

NINETY- SECOND SESSION OF IOM COUNCIL

GENEVA, 1 DECEMBER 2006

STATEMENT OF H.E. ARCANJO NASCIMENTO
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
PERMANENT MISSION OF ANGOLA

Madame President

Let me start by congratulating you on your election to the presidency of the council during its 92nd session. We are certain that under your leadership and guidance we will attain the goals set forth for this meeting.

Let me also welcome the new member states, Montenegro and Nepal, and extend to them my delegation full co-operation.

Angola associates itself to the statement made by Morocco, on behalf of the African group.

Madame President, Excellencies

The phenomenon of migration has become nowadays one of the most pressing issues confronting the international community. Not because it is a new one, but due to its present trends, huge dimension, and its impact upon our societies.

All societies have been affected over the centuries, in one way or the other, by a migratory movement. For some of migration has contributed to create wealth, to blend cultures and create a rich cultural diversity they have today, and to bring about prosperity. For others, migratory movements have added to the loss of human resources badly needed to create economic growth, and to technologic staggering.

Developing countries continue to be badly hit by the negative impact of migration. In spite of the increasing resources spent on training and capacity building, impoverished Nations still struggling with the drain of their skilled labour force, that is attracted by higher salaries and better working conditions in the developed world.

Unless this trend is reversed, it's going to be even more difficult to lift these countries out of poverty and the underdevelopment.

We are encouraged by the process led by IOM intended to return highly qualified nationals of developing countries back to their nations, in order to contribute to the welfare of their population.

Another area that deserves special attention by the IOM is the south-south migratory movement.

The tightening of immigration laws in most of the richest countries, motivated in some cases by xenophobia, racism and others forms of intolerance and, in others, by economic decline and the war against terrorism, has led to severe restrictions on migratory movements. Consequently, south-south migration is on the increase, to the extent that, in some cases, is threatening the stability and undermining the economic progress of countries of immigration.

For the majority of south countries affected themselves by weak economic systems, it is unbearable to sustain the economic and social weight brought up by waves of immigrants entering their territories. Their labour markets cannot afford to absorb the new immigrants, nor can their governments grant them a decent living standard. This is a matter of serious concern that must be addressed in a global fashion.

The mechanism put in place so far to deal with immigration by some regional organizations failed to tackle the specificity of south-south migration.

It is undeniable that the worsening of the economic situation in some developing countries, poor governance, violations of human rights and instability, are among the main reasons behind the scores of people leaving their countries and look for a better future abroad.

My delegation do not believe that the best way to address the root causes of the problem is through the adoption, by the countries of immigration, of measures that stimulate people living under such

conditions to abandon their home countries. Likewise, we don't think that the tightening of immigration rules will prevent immigrants from coming.

There should be a two-ways approach. One is to push countries and assist them to overcome internal problems that might make people to leave. On the other hand, measures must be taken to encourage a person to immigrate legally, which entails flexible admissions rules, the strengthening of border security and stepping up the combat against alien smuggling.

My country that until a few years ago was a country of emigration, due the instability, has rapidly become a country of immigration, hosting in its soil hundred of thousands of immigrants, many of them illegal which is a reason of serious concern, because of its negative economic impact and association with organized crime.

The current number of Illegal immigrants trying to enter Angola from neighbouring countries has the potential to threat our stability and way of life. For that reason, my government is determined to continue to combat illegal immigration and count on all countries of our region to dismantle the networks of alien smugglers.

Legal measures have also been adopted recently by the Angolan government to curtail illegal immigration, but at the same time to facilitate those law abiding people who want to live and work legally in our territory.

Madame President, Excellencies

The respect of human dignity is a cornerstone of the work of IOM. My delegation is disturbed at reports that migrant workers and members of their families continue to be abused, particularly in developed countries.

We appeal the IOM and the human rights bodies of the United Nations to step up their efforts, to make sure governments of concerned countries are taking effective measures against such violations.

Finally let me express my government's appreciation to the IOM, for the assistance and support rendered to the refugees and displaced persons in Angola, during the resettlement process after the end of the war.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.