



NEW ZEALAND

STATEMENT BY
Andrew Lockhart
Regional Manager
Immigration New Zealand

IOM 92nd Session of the Council

Thursday 30 November 2006

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Madam Chair

New Zealand welcomes this year's theme on "Partnerships in Migration – engaging business and civil society" and thanks the IOM for the considerable work they have done in progressing this theme through out the year and for the engagement they have facilitated.

Globalisation with the changes to transport and technology has increased the movement of people and made migration for many countries, including New Zealand a key part of the economic strategy to obtain the skills and labour needed for economic growth. At the same immigration provides the international linkages needed to further trade and exchange of ideas and culture. The benefits from migration are clear but not widely understood across society.

At the same time Immigration is a politically sensitive issue for most countries and their Governments. The impacts on society are not always even and the benefits not always understood outside some of the key stakeholders. Governments manage immigration with in a political, economic and social environment and seek to ensure the benefits of migration are realised, along side managing the risks and public expectations.

For the benefits of migration to be realised fully, it is important that public both understand those benefits and have confidence in the immigration system. Societal support is critical in both accepting and welcoming new migrants into local communities and supporting their integration.

New Zealand is a small country built on migration with over 20% of our workforce born overseas. New Zealand has relied on skills from around the world and has an active programme of migration to take 51,000 new migrants each year equating to 1% of its population each year. In addition almost 100,000 work permits are issued each year increasing the number of migrants in the workforce. In addition to being a receiving country, New Zealand is also a sending country with 16 % of people born in New Zealand living in other OECD countries.

New Zealand has embarked on an immigration change programme to ensure we have the skills, talent and labour that we need for economic transformation, New Zealanders are confident of the security of our border

And migrants and refugees settle well and integrate into communities

Engagement with both New Zealand business and civil society are important in managing these changes and can strengthen the outcomes and the policy design. The major changes to the immigration act underway in New Zealand have seen wide consultation with stakeholders and the community.

Our engagement with both New Zealand business and civil society across a range of areas and demonstrates the strength this brings to both the outcomes from migration and in the design and development of policy.

New Zealand skilled migrant policy introduced in 2003; placed a greater emphasis to proactively attracting migrants to meet New Zealand skills needs and address skill shortages. For these goals to be met engagement with business and employers has been essential and is used to both understand the nature of the shortages as well as supporting employers in their recruitment internationally and delivering services for migration including settlement information.

There is also engagement with business in attracting foreign investment and the expertise and skills needed to commercialise ideas and increase trade

However migration can only be one aspect of a labour strategy to address skill shortages and successful economic transformation means that the engagement with business needs to include a whole of government approach, focussed on working partnerships. In New Zealand this wider engagement on skills and labour includes training and development, productivity, and work place conditions.

Our engagement with civil society is also important in understanding the issues faced by migrants. It provides for partnerships with civil society to improve settlement outcomes and improve the wider understanding of the benefits and impacts of immigration at both a local and national level. This engagement is complex given the increasing diversity within society and the need to recognise both local and national issues. This combined with the need for a whole of government approach around areas such as integration makes the engagement more challenging but the potential outcomes make the effort worthwhile.

New Zealand has through the development of our settlement strategy have focussed on a whole of government approach to the services needed and we have engaged with local communities to partner with local government and non government agencies on the best way of supporting settlement at a local level. It was recognised that the approach to settlement services needed to be lead by communities and supported through local agencies with the community best places to provide the networks and linkages required. Over the last two years 20 local networks have been put in place to support settlement services within communities to help ensure better integration and a greater acceptance of migrants for the benefits they bring.

In addition the New Zealand government in developing a new Immigration Act has engaged with both business and civil society to provide greater strength to the proposed changes and understand the potential impacts within the community.

The migration changes resulting from Globalisation and increasing concerns relating to security are now clearly on the international agenda. This year has been highlighted by the 'High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development' at the United Nations in September. This provided countries with the opportunity to contribute to the wider debate on migration and development and to highlight some of the regional and global issues facing all of us.

The High Level Dialogue should not though be seen in isolation. Its success can be contributed to the work of the 'Global Commission on Migration' and the efforts of countries in various international and regional forums to front the issues of migration and the key challenges ahead. The themes and questions raised needs to feed into the work of established international and regional dialogues and through the new proposed forum.

New Zealand has substantive interests in the range of migration and humanitarian issues addressed by the IOM. We acknowledge IOM's active role on migration issues generally and in shaping regional and global responses to problems around irregular migration.

We would like to highlight the important active role the IOM has played in the international and regional efforts to combat people smuggling and migrant trafficking. IOM has focused on prevention, return of irregular migrants, and capacity building in migration management. The IOM also provides protection

and assistance, including consular services, to irregular migrants. These activities have had benefits for New Zealand and other Pacific states. The work of the IOM in this area has indirectly helped reduce illegal migration into New Zealand.

New Zealand also recognises the strong support of the IOM for the Bali process which is priority for New Zealand in the work toward combating illegal migration and people smuggling.

We also appreciate IOM's assistance to New Zealand for our refugee quota through the provision of medical screening and transport arrangements.

Thank you.