



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
PERMANENT MISSION AT GENEVA

**Keynote Speech by Vice Foreign Minister QIAO Zonghuai
of the People's Republic of China at the High-level Panel
Debate of the International Dialogue on Migration
Geneva, November 30, 2004**

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to be back in Geneva, a beautiful garden city, to attend the high-level International Dialogue on Migration and to exchange views on migration issues with my friends, both old and new. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I would like to thank the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for launching this Dialogue and I wish it a complete success.

It is very meaningful to set "Valuing Migration" as the theme of this year's dialogue. In-depth exploration of the benefits, opportunities and challenges of migration today will undoubtedly help us foster a deeper comprehension of migration dynamics and probe into effective migration management so as to promote exchanges among the peoples around the world and the development of global economy.

Mr. Chairman,

Migration is not a new term. It can be traced back to the ancient times. More than 2000 years ago, exchange of personnel and trade of goods were realized between Asia and Europe through the "Silk Road". In the 15th century, Columbus' discovery of the New Continent speeded up the migration between the European and American continents. Both contemporary and modern world history has proved that normal migration has contributed to economic and social development of, and cultural exchanges among, all countries, to optimal allocation of talents, technology and capital, and to cooperation and common development of the countries around the world. It's fair to say that migration is an inevitable outcome of the development of the human society and a significant symbol for the progress of humanity.

Mr. Chairman,

When discussing migration issues, if we only focus on the details, we will not get the overall picture, let alone bearing in mind political, economic, historical, social and other macro-perspectives. In today's world, maintaining world peace and achieving common development are the universal aspiration of mankind. World multi-polarization, economic globalization and rapid scientific and technological advancement provide favorable conditions and opportunities for the regular flow of population in the world.

However, we should not fail to see that the world is still far from tranquil and peace is far beyond reach. There is still unfair distribution of globalization dividends, widening gap between the South and the North, slow implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and marginalization of many developing countries. At the same time, traditional and non-traditional security threats still exist and are gaining new developments. Terrorism, drug trafficking, transnational crimes and other international problems have complicated the regular and orderly human migration around the world and brought forth new challenges to the world migration.

How to properly address the issue of global migration under the new situation? I believe that we should work hard along the following lines:

First, have a correct approach towards migrants. For a long time, though being far away from their homeland, migrants, with their hard work and wisdom, have made tremendous contributions to promoting economic development and social progress of recipient countries, and to cultural exchanges in the world. Against the backdrop of globalization, the countries in the world have their interests intertwined and thus have become interdependent. Migrants should not be regarded as a great scourge. On the contrary, regular flow of migrants can complement each other's advantages, spread civilizations and carry forward and create advanced science and technology. This serves the common interests of all countries.

Second, address both the symptom and the root cause of the problem. The irrational international political and economic order is the root cause leading to illegal migration. The fundamental solution to illegal migration is to gradually narrow the gap between the rich and the poor countries in the world, and to achieve common economic development and comprehensive social justice. The developed countries should honor their commitments of providing the developing countries with assistance in capital, trade, debt relief, technical support and human resources development so as to help them realize sustainable development. The developing countries, on their part, should strive for development through unity, step up South-South cooperation, introduce useful experiences from other countries and adopt roads of development suitable to their own national conditions.

Third, manage to improve policies, laws and regulations. At present, the global issue of illegal migration is prominent. It is partly because some countries lack fully complete policies on migration. Irrational and restrictive policies and measures hinder

legal and orderly migration. Some other countries confuse asylum with illegal migration and even mix political factors into the issue. The international community should persistently improve migration policies in all countries, protect legitimate rights and interests of migrants and oppose discriminative policies. Under the principle of “providing legal channels while blocking illegal ones”, the international community should promote regular and orderly migration, integrate normal migration into local eco-socio environments and restrain illegal activities of migration to the maximum.

Fourth, strengthen international exchanges and cooperation. It is a shared responsibility of all source, transit and target countries to effectively manage migration and fight against illegal migration activities. This is an undertaking beyond the capacity of any single country. The international community should step up cooperation following the principles of international solidarity, shared responsibility, mutual respect and equality and mutual benefit. The developed countries should provide the developing countries with necessary funds and technical assistance so as to improve their capacity to prevent and combat illegal migration. Relevant international and regional organizations such as the IOM can play a bigger role in promoting international cooperation and assisting the capacity building of developing countries.

Fifth, crack down on people smuggling. People smuggling and human trafficking masterminded by transnational criminal organizations are serious violations of human rights, which should be dealt with severely. In the meantime, we should recognize that illegal migrants are as much law-breakers as victims. Countries, therefore, should grant them basic humanitarian treatment and render them necessary assistance. Strengthened international cooperation against organized crimes is of vital importance to reducing illegal migration and protecting the fundamental rights of illegal migrants.

Sixth, make comprehensive studies on various challenging issues. Countries differ in geographic locations, history, cultural traditions, development stages as well as reasons of having migrants. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out in-depth research into migration and relevant new issues, and follow the development of legal migration. Issues like Secondary Movement, internal migrants and hi-tech illegal migrants are new and thorny, which need to be differentiated and closely studied. We have taken note that the Global Commission on International Migration organized multiple regional dialogues during the past year and actively engaged itself in the study of migration. We look forward to a high-quality report by the Commission to be submitted to the UN Secretary-General.

Mr. Chairman,

China is not an immigration country in the traditional term. However, the Chinese Government has attached importance to the issue of migration and actively promoted normal migration globally. In recent years, the Chinese Government has taken a series

of appropriate measures, such as: put in place the Green Card system, which will facilitate the exit, entry and residence of those foreigners who meet the criteria of permanent residence in China; increase visa-issuance ports and expand the functions of the ports; simplify the procedures for visa application, open more channels for overseas-bound tourism and standardize the management of tourism in border areas. These measures have maintained the normal exit and entry order and protected and promoted legal migration.

At the same time, the Chinese Government has firmly opposed illegal migration and dealt severely with trans-national organized crimes such as people smuggling and human trafficking. Now, a legal system, propped by the Criminal Law and supported by relevant administrative rules and regulations, has taken shape in China to effectively fight against illegal migration and harshly punish law-offenders. We are now improving the management of passports, and stepping up R&D to improve the forgery-proof level of tourism certificates as well as forgery-identification capacity. In addition, we have strengthened border control and investigation and crackdown of human-trafficking offenses. We have also utilized newspapers, TVs, networks and other forms of media, combined with community and school education, to improve the public awareness of relevant laws and policies and of the harm of illegal migration so that they will consciously abide by relevant laws and regulations. All these have achieved notable results.

China values and has actively participated in international cooperation in the area of migration. China has cooperated with 40-plus countries including Asia-Pacific and EU member countries to fight against illegal exit and entry activities. China has been an active participant in activities of regional cooperation mechanisms such as Regional Ministerial Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process) as well as Intergovernmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants (APC). China and the EU Commission have held multiple consultations on various levels and conducted relevant cooperation projects.

Mr. Chairman,

China highly values the positive role of IOM in assisting countries in resolving issues concerning migration. In June 2001, China became an observer of IOM, adding a new chapter in the cooperation between China and IOM. Since then, China and IOM have engaged in a series of diversified and productive cooperation. I hereby wish to reiterate that China will continue to intensify cooperation with other countries and relevant international organizations including IOM in the area of migration, with a view to promoting normal migration and lasting world peace and development.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.