



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

ON

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**

AT

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PLENARY MEETING**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK
6 JUNE 2006**

Mr Secretary-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Today the General Assembly will embark on a series of events in preparation for the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that will take place from 14 to 15 September, in the beginning of the 61st session.

International migration is a global issue that affects us all. Today there are more than 191 million migrants in the world. International migration has an impact both on countries of destination and countries of origin, in developing and in developed countries alike. We can all learn from each other's experience and engage in a dialogue to widen our common understanding of the interrelationship between international migration and development.

At the 2005 World Summit, our Heads of State and Government acknowledged the important nexus between international migration and development and the need to deal with the challenges and opportunities that migration presents to countries of origin, destination and transit. They recognized that international migration brings benefits as well as challenges to the global community.

They also welcomed the High-level Dialogue as an opportunity to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify appropriate ways and means to maximize their development benefits and minimize their negative impact.

The path leading to the High-level Dialogue has not always been an easy one. The issue of international migration in relation to development began to gain visibility at the time of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo. One year later, the Second Committee of the General Assembly considered the first report on international migration and development. Furthermore, most of the Conferences and Summits that followed the Cairo Conference devoted attention to international migration and development.

As a result, the United Nations has already a fairly comprehensive set of principles, objectives and recommendations in regard to international migration. In addition, the Global Commission on International Migration issued a report just last year and also presented a set of principles and recommendations.

Shortly, I will invite the Secretary-General to introduce his report entitled “International Migration and Development”, which will provide a comprehensive overview of studies on the multidimensional aspects of migration and development, and will highlight the developmental potential of migration.

Before doing so, I would like to remind you of a number of upcoming General Assembly events in preparation for the High-level Dialogue:

- On Thursday, 8 June, the first of two panel discussions on International Migration and Development will take place here in New York. I refer to my letter of 31 May. Another letter with further details will be sent from my office later this afternoon.

- On 4 July, the second panel discussion will take place in Geneva
- On 12 July, there will be an informal interactive hearing with representatives from the non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector here in New York.

I encourage your active and constructive participation in these events, which will be an important contribution to the successful organization and outcome of the High-level Dialogue in September.