



Argentina

HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Madame President of the General Assembly,

Let me begin by thanking in the first place the Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan for the organization of the event on International Migration and Development.

Ms. President,

Migrations are an essential part of Argentine history. In the past my country received great numbers of immigrants mainly from Europe; in the past decades they come from South American countries with whom we maintain friendly relations. To complete the cycle, as a consequence of the social and economic crises of the beginning of the decade, Argentina has given place to emigrant movements that contribute to the integration of Argentina in the world.

Therefore my country participates in this High Level Session with great interest, given the very high priority that the Argentine Government attaches to the subject of migrations.

The participation of my country is taking place in the context of regional integration that addresses the subject of migrations from a perspective of human rights and the decision to promote the treatment of migrations multilaterally thus overcoming the vision based exclusively on the State and its sovereignty.

Proof of the above are the advances achieved through agreements within MERCOSUR and associated countries which make this new vision a reality for the migrants of our region.

Particularly, I would like to draw the attention to the consensus achieved at the South American Conference of Migrations, contained in the Asuncion Declaration of 2006.

Ms. President,

Argentina, in accordance with its history, would like to affirm that the search for better conditions of life in other countries must not be reproachable and much less criminalized. Therefore, countries should address the subject by searching for mechanisms of cooperation, integration and take joint responsibilities not as a wish but as concrete facts.

Argentina sealed this new spirit in its migrations policies through the National Law of Migrations in 2004.

This new law reflects the commitment of our country to guarantee the full respect of human rights of the migrants and their families and at the same time establishes mechanisms of easy access to regulate migration, thus contributing to the elimination of any form of discrimination, xenophobia or racism.

In virtue of the new legislation the right to healthcare, to social assistance and to education at all levels is equally guaranteed in Argentina for all foreigners who should require it, no matter what their migration situation is.

Ms. President,

As a consequence of the establishment of the Residence Agreement of MERCOSUR and Associated States, signed in San Salvador de Bahia in 2002, Argentina executed the "National Program of Normalization of Migratory Documents" (called Patria Grande) which reflects a human and social perspective in the subject, benefiting all foreigners born in the states of the above mentioned block. The only requirement for the regularization is the nationality and a clean police record.

The above mentioned program has allowed the regularization of more than 250 000 immigrants from South American States in the three months since its validity. We must point out that this program is not an amnesty but a state policy that is valid, from now on, for all nationals of the States of MERCOSUR and Associate Members who are in Argentina and who will enter in the future.

Ms. President,

The Argentine Government is aware of the relation between the issue of migrations and international security, above all regarding the actual international Political context Therefore my country has expressed In different fora that it is indispensable to address these issues from a point of view of rights, so that the measures that will be adopted In favor of international security should not negatively affect the effective practice on fundamental human rights.

In line with the above, Argentina maintains, notwithstanding that the recognition of the exercise of sovereignty of States implies the control of its borders and the ability to decide upon the admission Into national territories, that such exercise must always respect due process of law.

At the same time we believe that it is more beneficial for the protection of internal security that the immigrant who arrives In our country be regularized and documented and not maintained on the margin and in anonymity that condemns him or her to be defenseless against unscrupulous employers and despicable traffickers.

Ms. President,

The gender perspective is part of our migratory Policy with the objective of acknowledging the important role of migrant women as agents of development and transmitters of values.

The trafficking of persons is one of the most urgent problems regarding circulation of individuals. The data we possess indicate that the geographical amplitude of the problem has increased and that the majority of the victims are women and children. Therefore international cooperation to discover and combat the complex transnational networks of trafficking in persons is indispensable in this field.

Ms. President,

To conclude, I would like to remind that the problem of migrations does not have one concrete solution nor is there an absolute truth in this issue. Each region and each country presents a different reality with their own characteristics where the only common element is the person and his or her dignity.

In order for the action of the international community in the subject of migrations to be successful, it must be addressed from an integral perspective on multilateral bases.

Argentina reiterates its will to actively participate in frameworks and mechanisms of international cooperation believing in the promotion of new principles In migration founded on the ethical dimension of the respect for the human rights of migrants.

In this sense, I welcome, on behalf of my country, the offer of the Government of Belgium to celebrate the first session of the Consultative forum on Migrations.