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NINETIETH SESSION

YEAR IN REVIEW

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1. This paper serves as background to the *Year in Review* session of the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) at the Council. As the scope of the paper does not permit comprehensive treatment of all noteworthy developments, this paper focuses on key policy developments at global, regional and national levels, as well as thematic issues of particular relevance to the IDM's theme *Towards Policy Coherence on Migration*.

I. GLOBAL LEVEL

2. Over the last 12 months, migration has received exceptional prominence on the world scene. First, in December 2004, the **International Agenda for Migration Management (IAMM)**, a non-binding reference system and policy framework on migration management was finalized by states following a broad consultative process with the advice and support of relevant regional and international organizations, NGOs and independent migration experts. The IAMM is now available to assist government policy makers and migration practitioners in building capacity to manage migration effectively, and to facilitate interstate cooperation. As part of this effort, a study of interstate cooperation in the migration field was conducted, resulting in four regional papers and one global analysis that stress, in particular, the growing significance of regional consultative processes. A key question raised in the study is, therefore, to what extent regional consultative processes can become building blocks towards greater interstate cooperation at the global level.¹

3. A number of capacity building activities at regional and national levels have been undertaken in 2005 on the basis of the IAMM. For example, the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) convened a capacity building workshop based on the IAMM and on IOM's recently developed **Essentials of Migration Management (EMM)**, a new Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners. A similar workshop is planned for countries of the ECOWAS region in mid-November. At the national level, in coordination with IOM, countries as diverse as Nigeria, Iran, Bangladesh, Albania and Iraq are conducting national capacity building workshops and/or national migration policy reviews on the basis of these tools.

4. The EMM and the IAMM serve as tools for the development of coherent migration policies. They were presented to IOM's membership at a September 2005 workshop in Geneva on **Developing Capacity to Manage Migration** to assist their national and regional efforts to develop the necessary capacity to manage migration.

5. Convened at the request of the UN Secretary-General, the independent **Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM)**² presented its report **Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action** on 5 October, the culmination of its 18 months of research and consultation on international migration. The report, which is intended

¹ The IAMM is available on IOM's website at http://www.iom.int//DOCUMENTS/OFFICIALTXT/EN/IAMM_E.pdf and on the website of the Federal Office for Migration at http://www.bfm.admin.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Themen_deutsch/Internationales/The_Berne_Initiative/IAMM_E.pdf. See also *Interstate Cooperation and Migration: Berne Initiative Studies*, IOM, Geneva, 2005.

² See GCIM website for more information, www.gcim.org

to provide a framework for a comprehensive, global response to the issue of international migration, emphasizes the importance of policy coherence - at the national level within governments, among states, among international institutions, engaging relevant stakeholders, and between migration and related policy domains such as development, trade, aid and human rights. The importance of capacity building to enable states to address international migration was also emphasized. The report reflects IOM's central role in the international management of migration, particularly as regards its economic and social dimensions. A key recommendation of the GCIM is the creation of a mechanism for better information sharing and coordination among all international institutions concerned with migration – an Inter-Agency Global Migration Facility.

6. Preliminary discussions have been held this year in preparation for the **High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development** to take place in the UN General Assembly in September 2006.

II. REGIONAL LEVEL

7. Critical to creating coherence between countries so as to enhance prospects for successful and mutually beneficial migration are initiatives fostering interstate dialogue and cooperation. Key among these are Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) on migration, which bring states together for informal and non-binding dialogue and information exchange.

8. Of particular note is that in 2005, **IOM and the GCIM brought together for the first time representatives of nine major RCPs** in April to explore, among other things, the contribution of RCPs to the governance of migration at the national and international level.³ The workshop demonstrated that RCPs have an effect on regional coherence and that they stimulate efforts to achieve coherence at the national level. In addition, RCPs generate and sustain communication networks among policy makers. Lastly, through activities such as workshops, training and operational projects, RCPs build the capacity of participating states to manage migration.

