



COMMUNITY OF PORTUGUESE SPEAKING COUNTRIES (CPLP)

**STATEMENT
BY
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**HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madam President,

Let me start by congratulating you, Madam President, upon your election as President of the General Assembly as well as on the excellent manner in which you have been conducting the proceedings of this important and unprecedented High-Level Dialogue.

I would also like to convey our appreciation to the Secretary General for the high quality of his report on *International Migration and which* constitutes a highly valuable contribution on how to better enhance the development impacts of international migration.

Madam President,

CPLP is an intergovernmental organization with eight economically diverse member states, spanning four continents. Our countries share a common language and a rich cultural heritage resulting from long periods of historical contacts, which generated cultural identities that help build bridges among them and facilitate contacts.

Migration is a phenomenon that concerns all members of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, as source, transit and destination countries. Portugal - a former source country itself - is now the preferred destination of a considerable number of Lusophone and other migrants. But migration flows in our space are multidirectional: while most of the Portuguese speaking migrants have chosen Portugal as destination, Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde and Mozambique have also become destination and transit countries not only for the Community's citizens but also from several other origins.

The impact of migration in our societies is becoming increasingly apparent in the economic, social, cultural and political aspects.

For this reason, we welcome this comprehensive debate and CPLP joins the consensus that seems to be emerging within the international community on the positive contributions of migration to development and on the need to take effective **measures** to protect the rights of migrants and combat discrimination against them, the transnational trafficking of people, targeted mainly at women and children, and other human rights violations.

In fact, CPLP concurs with the Secretary General's view that international migration "is intrinsically linked to development of both receiving and sending countries". Nevertheless, in order to allow co-development, we find it imperative that two conditions are met: international guidelines to improve the governance of migration need to be established and, on a national level, migration policymaking needs to be closely articulated with development policies.

These were some of the outcomes that emerged from a seminar on *Migration and Development within the CPLP Framework* held in Lisbon, this past June. During this **seminar** - organized by IOM in partnership with the CPLP, the Gulbenkian Foundation and other Portuguese organizations - government representatives from CPLP countries, NGOs and academia, private sector and civil society representatives held a comprehensive debate on the role of Diasporas in

development, within the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, and how to take better **advantage of the vast human capital embodied in these communities.**

Participants agreed that if appropriate policies are implemented, migrants are able to **simultaneously contribute to the development of their country of origin as well as of the receiving country.** We view this as one of the most promising opportunities offered by 21st century **migration.** **The fact is that know-how can now be easily transferred, making it possible to convert**
brain drain into brain gain.

In this respect, it is however important to, among other measures; (i) promote the economic, social and political integration of migrants in the host country, (ii) ease the red tape involved in the various levels of relationship between migrants and the public administration (iii) reduce the cost of remittance transfer and (iv) raise awareness regarding the active role that migrants can assume in development.

Madam President,

Even though positive contributions can result from economic migration, we cannot ignore that its **main motivations are generally associated with poverty in the source countries.** Necessary conditions should therefore be created for the betterment of people's living standards, ensuring **that migration - if undertaken - is not due to the failure of the development process.** Governments, the private sector and civil society should work together to create conditions that **allow citizens to meet their needs in their country of choice, including their birthplace.**

As stated previously, migration can be a game with multiple winners if the policies that regulate it are conjugated with development policies. In fact, the IOM 2005 World Migration Report offers solid evidence on how migration can reduce poverty and how migrants can act as **development agents in their home communities.**

Madam President,

When it comes to facilitating development through migration, regional and other **intergovernmental organizations, such as the CPLP, should have an active participation, at the regional level, by promoting greater coordination between states and, at the global level, by fostering cooperation between international organizations, and by sharing positive experiences and best practices.**

It was with this in mind that the CPLP adopted a resolution, during its latest Summit Meeting held in July 2006, in Guinea **Bissau,** on the importance of involving the Diaspora in the development process. In addition, a total of five Circulation Agreements were adopted in 2002, aiming essentially at facilitating the circulation of CPLP citizens within the Community. In that **same year, a joint Working Group, gathering experts from all members states, was established to develop a framework that will harmonize the social and political rights of CPLP citizens, which will greatly benefit those living in a CPLP country other than their own.** An Observatory of Migration Flows has also been created to compile and share accurate and up-to-date statistical data on the flow of migrants within the CPLP.

These are measures that will, hopefully, bear fruit promoting the full integration of CPLP migrants, granting them the necessary support to effectively act as development agents, and, at the same time, preventing illegal migration.

Madam President,

The linkage between migration and development is being gradually acknowledged by the international community, making it possible for international migration issues to be systematically incorporated into national, regional and global development strategies, in both the developing and the developed world.

In this sense we strongly support the Secretary General's proposal on the setting up a Global Forum on Migration and Development.

We believe that the holding of this High-Level Dialogue is an important first step in that direction.

Thank you!