

DRAFT RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

ENGLISH only

13th Economic Forum

Rapporteur's Report on the Side-event on

Migration and Economic Development of the Sending Countries

Gallery Hall, Czernin Palace, Prague, Tuesday, 24 May 2005, 14: 30 – 16:15

On 24 May 2005, for the second time, a side event with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation took place in the margins of the Thirteenth Economic Forum in Prague. The aim of the meeting, chaired by Minister Pierre Chevalier, Special Envoy of the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs for the OSCE Chairmanship 2006, was to discuss a specific concern of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation within the overall theme of the Economic Forum, namely migration and economic development of the sending countries. Participants in the meeting included participating and Partner States.

The Chairman highlighted that a well-integrated migrant represents an asset for the receiving country, while at the same time participation in the economic life of a society through work represented the best way for migrants to secure their successful social and cultural integration. Participants in the meeting were invited to address relevant questions related to migration, such as the economic causes of migration; conditions to guarantee a contribution by migrants to the development of the economy of their country of origin and of destination; reinforcing the link between migration and development; challenges posed by migration in countries of origin and destination; managing migration in a win-win situation, for the migrants themselves, as well as their societies of origin and destination.

Keynote addresses were delivered by Ambassador Omar Zniber of Morocco and Mr. Jean-Pierre Garson, Head of Non-Member Economies and International Migration Division of the OECD.

Amb. Zniber stated that migration has a strong impact on the security, stability and development of the South Mediterranean region. Conducting an in-depth discussion on this issue was a matter of high importance, and this was one of the aims of the forthcoming Mediterranean Seminar, to be held in Rabat, Morocco, in September 2005. Different countries had different approaches to migration, but the concerted work of both the countries of origin and destination was needed, as had been stressed in the opening of the Thirteenth Economic Forum. Although a positive dialogue had been established between the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, what was necessary was to focus on the economic and human aspects of migration. The OSCE had an important role to play in this respect, and it was hoped that discussion in Rabat would lead to concrete recommendations and possibly to an agreed plan of action on the integration of migrants in destination countries.

Mr. Garson stressed that political development was a key issue, especially in relation to peace and stability in the sending regions. A careful analysis of migration trends was needed. Migration could help mitigate some problems, but was not a solution. There was a need to promote co-operation and investment. Migration flows could be reduced if the sending countries managed to achieve stability and prosperity. This was a particularly important question as the new generations started to approach the age of entering the labour market. Concerning remittances, these were frequently much higher than the amount of aid and foreign direct investment in sending countries. There was also a need to stimulate re-

investment of remittances in the countries of origin, through, *inter alia*, fighting corruption and creating the right conditions. Countries that until recently had been sending countries had become receiving countries following policies aimed at opening and greater democratization. He also stressed the need for political reform and further democratization, which would stimulate economic development.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were raised:

- There was general consensus that economic development was a key to addressing problems related to migration. Some participants expressed the view that focus on restrictive measures against migration had failed to counter migratory trends. Promoting co-development was given particular focus.
- Concerns were expressed that development should not come at the expense of environmental issues, especially considering that a rising number of migrants were “environmental” migrants. The environmental dimension of migration was proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the Mediterranean Seminar in Rabat in September.
- The proposal to elaborate an action plan as the outcome of the forthcoming Mediterranean Seminar in Rabat was worth pursuing.
- The recommendations of the third Ministerial Conference of the 5+5 of September 2004 should be given appropriate follow-up.
- There was a need to look at migration trends in terms of complementarity, rather than substitution.
- There was a need to establish a proper dialogue between the sending and the receiving countries, including by favouring cultural exchanges.
- Although there was a perceived link between migration and organized crime, drug smuggling and terrorism, there was a need to change the perception so that migrants could be seen as an asset and not only a burden.
- Addressing factors leading to migration might in turn also contribute to increased security. Such factors include: proper dialogue and handling in connection with movements of migrants, fight against poverty, facilitation of legal migration and integration, increased action against illegal migration.
- Systematic policies needed to be considered aimed at stimulating the reinvestment of remittances by migrants in productive activities in the countries of origin.
- There is a need for cooperation and dialogue in the framework of the OSCE in order to raise awareness of the relationship between migration and development, and of the conditions under which negative aspects for sending and receiving countries can be mitigated, e.g. through the development of good practices in connection with the attraction of migrants, and good practices in connection with integration of migrants.

At the end, the Chairman expressed appreciation for the stimulating debate and the interesting contributions from the speakers, as well as the Mediterranean Partners and participating States. He also expressed support for continuing the discussion and looked forward to further discussion in Rabat.