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IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON  
INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON  
MIGRATION**

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**INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2007**

***Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy***

**Discussion Note**

18 October 2007

## INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION 2007

### *Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy*

1. Pursuant to the mandate in IOM's Constitution, the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) provides a forum for governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to identify and discuss key issues and challenges in the field of migration, in order to explore policy issues of common interest and the means to cooperate in addressing them. The dialogue takes place at the annual Council session and at intersessional workshops where the multidisciplinary aspects of migration and important linkages with related policy fields, such as trade, health and development are explored.

2. This discussion note provides an update on IDM activities in 2007, outlines plans for the IDM in 2008, and seeks the views of the membership on potential topics for the intersessional workshops to be convened next year.

### **IDM 2007: Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy**

3. In 2007, the IDM is guided by the overarching theme "Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy", which was endorsed by the membership. This theme is reflected in the two intersessional workshops organized in 2007 and the Council session in November.

#### **Intersessional workshops**

4. The first 2007 intersessional workshop, "**Free Movement of Persons in Regional Integration Processes**", was held in Geneva on 18 and 19 June 2007. Organized in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), this capacity-building workshop was attended by over 150 participants from 61 countries, most of them specialists from capitals, and 23 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

5. The workshop provided an opportunity for States and other stakeholders to exchange experiences on the legislative, policy and operational dimensions of facilitating intraregional mobility. Regions looking to develop or improve the implementation of regional free movement regimes were able to draw on the experiences of States and institutions in other parts of the world that had addressed similar issues. Officials from different regions engaged in lively and substantive exchanges that resulted in many ideas for improving information sharing on a more regular basis. Moreover, specific mechanisms utilized in some regions will now inform work in others, and networks are being established for continuing exchange and assistance.

6. To facilitate the discussions, IOM prepared an overview chart and a compilation of one-page information sheets outlining the main characteristics and terms of regional integration

schemes with provisions on the movement of persons. Any delegations wishing to make further comments on these materials should do so by the end of October.<sup>1</sup>

7. The second 2007 intersessional workshop, “**Making Global Labour Mobility a Catalyst for Development**”, took place in Geneva on 8 and 9 October 2007. It was organized by IOM in collaboration with the World Bank, the Development Centre of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

8. As evidenced by the important discussions at the Global Forum on Migration and Development and other recent work in this field, labour migration holds significant potential for both countries of origin and countries of destination. Countries of origin benefit from remittances and transfers of knowledge and skills, and migration can help reduce unemployment and underemployment. In countries of destination, migration can help mitigate labour shortages and improve economic flexibility and productivity. Given IOM’s migration management focus, the emphasis of the workshop was on establishing the programmes and mechanisms required to plan and manage labour mobility for countries of origin and destination, with the engagement of key non-governmental stakeholders, to enhance its positive potential and reduce its potential negative effects. Particular emphasis was placed on cooperative efforts between stakeholders.

9. The 2007 intersessional workshops benefited from the substantive input to the preparations provided by the partner organizations and received financial support from the Governments of Italy, Switzerland and the United States and from UNCTAD.

### **IDM Training sessions**

10. In partnership with the Graduate Institute for International Studies in Geneva (HEI) IOM conducts a series of training sessions on substantive migration matters for officials from Permanent Missions in Geneva, in response to specific requests from the membership. The training sessions are based in part on IOM’s capacity-building tool, *The Essentials of Migration Management: a Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners (EMM)*. Thanks to a generous contribution from the Government of Switzerland, the two training sessions held in 2007 were conducted with simultaneous interpretation in all three official languages (English, French and Spanish).

11. The first training session in 2007, held at IOM Headquarters on 29 June 2007, focused on **International Migration Law**. The participants analysed migration terminology and issues relating to State authority and responsibility, with particular reference to nationality, admission, detention and expulsion, the principal international law instruments relating to migration, trafficking and smuggling protocols, and the rights of migrant workers.

