

*DELEGATION OF TURKEY*

**26 September 2007**

**HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING  
(Warsaw, 24 September-5 October)**

**Working Session 5: Humanitarian issues and other commitments**

***Migrant Workers and Integration of Legal Migrants***

Mr. Moderator,

Migration and integration is core part of OSCE agenda and a matter of close concern to Turkey. Since the Helsinki Final Act, the OSCE participating States have acknowledged the human dimension of migration and have undertaken a series of commitments regarding the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers and their families.

Labor migration is not a new phenomenon. Yet, the need to devise effective policies of immigration and integration has been recognized relatively recently by many receiving countries. Efforts at managing this issue by Governments have been off-set by new restrictions on family reunifications, new and hardened legislations for naturalization, discrimination in employment and housing, barriers in social mobilization and difficulties in education of the migrant children continue to make the lives of immigrants difficult and the success of the integration policies incremental. Critical remarks by several speakers representing their communities are a testimony to a strongly felt sense of dissatisfaction.

Our attention has also been drawn by several speakers yesterday and today to the growing polarization within the communities along the lines of cultural and religious differences. These perceived differences lead to a confrontational “us” versus “them” mentality and feed into the tendency to label migrants as scapegoats for the ills in the society. As a result, a xenophobic public discourse gains ground and negatively affect not only the code of social behaviour but also governmental policies.

The measures taken to fight terrorism and extremism add to the complexity of the situation and have a crippling effect on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrants. Therefore, we must exhort ourselves as partners to look at these issues from a multidimensional human rights perspective without which remedial action would at best be ineffective if not counter-productive.

Migration with its setbacks and challenges has brought dynamism to the economies of the countries, made significant contribution to their development and welfare and enriched their social and cultural diversity. There is a wide body of criticism that this contribution is not recognized at the political level as a means to counter prejudices and biased portrayal of

migrant communities. Media should also be encouraged to pay attention to the success stories of migrants.

In closing, I would like to share with you the following recommendations:

- OSCE and its institutions should sharpen their focus on the human dimension of migration and integration. Protection and promotion of the rights of migrants should be a priority.
- The OSCE in conjunction with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly should sanction a follow-up to the report of the Migration Policy Group on integration policies commissioned by the High Commissioner on National Minorities.
- Participating States should promote participation of the migrants, including migrant women, in society and institutions. They should also consult – I mean not *pro forma* but genuinely – representatives of migrants, in the formulation and implementation of integration and anti-discrimination policies.
- Voting rights for the municipal elections should be considered as a measure to facilitate integration through meaningful political participation at the local level.
- The OSCE participating States should be invited to sign and ratify the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, one of the major international human rights instruments. Unfortunately, there are only 6 OSCE participating States which have already done so. The club of signatories should not remain so exclusive.

Lastly, I would like to announce that a side event on the “Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families”, organized by my delegation in cooperation with the ODIHR, will take place in Meeting Room 1 (next door) immediately after this session. I invite all of you to continue the animated debate initiated here at the side event.

We will also circulate a written contribution on Internally Displaced Persons in Turkey.

Thank you.