especially in Africa where the health and education sectors have been particularly affected by a skill exodus. The African Union (AU) has made countering brain drain a top policy priority for the continent, and in its *Mission and Vision* and *Strategic Plan* put engaging the African **diaspora** in the development of the continent at the centre of its policy and programmatic activities in 2004. The problem of brain drain was also discussed during the 2004 International Labour Conference and the 2004 World Health Assembly and led to a call for exploration of options for the ethical recruitment of health and education professionals, including through the development of bilateral and multilateral mechanisms.

² *Towards a Fair Deal for Migrant Workers in the Global Economy*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2004 (hereinafter “ILO”).

³ COM (2003) 336 *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, on Immigration, Integration and Employment*.

⁴ ILO, p.10.

9. Attracting foreign students has become an increasingly important mechanism for countries wishing to compete for highly-skilled labour. Several countries have adopted measures to facilitate immigration procedures for students and their entry into labour markets upon completion of their studies. As a consequence, **dramatic increases in student mobility** have been registered in most industrialized countries. In Europe, the largest increases in the past years have been in the admissions of students from developing countries.⁵ Growing student mobility is also evident in Asia. Japan has steadily increased its intake of foreign students from 10,428 in 1983 to 109,508 in 2003.⁶

10. Temporary **movement of lower-skilled labour** is also increasing. Several countries have created programmes for temporary recruitment of lower-skilled labour and/or raised their existing quotas. Expanded seasonal agricultural worker programmes and “working holiday-maker” schemes account for a large proportion of the increases in several European countries. Effective 17 August 2004, the Republic of Korea introduced a new Employment Permit System for lower-skilled migrant workers. By concluding a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding with several selected countries of origin, the Republic of Korea now allows migrant workers entry for renewable periods of one to three years, and grants foreign workers labour rights which are more or less equal to those of local workers. The impetus behind these reforms was the belief that a better managed labour migration system would protect migrant workers from exploitation while addressing labour shortages in specific industries in a more systematic fashion.

11. On 1 May 2004, **ten new countries joined the European Union (EU)**, constituting the biggest expansion in EU history. Prior to enlargement, anxieties over the right to freedom of movement within the EU led to concerns in many Member States about a potential flood of low-cost labour from the “East” overwhelming national labour markets. But the migratory impact of enlargement on existing EU Members has been less dramatic than many feared. This may be due, in part, to the transition arrangements that restrict some labour movement. Perhaps the most interesting migration trend in relation to the new Member States, particularly those of Central Europe, is not their potential for emigration to Western Europe, but rather their own gradual transformation from countries of origin to countries of transit and destination. Although the pace of this transformation varies from State to State, available data suggest that this process has, to a greater or lesser extent, taken hold across the region.⁷

12. The Second Asian Ministerial Consultations on Labour Migration were held on 22 to 24 September 2004 in Manila, with the prime objective of improving the management of labour migration flows from the region. The work programme was built around the three major themes identified as being of priority interest at the inaugural Ministerial Consultations in April 2003: Protection of and Provision of Services to Migrant Workers; Optimizing Benefits of Organized Labour Migration; and Capacity-Building, Data Collection and Inter-State Cooperation. Participants reviewed the progress achieved over the previous 12 months and discussed the

⁵ Christiane Kuptsch, *Foreign Students in Europe: Between Red Carpet and Red Card*, IILS, September 2003.

⁶ Migration News, April 2004, Volume 11, Number 2.

⁷ World Migration Report, 2005, forthcoming.

outcomes of specific research projects. Recommendations on further work orientations were agreed to, including the implementation of a pilot Migrant Worker Resource Centre.

