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TO THE CONSULAR AND MIGRATION AFFAIRS

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Madame President

International migration is today one of the greatest global phenomena. In our contemporary world, the movement of people across international borders to search for better living conditions is increasing greatly. People move because they lack opportunity, in particular, jobs and adequate income, not only for themselves, but for their families.

We must address the question: How does the international community establish the correct balance between the demand of the industrialized countries for labor and the supply of the countries exporting workers?

How does the international community stop a person from migrating, knowing that his or her own country immediately, and in the middle or long term, cannot provide good opportunity to satisfy his or her needs or ambitions? These are some of the concerns we must discuss at this important meeting.

As representatives of Governments, we need to play a significant role in the formulation and direction of public policy with respect to the positive impact caused by the migration. We must explain the relation between migration and development. A major imperative is to understand and identify the role of countries that send migrants.

The Dominican Republic, as a migrant receiving and sending country, has dealt with important changes in migration from the middle of the 1970s to today. These include multi-directionality of migration, increase of women as migrants, change of perception of Dominican residents abroad, and the change in the Dominican diaspora itself. Second and third generations who have migrated have experienced socioeconomic and cultural conditions better than those of their parents; they represent the best opportunity for the implementation of policies that reflect these deep changes.

Policies on international migration constitute a sovereign affair of States which prevail on internal national standards for their formulation and execution. However, Governments in all regions in the world are very conscious that migration needs to be planned and managed through international coordination and cooperation.

Under these criteria, Governments can concentrate their efforts to join in regional but non-binding consultations, which bring together representatives of States, Non-Governmental Organizations, business persons, and other sectors, in order to discuss migration issue of migration in a cooperative manner, favouring exchanges on experience and entering into bilateral and multilateral agreements on international migration.

Our country joins with efforts of the international community to build consciousness on the dimensions of the worldwide migration phenomenon. The High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development provides an appropriate place for our countries to exchange and discuss new ideas on migration policies that lead to the development, focused not only the nation, but worldwide, improving upon the regional consultations which have, up to the moment, given very good results to the participating States.

We hope that this important meeting produces proposals and recommendations that lead the countries to better conditions, allowing them to face up the challenges caused by migration, while taking advantage of the opportunities that it offers.

Madame President, I would like to highlight three relevant initiatives recently taken by the Government of the Dominican Republic in cooperation with other countries of the region. One is the "International Congress on Creating Synergies between Migration and Development" held in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration.

Another is the "Private Sector Forum to Explore Linkages Between Remittances and Development," organized with UNDP and the UN Fund for International Partnerships. This brought together participants from companies dealing with remittances, microfinance and information and communications technology, together with regulators and parties that can support projects. The forum addressed problems of access to financial products and services and problems of informal channels, and recommended efforts to increase financial literacy and capacity-building.

The third initiative is the "Regional Consultation on Migration, Remittances and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean", organized with UNDP, the Special

Unit for South-South Cooperation, the UN Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development, the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and others, and with support from several private sector companies. Teams of government, business, diaspora groups, NGOs and international organizations participated from thirteen (13) countries, including Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru. President Leonel Fernandez delivered an important statement on diaspora issues and remittances, and the meeting adopted a Declaration for consideration at this High-Level Dialogue. I am very pleased to make the Declaration available to you, on behalf of all the meeting's participants. We wish to invite those present here to give attention to the proposals in the Declaration and we urge that governments and international bodies, especially UNDP, use these as a basis for new policies and actions in response to the needs and opportunities that we have identified.

THANK YOU.....