

**IOM STATEMENT BY MR. LUCA DALL'OGGIO, PERMANENT OBSERVER
52nd SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
General Debate Agenda Item. 3 "Follow up to the 4th World Conference on Women
and to the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000:
Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st century'"**

New York, 3 March 2008

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope and impact of the activities that have been conducted over the last decade in the area of migration and gender equality. This exercise would help us identify some of our accomplishments and above all to refocus our priorities.

In 1995, at Beijing, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) challenged the international community on four points. First, to acknowledge the phenomenon of the feminization of migration; second, to improve the understanding, the knowledge as well as to raise awareness of the needs of migrant women; third, to sensitise the international community to the need for programmes specifically designed for migrant women; and, lastly to ensure the equal access of both migrant women and men to IOM services and projects.

During the same year, IOM adopted a specific policy to reaffirm and strengthen its commitment in regard to the protection of the rights of migrant women.

Mr. President,

Since then, numerous efforts have been undertaken, with encouraging results. The Organization has not ceased to make international actors and its Member States aware of the phenomenon of the feminization of migration and to highlight the role of migrant women as agents of sustainable development in both their countries of origin and of destination.

This topic also received considerable attention during the General Assembly's High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in September of 2006, where the question of the financial and social contribution of diasporas to the development process, concerns over the rights of migrant women, the human drama of trafficking and the eradication of harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation among migrant communities have been raised and shared by many delegations participating in the HLD.

Over the past thirteen years, IOM has continued to bring together its partners and to share information and knowledge on the evolving status of migrant women, their role in the fight against poverty and on the need for a greater integration of migrant women in national development processes.

The corollary of this advocacy is the improvement of research and state of knowledge regarding women and migration, bearing in mind the need for adequate data and information for policies and programmes addressing the specific needs of migrant women. For example, the reinforcement of research and the improvement in the collection of data not only led to an increase in the awareness of the important place of women in migration but also highlighted a number of major issues for the development of the countries of origin and destination. Among other initiatives, IOM has in this context recently collaborated with INSTRAW on a study on the gender-specific dimension of remittances in Colombia and in the future, hopes to intensify and systematize the pooling of expertise and resources of our two organizations.

The socio-economic impact of female labour migration and its consequences on the empowerment of women, especially on their families and the children left behind remain under-

documented issues that must be further explored. How do these children grow up without their mothers? What are the economic, social and more importantly, the human costs of migration? What are its benefits for this generation? These are crucial questions that should be answered today if we want to be ready to face tomorrow's challenges. Thus, in 2007, IOM conducted a study on seven Asian countries that are experiencing a significant migration of women, a study which will be available in the coming months.

Mr. President,

Since 1995, IOM has implemented a variety of projects that specifically targeted migrant women. These projects were aimed primarily at reducing their vulnerability in the migration process by focusing on the fight against human trafficking, sexual violence and on the protection of women migrant domestic workers or others.

The Organization, in line with the definition of gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 1997, seeks to respond to the specific needs and expectations of both men and women in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of all its projects and programs to ensure that migrant men and women can meaningfully take part in and fully benefit from such projects and programs.

We all can be proud of the work accomplished in the promotion of the interests of female migrants and its development since the Beijing Conference. The results obtained were encouraging and should convince, if needed, governments and international agencies of the strategic imperative of increasing and sustaining the financial and human resources allocated to gender mainstreaming efforts in development programs and policies.

Mr. President, thank you very much.