12. A second training session, on **labour migration**, was held on 13 September 2007. It covered general aspects of labour migration management, the distinct perspectives of countries of origin and destination and inter-State cooperation. In addition to the EMM, this

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<sup>1</sup> The chart and the summary information sheets were distributed to the participants at the workshop and are now available on the IOM website at <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/1805>.

training session was based on the *Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination*, prepared jointly by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), IOM and ILO, and on the research and analysis undertaken in connection with the forthcoming *World Migration Report* on the topic of managing labour mobility in the evolving global economy.

**Council 2007: Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy: *Structure and Themes***

13. The IDM will take place during the first two days of the IOM Council, on 27 and 28 November 2007. It will focus on the overarching theme of **Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy**, a key challenge for States and other stakeholders adjusting their migration management approaches to the new dynamics and realities brought about by greater global economic integration. The programme will include the following:

- (a) A special session to launch the *World Migration Report 2008: Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy*, at which the membership will be given an overview of the key findings of the forthcoming edition of IOM's flagship publication;
- (b) A high-level panel discussion on *Migration Management in the Evolving Global Economy*, at which ministerial-level presentations on managing greater mobility of people as an integral part of globalization will be followed by discussion;
- (c) A high-level panel discussion on *Migration Highlights*, which will focus on selected major recent and forthcoming migration developments, with ministerial-level presentations followed by discussion;
- (d) A panel discussion on *The Migration and Environment Nexus*, which will call attention to the implications for the movement of people within and across borders of climate change and environmental degradation. The international community's attention is increasingly focused on environmental change, and this session will bring out the links to human mobility and begin to explore the means of facilitating planning and coherence in this cross-cutting area.

**IDM 2008: Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities**

14. Following the request made by Member States at the informal consultations held on 21 June, the Administration proposed two possible overarching themes for the 2008 IDM. A majority of respondents to a survey sent out after the consultations selected **"Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities"**.

15. Drawing on IOM's research and programmatic experience, the question of "Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities" will be explored from the point of view of the role of return in contemporary migration dynamics, patterns and policy, the reasons for and impediments to return, and the policy and programmatic action stakeholders can take to

facilitate, sustain and enhance the benefits of return migration. Another important issue will be the relevant national and international legal frameworks and standards.

16. The Administration wishes to take this opportunity to request delegations to give consideration to the potential workshop topics listed below, or such other topics related to the overarching theme “Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities” as the membership might wish to propose at the informal consultations, and to select two topics for the IDM intersessional workshops to be convened in 2008.

**(a) Return Migration as a Critical Element of Comprehensive Migration Management Systems**

17. Effective migration management cannot be achieved by focusing on isolated elements of migration. It requires a comprehensive approach in terms of both content and participation. Return migration is rarely approached in a holistic manner or analysed in the broader context of migration management. Perspectives on return and even its definition differ from country to country, often depending on their migration histories. While some stakeholders look at return primarily in the context of human rights, others focus on sovereignty, and yet others are interested in its development potential. A broadened and more comprehensive understanding of return has the potential to help reconcile and balance the interests of different migration stakeholders and to facilitate cooperative migration management approaches.

18. This workshop would look at the interaction between the return stage and other elements of the migration process, such as entry (regular and irregular), transit, stay and integration. It would also look at the various forms of return: permanent or temporary, actual or virtual, voluntary or non-voluntary, spontaneous or assisted. Another important dimension to be explored is the relationship between return migration and other policy fields, such as development, trade, human rights and health. The ultimate goal of the workshop would be to enhance cooperation among all relevant stakeholders and to identify policies and practices that would provide for the greatest convergence of interests, thus contributing to more effective and beneficial management of return migration in particular and migration in general.

**(b) Managing Return: Making Temporary and Circular Labour Migration Schemes Feasible**

19. There is much interest today in temporary and circular migration as a means of addressing skills and labour shortages in destination countries, providing opportunities for personal and potentially community development and avoiding the loss of critical human capital in countries of origin. However, the effective functioning of these programmes depends on ensuring that temporary stays remain temporary. Therefore, facilitating returns is essential to the success of temporary and circular labour migration.

