



INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

PRESS RELEASE

*Participation at ministerial level rises to 90***General Assembly review of migration and development opens 14 September in New York**

(UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK, 8 September) Over 120 governments, with nearly 90 at the ministerial level, are signed up for the first-ever plenary session of the UN General Assembly on migration issues. The meeting will focus on ways to maximize the development benefits of migration and to reduce difficulties.

“We are only beginning to learn how to make migration work more consistently for development,” Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a report prepared in anticipation of the meeting. “Each of us holds a piece of the migration puzzle, but none has the whole picture. It is time to start putting it together.”

In addition to the plenary debate, next week’s meeting will bring ministers and delegates together in informal round table discussions on themes such as remittances (i.e., monies sent home by workers abroad); smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons; and partnerships at the bilateral and regional levels.

Conceived and scheduled more than two years ago by the General Assembly, the 14–15 September High-level Dialogue follows a period of intense public attention to the cross-border movement of people, and a quickening pace of multilateral talks on migration.

The report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development estimates that 191 million people live in countries other than where they were born. It notes that migration does not follow only a South-to-North track. One third of the world’s migrant stock are workers and families from developing countries living in developed nations; one third have moved from one developing country to another, and another third have migrated from a developed country.

By the most recent estimate, \$173 billion in remittances from migrants was sent to homes in developing countries in 2005. In the developed world, immigrants often fill sectoral shortages in work forces or take jobs that are unwanted locally, reduce the extent of population ageing and help to maintain the solvency of social pension systems, and stimulate demand and economic growth, the UN report finds.

To request a preview interview with a senior UN official or obtain regional fact sheets on migration and development, contact Oisika Chakrabarti, 1-212-963-8264, chakrabarti@un.org, or Tim Wall, 1-212-963-5851, waltt@un.org, of the UN Department of Public Information, Development Section.

To obtain media credentials for the General Assembly High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, please fax a letter of assignment to 1-212-963-4642, and follow-up with a call to the UN Media Accreditation Unit at 1-212-963-7164.

To view the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development, and other related materials, please go to www.unmigration.org.