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Distinguished organizers of this Forum,

Distinguished management of the panel,

Dear colleagues and participants,

Allow me to express personal thanks and of the institution that I represent, for the opportunity given to me to attend this conference and make an introduction, and at the same time asking for your patient and attention.

Because of the time in disposal, it is difficult to outline in details, problems, discussions and corresponding recommendations.

I will try to offer a general framework, leaving space for suggestions, questions and comments, which will be welcomed and evaluated.

Navigating in the official website of the Institution that organizes this Forum I read the intervention of Mr. Bernard Snoy in the Global Forum on Migration and Development, July 2007.

“OSCE considers migration as a multilateral issue with linkage to border security and management, with stable development, tolerance and non discrimination, and on human rights, by acquainted and accepted these in a number of its commitments and documents”.

Thanks to the today tendencies related to migration and demography, the Republic of Albania, as many other OSCE members states is experiencing the tendency of an origin transit or destination country, perhaps a combination of the three of these, with economic, social, cultural and security consequences. This needs cooperation in many levels, to deal, with efficiency, the management of the migrating phenomenon.

In a previous intervention, I presented a brief picture on the migrating policies of the Albanian Government. As I will analyse below, we find many of these tendencies a part of the policies of the Albanian Government.

Introduction on the Albanian Government migrating policies

If we would summarise in pillars, these are our migrating policies:

- Labour market policies, giving priority to the professional formation, by acknowledging the selective nature of the today migration, making efforts that this market not to be subdued to artificial deformations with the dismissal of the most prepared people; policies for the support of the economic-social integration for migrants in receiving countries in cooperation with the respective governments and societies of these countries;

- Policies for the development of our country, having as priority the migration- development;
- Measures and interventions to foster the support networks of the new and old Diaspora;
- Support to migration and remittances, included in the strategy for the development of the country, with notably regard to the strategies for the reduce of poverty;
- Financial and technical assistance for organizations and networks of migrants through policies for the development, mobilizing abilities and their human, financial and social resources to the benefit of the development for the country, via their physical and virtual return.
- Measures to prevent and uproot illegal migration, contraband and trafficking in human beings;
- Continuous improvement of the legal framework, through ratification of bilateral and multilateral agreements;
- Continuous involvement of the civil society, social partners, migrations associations, not only by preparing the legislative framework, updating policies but also by implementing them in the public, in the light of transparency.

I am convinced that the before mentioned are not just declamations, or having values of political document, they are followed by concrete actions. Just to have an illustration today we have a National Strategy for Migration, followed by a very concrete Action Plan. As we all know, the most difficult part is coordination among institutions, starting from the domestic ones. This phase is already passed. Today we have an Inter - Ministerial Committee headed by the Prime Minister, with the participation of the Ministers, institutions that are stakeholders to manage the migrating phenomenon, which in addition to political attributes and supporting tools, and technique, it carried out the co-ordination of all activities, aiming at achieving reduce of costs and maximum of profits from the migrating phenomenon.

Allow me to point out that the road to achieve what we have today was not “a Pindaric threatening”, but we learned from our mistakes and non achievements at the international level and we have made our efforts to learn from lessons and international approaches.

Today, we are proud to say that migration is associated with the development of the country, the same as we have acquainted the philosophy that management is the most valuable attitude and that this management is performed at an international context, where common problems are given approximately equal solutions, co-ordinated to the benefit of the host countries and what is most important is that in addition to the societies of the two countries the migrant and his family should be the beneficiaries.

When I mentioned difficult route I meant the commencement of the treating the Albanian migrating phenomenon, in a full lack of the legal framework, structures specialized, not talking in details to the period of 1990 where the desire for a better life was “political heresy” and firmly punished.

In a retrospective view, I found it useful to make a brief historical presentation, focusing on the features of the Albanian migration, of migrants themselves and some of the responses we offer.

In close relation to these developments, which in the migrating field are very impetuously, sometimes not predictable, such as the global economic crises that the world is facing, we have been careful to acknowledge the phenomenon and its protagonists, micro - universe that have the movement of people through international borders.

- First migrating flow: Period 1991-1992 was a consequence of an environment of political, social and economic destabilization.
- Period 1992-1996 was relatively characterized from the political stability and social- economic progress.
- Period December 1996 – April 1997 was the third migrating flow (bankruptcy of pyramidal schemes.)
- Period 1998-2002 and in continuance, Albanian governments implemented a National Program of Stabilisation. After the year 2000 up to present the legal framework was improved, institutional framework was strengthened, administrative and professional capacities of the workers involved were increased as well as the bilateral or multilateral co-operation was fostered.

All this would have not been achieved if we wouldn't have and deserved the support from different countries, huge European institutions, such as the presence of the European Commission to Tirana, or prestigious missions such as IOM, International Labour Organisation (ILO) on which I find the opportunity to express thank and gratitude.