20. How can States and other stakeholders, working on their own or in collaboration, enhance the prospects of achieving the above objectives? What examples exist of successful return initiatives, and what are the factors that make them successful? What preparatory measures and capacity are required in this regard? What is the role of each of the various stakeholders in facilitating the return of temporary migrants or as part of circular migration schemes, including countries of origin, countries of destination, individual migrants,

employers and recruiters, among others? What types of partnerships are most beneficial in this regard?

21. This workshop will look at options<sup>2</sup> to reduce the incidence of overstays and facilitate humane and orderly returns. Improved recognition of qualifications, facilitated re-entry and preferential access to future employment in the destination country, or in the case of employers, access to migrant workers, can encourage businesses and individual migrants to develop a good track record on return. The opportunities and challenges inherent in implementing such policy options and in forging multi-stakeholder cooperation in this area will be discussed.

**(c) Enhancing the Role of Return Migration in Fostering Development**

22. Long-term foreign residents at all skill levels can contribute substantially to home-country development, including through temporary and circular mobility, investment, skills transfer and joint human resource development. This workshop would explore potential visa, travel, tax and investment incentives and policies that can stimulate such mobility, while looking at the implications of dual nationality, multiple entry/work/residence systems and social security portability. In the case of temporary migrant workers, innovative means exist to enhance the development potential of their return. Creating conditions for migrants and remittance-receiving households to save and invest a higher percentage of foreign earnings could make for more sustainable returns. Private and public sector employers could also benefit from improved strategies to reintegrate returning migrant workers.

23. How can public-private and inter-State partnerships as well as diaspora mapping and engagement help to identify and harness the potential contributions of nationals living abroad? What are the policy and practical implications for mainstreaming return management into national plans for poverty reduction and development? How can pre-departure orientation and migrant information centres help to guide migrants who might be interested in virtual or actual returns? These are but a few of the points that would be discussed at this workshop.

**(d) Managing Return Migration when Entry or Stay is not Authorized**

24. The return of persons not authorized to enter, stay or remain in a host/intended destination country – such as stranded migrants, migrants in an irregular situation whether as a result of unauthorized entry or overstay of authorized entry, asylum seekers whose claims have been rejected - remains a persistent challenge for individual States and for the international community. Return is recognized to be a critical part of effective migration and asylum systems, and quickly brings to centre stage issues involving protection of the human rights and dignity of returnees as well as the feasibility and sustainability of returns.

25. While sovereign States retain the right and responsibility to determine which non-nationals may enter and stay in their territories and under what conditions, many questions remain. Should such returns be conducted involuntarily or through efforts to achieve voluntary return? Should they involve counselling, assistance and help to restart a new life at

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<sup>2</sup> For an overview of potential policy means, see: OSCE, IOM, ILO, 2006. *Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination*.

home or not? Or perhaps a mix of forms is required. Which forms of return achieve the best results in terms of feasibility, cost, sustainability and dignity? How do gender and other factors affect return considerations? How can more traditional readmission agreements and associated capacity building be better coordinated, for example, with evolving policy on circular mobility partnerships, comprehensive plans of action and rescue at sea?

26. The workshop would seek to bridge some of the information gaps that exist in this area and hamper effective cross-country analysis and identification of successful practices. Its key objective would be to identify and discuss return mechanisms and arrangements to facilitate the safe, dignified and sustainable return of migrants when entry or stay is not authorized, including accompanying measures relating to the well-being and reintegration of returnees. The workshop would also aim at highlighting policies, arrangements and dialogues that foster mutually beneficial solutions for all stakeholders and make it possible to address their different needs and viewpoints.

27. The Administration is pleased to announce that the two intersessional workshops planned for 2008 will be held on 21 and 22 April and on 7 and 8 October respectively. In subsequent years, the workshops will be held on dates as close to the above as annual calendar variations permit. The Administration hopes thus to facilitate the membership's participation in the workshops.