13. The trend towards the **feminization of migration** is becoming more pronounced as global demand for female labour increases, particularly in lower-skilled service sector jobs.⁸ Although women have always migrated in numbers almost equal to men, global trends empowering women are providing women with a greater capacity to migrate alone. Compared to earlier flows that were primarily related to family reunification, a growing proportion of female migrants are migrating for employment reasons and as principal wage earners.⁹ Already in 2000, women outnumbered men among the international migrants in developed countries.¹⁰

14. **Migrant remittances** continue to rise. In 2003, global remittance flows to developing countries totalled an estimated USD 93 billion through official channels alone.¹¹ This figure exceeds by almost a third the total sum of USD 68.5 billion industrialized countries spent on assistance to developing countries in that same year. According to some estimates, remittance flows will rise to USD 100 billion in 2004.¹² Nowhere is the importance of remittances more strikingly evident than in Latin America, which received USD 38 billion in remittances in 2003,¹³ exceeding foreign direct investment and development assistance flows combined. According to the Inter-American Dialogue, remittances have become the single most valuable source of new capital for Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁴

15. **Irregular migration** continues to pose major challenges for States in every region, and has focused increased attention on border and internal controls. Security concerns relating to international terrorism have fuelled this trend, not least after the terrorist bombings in Madrid in March 2004, killing more than 200 people. Estimating the scope of irregular flows continues to be a challenging and controversial issue for countries of destination.

16. New revised figures on **trafficking** in persons released by the US Department of State in its annual report on trafficking in June 2004 indicate that between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked annually across international borders worldwide.¹⁵ It is believed that a significant proportion of victims are women and children, trafficked for sexual exploitation. The body of research on trends and patterns of trafficking continued to expand rapidly in 2004.¹⁶

⁸ *Women and International Migration*, World Survey of Women and Development, June 2004, draft.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ World Migration Report, 2005, forthcoming; *Trends in International Migration*, OECD Annual Report, edition 2004, forthcoming; *ILO* 2004.

¹¹ House of Commons International Development Committee, *Migration and Development: How to make Migration Work for Poverty Reduction*, Sixth Report of Session 2003-4, Vol. 1.

¹² *Global Trends*, Migration News, April 2004, Volume 11, Number 2.

¹³ Inter-American Development Bank, Press Release, 2004.

¹⁴ *All in the Family, Latin America's Most Important International Financial Flow*, Inter-American Dialogue Task Force on Remittances, January 2004.

¹⁵ *Trafficking in Persons Report*, US Department of State, June 2004.

¹⁶ In 2004, IOM will publish a *Global Survey of Research on Trafficking* in a special issue of its journal *International Migration*.

17. Intensified inter-State cooperation in efforts to combat **trafficking and smuggling** was evident in every region of the world in 2004. Significant developments at the international level include the entering into force of the two Protocols to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime relating to trafficking and smuggling in late 2003 and early 2004, respectively.¹⁷ In April 2004, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights decided to appoint a new Special Rapporteur who will focus on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, for a period of three years.

18. At regional levels, **inter-State cooperation** is improving in the area of counter-trafficking activities and irregular migration. Governments in Asia are placing greater emphasis on enhancing measures against trafficking as well as smuggling and other forms of irregular migration. Various events held under the auspices of the Bali Process have led to strengthened networking and greater cooperation among participating countries, including the further development of bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. In Africa, the AU has made counter-trafficking one of its top three policy priorities and has engaged in bilateral discussions with the European Union on a joint Plan of Action to combat trafficking, most recently at the Second Ordinary Session of the AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission meeting in Cotonou, Benin, in April 2004.

19. Global **refugee numbers** have fallen sharply in recent years,¹⁸ and **asylum applications** lodged in 30 industrialized countries in the first six months of 2004 dropped sharply (-22 per cent) compared with the same period last year.¹⁹

II. POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

(a) Enhanced Inter-State Cooperation at Global and Regional Levels

20. The focus of IOM's **International Dialogue on Migration** in 2004 has been on demonstrating that in order to manage migration cooperatively, it is important to find common ground and complementary objectives at national, regional and global levels. Two key policy areas where enhanced dialogue and cooperation are growing in importance were chosen for the two intersessional workshops this year: migration and health and migration and trade.

21. The seminar on **Migration and Health** (9 to 11 June 2004), organized in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control, brought together health and migration officials for an exchange of views on health and migration policy concerns, with particular focus on the public health implications of increasingly mobile

¹⁷ The *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, entered into force on 25 December 2003. The *Protocol Against Smuggling By Land, Sea or Air*, entered into force on 28 January 2004.

¹⁸ UNHCR Director of Protection, Executive Committee, 7 October 2004.

