



**The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
The General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison  
and International Cooperation**

**Statement by**

***H.E. Dr. Ali S.J. Errichi***

**Secretary of Expatriates, Immigrants and Refugees Affairs**

**Before**

**The United Nations General Assembly High-Level  
Dialogue on International Migration and Development**

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**Madame President,**

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your election as President of the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly. I am also delighted that an Arab woman holds this high office in the service of peace, security and prosperity. We are fully confident that you have the wisdom and experience to guide us through this dialogue which seeks to make the role of migration in development even stronger. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our support for the statement that H.E. Ms. "Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula", Minister of Home Affairs of South Africa, has delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Madame President,**

The fact we are having this dialogue at such a high level reflects the extent to which the international community recognizes the important role that migration plays in international relations. Throughout history, migration helped create and sustain fruitful contacts among various peoples and cultures. There is no doubt that migration has contributed to the free commerce of ideas and experiences. And, there is no doubt that it has been one of the main engines of material and intellectual progress in our world.

However, migration into sovereign spaces cannot be constructive unless the cultural, legal and political realities which define these sovereign spaces are taken into account. Ignoring this fact will have nothing but negative consequences on the important role that migration plays in bringing peoples of the world closer together. While migration contributes to the increase in the rates of intellectual and economical growth of many countries, it can also, at times, be a serious challenge to other countries. Therefore, it is imperative upon us to agree on realistic mechanisms that recognize the rights of sovereign states to protect their borders, and, at the same time, respect the human rights of the immigrant.

The cost of chaotic, illegal migration is much greater than its benefits. It may even, at times threaten the national security of certain countries. For when the number of illegal immigrants reaches a certain limit, the citizens of this country begin to feel that their economical, social and cultural interests are at risk. In this case, political and social tensions begin to emerge which, in turn, may evolve into instability and civil unrest. Also, when the market of a certain country cannot absorb large numbers of illegal immigrants and, thus, provide them with jobs, some of these immigrants tend to engage in illicit economical activities such as drug trafficking, organized crime, theft and the trafficking of human beings.

It is for these reasons that my country has committed itself to the view that the problem of illegal immigration cannot be solved without dealing with the root causes. We have consistently called on the international community to live up to its responsibilities and to contribute to the economical development of the countries from which the immigrants flow.

The flow of illegal immigrants can only come to an end through sustainable development and long term investment, which will create jobs that offer decent wages. It is in the pursuit of this plan that my country believes that it is important to have an African – European summit to discuss and find sustainable solutions to the problem of illegal immigration, solutions which would protect the rights, security and dignity of legal immigrants while, at the same time, creating conditions which will save millions of people from subjecting themselves to the dangers and indignities of illegal immigration.

Towards this goal, I am happy to announce that my country is working to organize a meeting for African and European ministers to discuss migration and development.

**Madame President,**

I would also like to mention that, as a part of its commitment to the economical integration of the countries in the African Union, Libya has invested in agricultural and industrial projects in a number of these countries. My country has also contributed to the funding of a number of projects for development in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization. For example, nine million dollars has been invested in five projects in some of the countries in the Sahel and Sahara Grouping. Also, studies are underway to expand this program so as to include seven other African countries with our financial support exceeding 13 million dollars. In addition to that, my country has announced in December of 2005, the establishment of the Qaddafi Project for African youth, African children, and African Women in cooperation with the appropriate international organizations. The aim of this project is to help end poverty, hunger and disease, to spread education and to train African women while helping to protect their rights.

**Madame President,**

Finally, I would like to say that we agree with what was stated in the Secretary General Report that, "*immigration is not a process in which one party gets the comparative advantages at the expense of other parties*". Indeed, in my country there are more than a million immigrants who work in various sectors of our economy and make more than two billion dollars a year, a good part of which goes back to their families in their countries of origin.

**Thank you, Madame President.**