

Statement by
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Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the I.R. of Iran
at the "High-level Dialogue on
International Migration and Development"
15 September, 2006
New York

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In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mme President;

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your well-deserved election as president of the 61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly and High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. I am confident that under your leadership this gathering will be successful in its deliberations.

Although international migration occurs essentially as a result of the decisions taken by individuals and families, it affects the relationship among the states concerned. International migration, due to its ever-increasing growth in terms of scale, scope and complexity, has become a phenomenon with global aspects. It has posed new challenges which should be addressed appropriately and in a holistic manner. In addition, the undeniable interlinkages between migration and development highlights the need for addressing the issue bearing in mind its undeniable impacts on the process of development of all countries of origin, transit and destination. It goes without saying the ongoing negotiations on migration should be aimed at minimizing its negative consequences and maximizing its benefits for all countries involved as well as the migrants alike.

In addressing the issue, a realistic and global vision is needed and one can not and should not fail to consider the root causes of international migration. Globalization and, thus, strengthened communications and public awareness have unavoidably given rise

to expectations and movement of people around the globe. Poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, lack of adequate investment, imbalances and inequalities in international trading system, uncontrolled population growth, violence, discrimination, and the wide gap in terms of well-being and development between the developed and developing countries are among the other factors which affect migration. Increase in number of female migrants and other vulnerable social groups, as well as the high risks embedded in the movement of such groups, have added to the complexities and deserves further attention of the international community.

Mme. President;

It should be taken into account that almost all countries of the world face migration phenomenon and fall in the categories of origin, destination and/or transit. Besides, migration is not just a south-north issue, it occurs also in the countries of the south. And it is obvious that individual countries without bilateral, regional and international cooperation will not be able to manage this phenomenon in an appropriate way and right direction. While struggling to address international migration in order to minimize the negative consequences and maximize the benefits for all, it also should be seen in the context of internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals. In other words, we need to address migration and development in a manner which leads to the achievement of the MDGs.

Full participation and active engagement of all countries in negotiations in a transparent and constructive manner will contribute to reach fruitful results. Appropriate management of migration at national, regional and international levels is another requirement that should be taken into account during the negotiations. Building national capacities, particularly in developing countries, by establishing necessary infrastructures, creation or modification of relevant legal regimes in a coordinated and coherent manner, formulation of national strategies on migration, exchange of information, experiences and best practices and allocation of adequate resources to such measures will help the international community meet the new challenges posed by migration.

Undoubtedly, migrants play important role in the process of development in all countries. Migrants in general and skilled and highly educated migrants in particular contribute effectively to the process of development in destination countries. Likewise, transfer of technical knowledge as well as capital to the countries of origin by migrants is also effective in the development of these groups of countries. Therefore, removal of obstacles which migrants facing in knowledge and expertise in destination countries, facilitating and lowering down the costs of the remittances' transfer, as well as enhancing the safety are determinant in the process of development.

Mme. President;

Being from a country of origin, transit and destination, and while suffering a lot from the negative consequences of migration, my government attaches great importance to the ongoing negotiations and cooperation at all levels. Iran, which is located in a strategic area linking the Persian Gulf to Central Asia and South Asia to Mediterranean countries, can play a key role in the regional cooperation on migration. I would like to highlight here several measures that my country has resorted to in order to address the question of migration.

With the cooperation of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Iran embarked on enhancing national capacity in dealing with migration. So far, several training courses on the management of international migration have been successfully held. In order to address some of the negative aspects of migration such as human smuggling and trafficking in persons, my government has also taken the following measures:

1. **A new Law entitled: "Combating Human Trafficking" has been adopted by the Iranian parliament in July 2004.** In this law, Human trafficking acts are defined and the punishment of the perpetrators have been included;
2. **A cooperation mechanism has been set up in the Iranian Interior Ministry composed of several general directorates of the above-mentioned Ministry, Ministry of Labor and Social affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Judiciary;**
3. **At the regional level, Iran has participated in the quadripartite Ministerial meeting between, Greece, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey held in Athens in December 2005 on Fighting Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons.** The Joint Declaration of this meeting contains important parameters, including: materialization of the previous agreements, establishing a more effective mechanism for the exchange of information, creating an early warning system, promoting regular consultations among high-ranking officials and experts by setting up working groups and creating a network of national contact points to exchange information, and introducing best practices and solutions in the field of illegal migration, corruption, narcotics and organized crimes. As a result of which the first working group held a meeting in Pakistan.

Launching the initiative of a trilateral dialogue on migration management among Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan is another step taken in the region for further cooperation among the countries involved. With the implementation of further projects in the region, aimed at sharing the expertise, know-how and enhancing the capacity on migration, countries will be able to improve their understanding of migration and migration management. I reiterate that strengthening the regional cooperation is a key to success for the international efforts and cooperation.

I thank you