9. The **Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia** achieved a significant breakthrough this year in its efforts to promote more cooperative and beneficial overseas employment, by including in their September consultations in **Bali**, Indonesia, important countries of destination of overseas workers. It became clear that countries of both origin and destination share similar concerns and interests in the global labour market: the construction and **good management of a fair system** that works for the benefit of all. The unscrupulous practices of some recruitment agencies were of concern to all countries. Participating countries agreed on a number of recommendations to improve the welfare of overseas workers and optimize the benefits of organized overseas employment. This included the **need for better information and training**, efforts towards a **minimum wage system**, addressing problems faced by **employers** in the recruitment process, and **capacity building**.

³ The final report is available on IOM's website at http://www.iom.int/en/know/iom-gcim/iom_gcim_200504.shtml and on GCIM's website at http://www.gcim.org/news/?sec=gcimevents&lang=en_US&nav=&id=2005/04/15/03.

10. In the framework of the **Western Mediterranean Dialogue on Migration (5+5)**, a seminar on Migration and Development was organized by Algeria and IOM in Algiers in June 2005. It reinforced the 5+5 process and the importance of such events for the sharing of views on topics of common interest in an informal context.

11. The Concluding Meeting of the Follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference (**CIS Conference**) took place on 10 October 2005 in Geneva. Participants agreed on new arrangements to replace the process which, taken together, would provide a flexible, action-oriented and states-owned framework for structured dialogue and coherent cooperation on a comprehensive range of issues related to migration, asylum and displacement.

12. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the **Regional Conference on Migration** (Puebla Process) has continued to work towards bridging the perceived divisions between sending, receiving and transit countries, and between those of the North and the South. This year's informal dialogues have helped build trust to address common concerns on issues such as trafficking, irregular migration, return, border management and the protection of migrants. Particular focus was placed this year on citizenship and integration issues. In the **Caribbean**, IOM, together with UNHCR, deepened the regional training for migration officials and NGOs for the management of mixed migratory flows, combating trafficking and other forms of irregular migration and the displacement of people by either natural disaster or conflict. In South America, the **South American Conference on Migration** focused on the need to harmonize migration legislation and consular issues, protect migrants' rights, combat trafficking in human beings and ways to better manage remittance flows, diaspora relations and migration and development initiatives.

13. Important strides were made in a number of **regional integration** efforts this year. In December 2004, the presidents from twelve **South American** nations signed the **Cuzco Declaration**, announcing the formation of the South American Community and expressing their intention to model the new community on the European Union, including a common currency, parliament, and passport. Similarly, the **Central American states** El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras have also made significant progress in their integration efforts by agreeing on key migration issues – Passport, Visa and the Harmonization of Migration Information Systems. IOM supports and cooperates with these countries in their integration efforts. The **EU** continues its work towards a Common Asylum and Immigration Policy, with substantial efforts being devoted this year to the implementation of The Hague Programme, adopted at the end of 2004. Particularly noteworthy developments include the establishment of a European agency for the management of operational cooperation at the EU's external borders (Frontex), which assumed its responsibilities in May 2005, the issuance by the European Commission of a green paper on economic migration, as well as communications on migration and development and on integration. All reflect a broadening of the EU's migration focus to be both more comprehensive and coherent in its approach to new and related policy domains. **In Africa**, Regional Economic Communities such as CENSAD, EAC, ECOWAS and, most recently, SADC have been paying increasing attention to migration and working towards the adoption and harmonization of regional strategies on migration management.

III. BILATERAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

14. A general bilateral and national trend in 2005 was the move towards more **strategic efforts in migration**. IOM has witnessed the increasing desire of states to become more comprehensive in their approaches to migration management and to have their policies based on factual analysis of their migratory realities. South Korea, Albania, Panama, the Bahamas and many others have undertaken fundamental migration policy reforms reflecting their recognition of the need to have a comprehensive migration policy that addresses both the outflow and inflow of persons. A six-month strategic analysis of Irish migration policy conducted by IOM on behalf of the Irish National Economic and Social Council (NESC) provides a useful model for other states.

