



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

**H.E. MR. AFTAB AHMAD KHAN SHERPAO
FEDERAL MINISTER FOR INTERIOR**

**AT THE
HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION
AND DEVELOPMENT**

New York, 14-15 September 2006

**Statement by H.E. Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao, Federal Minister for Interior,
at the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development,
New York, 14 - 15 September 2006**

Madam President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today representing Pakistan at a forum in which issues of tremendous importance will be addressed. We have come together looking for innovative solutions and ideas to better manage migration and address the needs of our peoples and our countries.

Pakistan attaches great importance to the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. It provides a unique opportunity to the international community to build common approaches to promoting coherence between migration and development and to identify ways to increasing development benefits of migration and reducing its negative impact.

We wish to align with the statement made by the distinguished representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of an individual's will to overcome adverse conditions, to explore new horizons, and to live a better life. Globalization, with its impact on speed and flow of communication and transportation has enhanced the desire and the capacity to move to other places.

Madam President,

Today, there is a growing and much needed recognition of the positive potential of migration. The benefits of migration for development include the impact of remittances on poverty reduction, foreign exchange reserves and balance of payments, knowledge and skills transfer, relief from unemployment, empowerment of women and other potentially vulnerable groups and democratization.

Migration in an inter-dependent world has benefits both for sending and receiving countries. This requires cooperation among countries at bilateral, regional and global levels to address the issues of immediate concern. The unprecedented level of attendance at the Dialogue and the focus and attention it has generated on migration issues must be used to lay the foundation for a sustained dialogue and enhanced international cooperation on migration and development.

Excellencies,

Migration is an important part of developmental debate as it involves the growth of people, economies and countries. To gain maximum benefits, we need to focus on facilitation of remittances transfer through banking channels and to create incentives for their productive utilization in line with the development priorities and needs of our countries. We need to engage our Diasporas and utilize their expertise in various fields developed during their stay abroad, to counter the impact of brain drain and gain benefit from brain circulation and skill development

While recognizing the potential of migration to contribute to world development, it is important to recognize the need to establish adequate and transparent mechanisms to channel migration in a safe, legal, humane and orderly manner to combat irregular migration and prevent enabling conditions for organized crime and exploitation of people. The protection of rights of migrants and victims of trafficking is of great concern to us. Government of Pakistan will work with other countries to ensure the well being and dignity of its migrants and insist on the dignified return of its nationals, where required. We attach great importance to the implementation of existing United Nations (UN) and International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions for protection of migrant workers.

Excellencies,

Interestingly, the preparatory process for the High level Dialogue, has already made a significant contribution in moving the migration and development debate to a higher place. In Pakistan, we take a holistic view of the whole issue, while formulating our migration policy. The ongoing consultative process involves representatives of government, civil society and international organizations. A two days inter-ministerial conference was organized on 30th August, 2006 in collaboration with International Organization of Migration (IOM), which resulted in inputs from all stakeholders for an integrated and cohesive response from Pakistan at this important dialogue on migration and development.

Madam President,

Pakistan is happy to see international migration issues move up on the global agenda. We strongly favour more intense international cooperation and collaboration on international migration to enhance its development impact. Our task, through this Dialogue, is to develop a coherent approach to effectively deal with the challenges and opportunities associated with the large movement of migrants across national frontiers and continents and to optimize the development impact of this phenomenon.

Pakistan believes that without the requisite machinery and institutional support, it will be difficult to advance the objectives of generating and sustaining the much needed coherence and coordination on migration issues. We would, therefore, favour building on the existing arrangements to further the global dialogue on migration and development by allowing the Global Migration Group to meet inter-governmentally under ECOSOC.

Madam President,

We are here today with a renewed commitment to continue to work together with you and strengthen the processes to utilize migration for the betterment of our people. Let us remember today that our united efforts must bear in mind that ultimately we want the best for our fellow human beings and our countries - this can only be achieved if we work together positively, recognizing the importance of migration in our lives and our world. Let's commit ourselves to growth and betterment not only for ourselves, but for each other.

I thank you Madam President.