Three periods for the Albanian modern migration

As I will mention below, our country experiences and is experiencing these phases or similar versions of the migrating cycle. We are convinced that the migrating phenomenon could influence on the increase and reduce of poverty through three channels: i) changes in the composition and professional competences for the labour power offer; ii) changes in the productivity; and iii) through remittances from migrants and using them to the benefit of the development for the country, commencing in the families, local communities and to all the country. Neto benefits from the migrating phenomenon is the amount of these three factors, like the importance of any factor or cycle, as below, changes along to the life of the migrating cycle; i) exit from the origin country; ii) arrangement in the host country; iii) consolidation; iv) establishment of networks and v) wilful and forceful return. In this manner, each of these cycles can be accelerated or overcome depending from the public policies, as the return is in coincidence with migration from other countries to the Republic of Albania.

This migration can be considered in three periods: i) migrating flow, before 1944; ii) a later Diaspora, in small dimensions, emigrated during the period 1945-1990; iii) considerable flows after the period 1990, or even the overthrow of the totalitarian communist regime.

The third phases commences after the year | 1990, dividing it in three sub phases : i) migratory flows of the period 1991-92, totally uncontrolled. In this period about 300.000 Albanian citizens left Albania; ii) flows 1992-96, when about the same amount of people left Albania, often in illegal routes, despite the temporary improvement of the economy, political stability, better controls on borders and sometimes soft policies of some countries; iii) flows after the period 1996-07, soon after the collapse of different pyramidal schemes and political –social turmoil. Some factors such as, unemployment, insecurity, poverty, economical difficulties influenced that 100.000 people left Albanian within some months; ; iv) lastly, from 1998 there has been an improvement of political , economic, social situations; together with some favourable improvement of the two neighbouring countries, Italy and Greece influenced on the increase of legal migration flow and reduce of illegal migration.

Figures of today migration and countries for migration of the Albanian citizens

In selecting destination countries, Albanian citizens have acted consciousness with some factors. Not according to importance these factors are: geographic, cultural and language proximity, supported from the legal framework of these countries. In the Albanian memory, in the long distance destination and traditional countries, USA, Canada, Australia, Argentina, New Zealand where a small of Albanian

citizens were re-turned, the phenomenon of “migration” in the memory of the people, synthesised with the nostalgia affected that Albanian to emigrate in closer or neighbouring countries. Later opportunities to find better job, legal framework and social- cultural conditions for them and their children influenced on Albanian to go further than these countries. Greece, Italy and West European countries were the main destination countries, in the period 1992-96. The desire of the Albanian citizens to go to Germany, Switzerland and other countries of the West Europe, was dispersed because of their strict migrating policies. After the year 1995, traditional destination countries, such as USA and Canada were important in the mind of Albanian citizens.

A picture on the Albanian migration

1 million emigrants out of a general population 3.4 million citizens;

- 22-25% of the general population;
- 35% of the active population;
- Albanian migratory flows 5-6 times more comparing to the countries in development, related to the active population,

Features of Albanian emigration

Age factor: first generation of emigrants is reaching the age for retirement. Second generation is studying, or joining labour market.

Ethnic origin: the most part of Albanian migratory communities is in Greece, as being the first remittances country having the receipt of more than 50 % of the immigrating general population there, followed by the presence of another neighbouring country, Italy.

In the daily life, Albanian emigration is faced to prejudices, victimization phenomenon, incrimination and easily based on percept rather than facts. This public percept is caused by some media, mainly local ones.

Geographic proximity increased the expectancy that Albanian emigrants in these countries would have gone before but they feel the distance and nostalgia of their relatives; they are not always near the local population, despite cultural proximities, geographical, language proximity, if comparing to the initial expectancy.

“Ethnic gethos” stop integration for emigrants, but this phenomenon touches Albanian emigration, because our emigrants don’t have stable expectancies in these “gethos”.

Human resources most of the emigrants still have low level of professional and educational level; emigrants with qualifications have found jobs in sectors not corresponding to their background and abilities.

As above mentioned, this has stopped integration and establishing anti- migrating precepts and reactions, in particular for those not authorized and that stay in the periphery of social institutions.

Actually, not only because of the presence, mainly to two countries, Greece and Italy Albanian emigrants give their contribution to arrange the social caring./

Status of the Albanian emigrants: In the beginning of emigrating flows, Albania was not prepared to manage it. The two host receiving countries, Greece and Italy were also not prepared to receive properly massive flows, the most part not authorized.

Change of the illegal/legal report initiated in 1998.

In the timeline 1998-2005, about 70 000 Illegal Albanian emigrants arranged their status, every year in Italy and Greece. In the timeline 2003-2007, the report between regular/ irregular report was 1.5-1 in Greece and 3-1 in Italy.

Active and passive migration: family emigration was increased, conditioned and favoured from cultural, language and geographic proximities and from the low cost to immigrate to neighbouring counties.

Emigration was followed by huge levels of minors' emigration, accompanied or not. Step by step the Albanian emigration followed the general tendency of its feminization, conditioned and favoured from relative employment facilities of women in respective sectors, such as services housework, ect.