15. Similarly, the **CARDS** Programme of the European Commission to "Establish EU compatible legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks in the fields of asylum, migration and visa matters in the Western Balkan States" in the context of ongoing and/or future EU accession negotiations is coming to its conclusion. The asylum, migration and visa modules were contracted, respectively, to UNHCR, IOM and ICMPD with the common aim of assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, FYR Macedonia and Albania to align their national legislation and administrative practice with EU standards. National EU alignment strategies and implementation plans will lay the ground for future common migration management approaches in the areas of entry, stay, return, readmission, irregular migration, data and statistics, and IT applications.

16. A cross-border survey prepared by IOM in cooperation with UNHCR and ILO, mapping population movements between Afghanistan and Pakistan, which highlighted the growing population movements between these countries and their positive impact in this region, was completed. This study documents, for the first time, the importance of population movements in general, and not just refugee-related flows, between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

IV. THEMATIC LEVEL

17. **World Migration 2005**, the first comprehensive study looking at the costs and benefits of international migration, clearly demonstrates that, if managed properly, migration can bring more benefits than costs. Remittances are an important indicator of the benefits of migration, given their huge potential to support development and reduce poverty. The report highlights the need for governments to cooperate in order to elaborate appropriate policy choices that reinforce and underpin the beneficial effects of migration and mitigate the costs.

18. **Labour migration**, particularly temporary and circular labour migration, continues to attract attention. In addition to the overseas work consultations mentioned in paragraph 9 above, the WTO Doha Trade Round is devoting increasing attention to the temporary movement of persons across borders as suppliers of services pursuant to Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, although the offers of commitment by governments under this mode remain far more limited than in others. Further research is being conducted by IOM and the World Bank on what can be learned from bilateral approaches to managing labour migration of potential relevance to Mode 4 – whether within or as a complement to Mode 4. The results of this research will be discussed in informal expert group meetings of interested governments and agencies. In addition, ILO is pursuing the elaboration of a non-binding multilateral framework

on labour migration, based on the call from last year's International Labour Conference for the ILO to develop an action plan on migrant workers.

19. In a related vein, a clear trend in 2005 is the increasing interest of the **private sector** in migration and migration management. In response, the Director General has created a Business Advisory Board with whom he can identify and exchange ideas and analysis on global issues relevant to migration and business, and develop practical solutions. As the world is moving towards an increasingly global labour market, businesses are interested in the global recruitment and international transfer of their staff with minimum delays.

20. Renewed attention to the theme of **migration and development** characterized 2005, as evidenced by such developments as the publication by the European Commission of a Communication on Migration and Development, setting out a multifaceted approach. IOM held an intersessional workshop in February 2005 on the theme of Migration and Development. It focused on policy coherence, migration and the Millennium Development Goals, and how to engage diasporas and other stakeholders in partnerships. UNFPA has also convened a series of meetings on migration and the Millennium Development Goals in 2005.

21. The focus of the **World Bank Global Economic Prospects 2006: International Remittances and Migration on the role of remittances in poverty alleviation and development strategies** is another welcome effort to link migration and development, in particular the importance of migration in development planning efforts. **Enhancing the development impact of remittances, and remittance services** is a key objective in this field and will be the subject of a ministerial conference, to be organized by IOM with the Government of Benin and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, planned for early 2006 in Cotonou, Benin.

22. The **role of internal migration in development**, particularly how internal migration affects, and is affected by development, was explored at a Regional Conference on Migration and Development in Asia, organized by IOM in March in Lanzhou, China. Case studies relating to Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Pakistan and Viet Nam were discussed, and it was recognized that internal migrants contribute greatly to local and national development, including to poverty reduction.

23. The importance of **capacity building in migration and development** was highlighted at a workshop in sub-Saharan Africa, organized in Harare in October 2005 by IOM, in collaboration with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). Drawing on the EMM, emphasis was placed on the impact of skills mobility on development with the objective of arriving at a comprehensive approach to human resource development. A second workshop is scheduled for February 2006 in Dakar.