¹⁹ *Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries, January to June 2004*, UNHCR, 27 August 2004.

populations. Its primary goals were to build capacity and enhance understanding of the relationship between health and population mobility by providing a forum where policy makers, practitioners and other stakeholders could meet and exchange perspectives and experiences. Participants concluded that the challenge was not to limit movements, but to better understand the implications of population movements for health in order to develop improved public health responses and policies.²⁰

22. In recognition of the ongoing and sustained debate on trade and migration, IOM organized the seminar on **Trade and Migration** (4 to 5 October 2004), in collaboration with the World Trade Organization and the World Bank to explore in greater depth the lessons to be learned from the actual experience of governments in managing the movement of people for Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).²¹

23. IOM's membership has already determined that the first intersessional workshop of 2005 will be held on the topic of **Migration and Development**. It will examine not only concerns such as brain drain and the labour market impact of migrants, but also the potential for migrants abroad to contribute to development in their countries of origin.

24. At the **Berne Initiative**²² Consultations in 2003, government experts from all regions of the world strongly supported the development of a non-binding policy framework to assist in developing effective mechanisms for managing migration and facilitating inter-State cooperation on migration, fully respecting State sovereignty. In 2004, IOM and the Swiss Government convened four regional consultations in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas to enable governments from around the world to contribute directly to the development of this framework resource – *International Agenda for Migration Management*. These regional meetings offered a platform for the exchange of views and experiences on migration issues, and demonstrated strong enthusiasm for the development of the agenda and the continuation of the Berne Initiative process. On 16 to 17 December 2004, the Swiss Government will hold a conference in Berne to review the results of the regional consultations and explore the next steps in the Berne Initiative process.

25. On 1 January 2004, the **Global Commission on International Migration** (GCIM) began its work with a mandate to place migration squarely on the global policy agenda in order to promote more deliberate international action, collaboration and debate on this important phenomenon.²³ The GCIM is an independent body established with the backing of Sweden and

²⁰ Conference proceedings for the seminar on Migration and Health, 9 to 11 June 2004, are available at http://www.iom.int/en/know/idm/smh_200406.shtml.

²¹ The 4 to 5 October 2004 Seminar was a follow-up on the IOM-OECD-WB seminar on Trade and Migration held from 12 to 14 November 2003.

²² The goal of the Berne Initiative, launched in 2001 by the Swiss Government, is to achieve more effective management of migration at the regional and global levels through enhanced cooperation among States.

²³ See GCIM web site for more information, <http://www.gcim.org/>.

Switzerland and a core group of States.²⁴ The GCIM has held regional hearings in Manila and Cairo to gather information and viewpoints from governments and other stakeholders. Additional hearings are planned for late 2004 and early 2005, and the Commission's report to the Secretary General is due in July 2005.

26. Numerous **forums on international migration** took place in 2004. Two key events were the World Congress on Human Movements and Immigration in September 2004 as part of the larger Barcelona Cultural Forum, attracting more than 1,500 participants from around the world, and the Ninth International Metropolis Conference hosted in Geneva in September/October 2004, with the theme "Cooperative Migration Management: International, National and Local Answers".

27. Movement towards greater inter-State cooperation is also evident at regional levels. In Africa, the AU has moved closer to the adoption of a comprehensive framework for managing migration for the African continent. In March 2004, the African Union, in collaboration with IOM and other partners,²⁵ submitted a **draft strategic framework for a policy of migration in Africa**.²⁶ This framework document has been the subject of discussion and consultation, including at the AU Heads of State Summit in July 2004. It is envisaged that the draft framework will be discussed by the regional economic commissions before being adopted at the next AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission in 2005.

28. The EU remains the region that is most advanced in the development of harmonized approaches to migration policy and legislation. Under the **Irish and Dutch EU Presidencies**, the development of common policies in these areas has remained a priority. In its Communication of 2 June 2004,²⁷ the EC assessed the achievements of the five years of implementation of the Tampere I agenda for the creation of an EU Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, and set future guidelines for a new Justice and Home Affairs agenda for the years to come. It placed integration of legal immigrants, the fight against illegal immigration and terrorism, and promotion of a common policy of management of migratory flows, including the facilitation of legal admission of migrants, at the top of the agenda. The Communication also noted the need to develop a common European asylum procedure.