According to a tendency of whole world emigration, the level of unemployment among emigrants was very high compared to the local ones.

Long term emigration vis a vis long term one: opportunities for employment offered from migrating policies of neighbouring countries.

Geographic proximity favours periodical returns to homeland.

Synergy between economic and professional activities of the receiving countries and Albania.

Emigration of survival and consuming toward factor of development: During the 15 first years emigration served as a resource for survival and consuming.

In the last year, efforts have been made to use the Albanian emigration as a factor for the economic, social, cultural and political development.

As support we have the National Strategy for Migration and the National Action Plan for Migration, as a huge document and tool to manage all the aspects of the Albanian emigration.

Special attention has been placed to willing return, supported by programs and policies.

We are trying to use remittances and virtual abilities of emigrants as resource for financing, establishment of job vacancies and development factors in community.

Changes in the migratory flow structure: increase number of qualified emigrants. Increase in number of students that study abroad.

Feminisation of the Albanian emigration, not only through family reunion but also independent female emigration by making equal the report/ male emigrants and women emigrants.

Changes in the composition of the migratory flows: tendencies to strengthen the undertaking initiative of the Albanian emigrants in two main receiving countries, Greece and Italy. Undertaking remains a masculine activity, which leads to the duty to stimulate female emigration.

Albanian emigration in the context of international policies

Migration brings profits in a balance costs-profits, only if it managed properly to the benefit of the individuals, family and societies of the origin and receiving countries. If we would link properly migration with development than this phenomenon would be valuable to use. This process has the other side of medal. This is why it causes not only arguments but also divides schools of thinking.

For example, migration may impede origin countries from abilities, talents and excellent minds which influence on the decomposition of families, rarely migration is used for contraband and trafficking in human beings to further go to exploitation of migratory flows from criminal and terrorist organisations.

It is never excessive to admit and readmit that many of the problems may be solved through commitment, arguments, in the country with the participation of all fundamental actors, and also through an international cooperation. This would lead to better knowledge and understanding of profits offered from migration.

To illustrate better I am citing the words of the former Secretary General of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, “ none of use can solve migration problems alone, but each of use keeps in grand a part of the solution of rebus. Time has come to bring them jointly”.

Not always migrating experiences have been positive: migrants of the two genders are being exposed to the exploitation and abuse of human beings from contrabandist; others, as the result of increase of social tensions, religious and cultural tensions in some societies find themselves included and in front of walls of discrimination, xenophobia and racism.

Policies of international migration don't exist isolated, they all have global consequences. We already know that costs and profits from migration are not divided equally, among countries but even among social groups.

This is why in our policies the priority is international cooperation and coordination. This is why we have approved the philosophy that migrating policies can not be considered only economic aspects, but referring to the school of thinking that migration produces social consequences, cultural even that fact that policy is not only a thing being rich or poor but it is a model of the societies that we want to live in.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations as below, are interweaving of international expertise with the Albanian expertise.

- Expansion of legal channels for migration, in particular the circulating and temporary migration, through bilateral and multilateral agreements for employment.
- Improvement of curricula of professional, public and private formations centres, according to development and requirements from the foreign labour markets.
- Development and improvement of migrating policies, based on the acknowledge and undertaking of base reasons of migration and its consequences (“push” and “pull” factors).
- Efficient enhancement of bilateral and world cooperation, and exchange of information between institutions, that has under the competence to deal with the migrating phenomenon.
- Joint actions for a concrete approach to fight illegal migration and punish persons, despite the fact where they stay, that smuggle or traffic human beings, or employ foreigners with illegal stay.
- Joint programs to develop and assist willing returns of migrants and their re-integration to the origin country.
- Development of continuous systems for training and formation of employees that deal with the migrating phenomenon, as fundamental steps to manage with efficiency this phenomenon.
- Assistance in order that “Brain Drain” will not degradation employment, not according to possibilities and capacities of this migrating category in the destination countries, followed by huge joint programs in order to change it to “Brain Gain”.
- Better partnership between the remittances and host countries, as an efficient mechanism to ensure the development, up to date policies coherent and to ensure their successful implementation. Consideration on migration, employment, investment and assistance on the development can be jointly addressed at national and global level.
- Accepting the fact the migrant workers in the international migration are not protected, it is easily touchable to increase efforts to protect them and their families, in the field of their rights and increase of their economic welfare.
- Cooperation among the origin countries and destination countries with joint programs in order to reduce the financial cost for remittances, use of official financial institutions and expansion of services to the community in the origin country.
- Increase the partnership for the development of policies for development in the origin country, regarding to the human resources, policies for the labour market development and social policies. This would reduce pressure to emigrate as necessity, increasing the level of employment and social involvement in the origin country.

I would like to thank you for taking your time and attention, and I welcome any suggestion or comment. I wish you fruitful work and see you in future meetings.