24. Continuing terrorist attacks maintain **security** concerns at the forefront of the discussion of international migration. **Irregular migration**, human trafficking and migrant smuggling also challenge the ability of states to regulate the entry and stay of migrants, and thereby raise security concerns. A primary challenge faced by states is the bolstering of security without stifling legitimate and needed movement, and without imposing serious constraints on the personal rights and liberties of migrants and asylum seekers. For its forthcoming **Presidency of the EU Council (first half of 2006)**, Austria has announced a major policy initiative focused

on relations and cooperation with the EU's new neighbourhood countries to promote coherent and cooperative policies and practices on migration and security-related issues.

25. Many countries are examining ways to render traveller inspection both more efficient and more effective in order to promote normal cross-border movements. As more regular migration regimes are put in place to allow, in particular, labour migration, the prospect of providing more secure documentation to migrants needs to be addressed. The use of **biometrics** to deal with key migration challenges in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was the subject of a two-day workshop in Minsk, the capital of Belarus, co-organized by IOM and the Belarus Ministry of Internal Affairs at the request of the CIS Council of Ministers of Internal Affairs. The workshop focused on the use of biometrics in four main areas - travel documents and their issuance, identity cards, border management and privacy, and data protection.

26. Attention at national, regional and international levels to the importance of **international migration law** was evident in 2005. IOM organized the first **training course on international migration law** in cooperation with the Institute of International Humanitarian Law, in September 2005, in San Remo, Italy. It covered the international legal framework governing migration with specific emphasis on the rights and responsibilities of states and migrants. Several regional and sub-regional training courses were also conducted on these subjects. These courses are designed to facilitate dialogue between actors involved in migration management to promote interaction on common migration challenges and to encourage cooperation between countries in the development of coherent migration laws and policies.

27. The **human rights of migrants** continue to be an issue of paramount concern for many governments and migrants. The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW) continued its work to monitor implementation of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families by its parties. It is the newest treaty body and held its first session in March 2004. In 2005, Algeria, Chile, Honduras, Syria, Peru and Lesotho ratified the Convention, bringing the total number of ratifications to 33.

28. **Trafficking in persons** is increasingly being recognized as a human rights issue, but many gaps still remain in understanding its causes and mechanisms. While it is gratifying to note that 91 countries have ratified the Trafficking Protocol to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, and many others are taking concrete steps to tackle the problem, IOM's recent research indicates increased diversification in the profiles of trafficked persons as well as in the forms of exploitation, notably in forced labour, begging and various forms of delinquency.⁴ This situation makes it more difficult to identify, protect and assist victims, and more urgent that states increase and strengthen their resolve to combat trafficking.

29. The **role of religion in migratory processes** is a principal concern for many governments and migrants today. Key issues include questions of integration, the process of dialogue and communication between different religions, migrant communities and the state, and the impact of religion on a migrant's sense of identity. These and related themes will be explored at an International Conference on Migration and Religion in Rabat, organized by IOM at the request of the Moroccan Government, in December 2005.

⁴ See in particular the Regional Clearing Point Annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-East Europe, IOM 2005.

30. In the field of **migration and health**, concerns regarding the global spread of disease in a mobile and interconnected world have crystallized around the potential global spread of avian flu and the risk of a pandemic. The EU's new health agency, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), will be facilitating cooperation between national disease control authorities and develop comprehensive public health surveillance strategies for the EU. IOM is committed to building a strong partnership with the ECDC, including health training, health surveillance and assistance in border management and for border officials. In addition, concerns regarding human resources in the health sector continue to capture the attention of public health officials worldwide. This was reflected in resolution WHA58.17 of the 2005 World Health Assembly which calls for the continuing monitoring of the challenges to the operational sustainability of health systems in developing countries faced with the international migration of their health personnel. IOM, WHO and ILO are collaborating to address these issues.

Conclusion

31. Migration continues to gain in importance as a topic on the international agenda. As our understanding of the nature of contemporary migratory unfolds, new policy areas are being explored, new partnerships established and new action strategies tried. A key challenge remains the achievement of coherence in action among all stakeholders.