29. Interregional level dialogue is increasing as evidenced by the Cooperation Process in the Western Mediterranean, also known as the 5+5 Dialogue.²⁸ The third Ministerial Meeting on

²⁴ Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Holy See and the EC/EU. The Core Group is chaired by Switzerland and Sweden.

²⁵ International Labour Office (ILO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Migration Policy Programme (IMP), World Health Organization (WHO).

²⁶ The Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers adopted Decision CM/Dec 614 (LXXIV) in Lusaka, Zambia, July 2001, on the "Establishment of a strategic framework for a policy of migration in Africa".

²⁷ COM (2004) 4002 final; Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Assessment of the Tampere programme and future orientations, Brussels, 2 June 2004.

²⁸ Algeria, France, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia.

Migration in the Western Mediterranean, held on 15 and 16 September 2004 in Algiers,²⁹ brought together ministers of participating States to work on regional cooperative approaches in the field of migration management. Particular attention was given to the issue of transit migration in the Maghreb, which has become a key transit area for irregular migrants trying to reach Europe. Participants also defined practical ways to involve migrants in the sustainable development of their countries of origin through the transfer of skilled human resources, remittances, investments and microcredit schemes. This dialogue has led to programmes for exchanges and training of human resources in order to optimize the management of legal migration, as well as sharing operational information on migration flows within the region, such as the Technical Seminar on Challenges and Responses to Irregular Migration in the Western Mediterranean (5+4 mechanism) organized by IOM in June 2004 in Tripoli (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya).

30. In connection with the May 2004 EU-LAC Summit of Guadalajara, an EU-LAC meeting on migration brought together 70 government experts of the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean in Quito in March 2004. This interregional dialogue explored assessments of migration flows, the benefits and challenges of migration for countries of origin, transit and destination, remittances, brain drain, illegal migration, including trafficking and smuggling of human beings, as well as policy responses to the migration phenomenon in the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean.

(b) Linking Migration to other Key Areas of Governance

31. Given increasing awareness of the benefits migration can bring to countries of origin and destination alike, including benefits of labour migration, remittances, enhanced foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, skills circulation and flows of knowledge and ideas, and of the role of migrants as agents of development, calls are frequently made to better integrate migration in national and international development frameworks.

32. On 29 June 2004, the United Kingdom House of Commons International Development Committee issued a landmark report³⁰ on migration and development, acknowledging that “there is a development dimension to migration, but there is a lack of joined-up thinking at national and international levels, and some resistance to connecting the issues.” The report called for concerted efforts to achieve policy coherence on migration and development. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached the same conclusion in 2004, stating that “[i]ncreased aid and other actions need to be part of a coherent overall approach to supporting development” which includes assessment of many cross-cutting policy areas, such as migration.³¹ There are positive signs that national actors are beginning to move in this direction. Sweden’s recent “integrated global development policy” is one such example.

²⁹ <http://www.iom.int/dialogue5-5>

³⁰ *Migration and Development: How to Make Migration Work for Poverty Reduction*, Sixth Report of Session 2003-04, Vol. 1, House of Commons International Development Committee.

³¹ *Global Monitoring Report 2004, Policies and Actions for Achieving the MDGs and related Outcomes*, 16 April 2004, World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

33. On 1 April 2004, IOM took the initiative to host an informal inter-agency round table on migration and development, to exchange information on the migration and development interests and activities of the participating organizations.³² All agreed that informal exchange on this topic should continue, and further meetings on specific issues are planned.

Conclusion

34. International migration has continued to grow in 2004, especially in the area of temporary labour migration, posing a range of challenges to States across different areas of governance. Both as a cause and consequence of rising mobility, there is growing interest at inter-State, regional and global levels for cooperative strategies for managing migration, and greater efforts are being made to examine the interlinkages of migration with other key policy areas in the interest of developing more coherent and beneficial strategies.

³² Nine organizations (ILO, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNHCR, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), WHO, World Bank) plus IOM participated.