



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Seventeenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

Part 2 / Athens, 18 - 20 May 2008

“Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region”

Statement in the Concluding Debate

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Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have now reached the concluding session of this second part of the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

I would like to thank all participants for their active involvement in the deliberations. I would especially like to thank the speakers for their high-quality presentations and the moderators for steering and stimulating the discussion so professionally. In addition, I am grateful to the rapporteurs for their valuable contribution, which will enable us to prepare a comprehensive written report of the discussions.

I will try to sum up the most important messages that stemmed from our discussion. I will also briefly refer to the possible follow-up to the Forum, based on the analysis and conclusions of the Review Report and the ideas presented to you in the “Concept Note on Conclusions and the Way Forward” and the “Joint IOM-OSCE note on follow-up activities”.

Firstly, and this is something that more or less radiated throughout the entire Forum process, the development of effective migration policies requires enhanced partnerships and cooperation between destination, transit and origin countries. Migration issues can be most effectively addressed at regional level and sharing of experiences and lessons learned among countries and regions should also be promoted. The interest by countries for the OSCE to continue to provide a platform for discussions on migration management and security issues was reconfirmed. It was also stressed that the OSCE could help strengthening regional consultation mechanisms on these topics.

Secondly, it was frequently emphasized that the OSCE could facilitate governments, upon request, to develop and implement effective national policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms. The development of such frameworks and policies should be based on a number of elements including: high quality, comparable and harmonized migration data; coordination between various departments and agencies at local, national and regional level; coordination between different policy areas and including of migration issues into various policy areas; mainstreaming gender into policies; a pro-active dialogue with the private sector and the civil society.

Another conclusion that I believe we all share is that migration, if well managed, is a long term, structural factor of development in countries of origin and destination. The flow of remittances should be facilitated and remittance holders and recipients should be encouraged to invest in new businesses. Diaspora communities could be encouraged to invest their savings back home which would give a positive boost to national economies, provided appropriate national legislation is in place.

An important topic that we approached relates to the correlation between the environment and migration. More awareness is needed on the phenomenon of environmentally induced migration and potential impacts on the security and stability in the OSCE area and in-depth research should be encouraged.

And last but not at least I would like to emphasize the need to work more effectively on social aspects of migration. It is of utmost importance to combat xenophobia, to pay due attention to the human rights of migrants, to make sure they get equal treatment and working conditions. Particular attention should also be given to the most vulnerable, women and undocumented migrants and to the issue of integration and reintegration throughout the entire migration process.

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Allow me to provide you with a brief overview of what I believe the OSCE can do or should continue to do to assist its participating States to respond to these needs and challenges.

One element is offering training and capacity-building to officials and government institutions as well as to social partners and other relevant practitioners in our participating States. In this regard the OSCE-IOM-ILO 'Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination' is a solid base for our work. Currently, my Office together with the IOM, with support of the ILO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission, is working on a project entitled 'Development of Practical Training Materials on Labour Migration Management'. The project aims at supporting the development and implementation of labour migration policies that ensure safer, more humane and orderly labour movements as well as decent work conditions for migrant workers. Eleven training modules will be developed, covering issues such as international legal frameworks for the protection of migrant workers; migration and development; foreign employment; admission policies; social cohesion; gender aspects; return and reintegration; irregular labour migration; and international cooperation.

My Office, in co-operation with partners, also intends to continue fostering the implementation of OSCE commitments related to migration based on our discussions here and on the Review Report prepared by the ILO.

I trust you have all received the revised note on Joint OSCE/IOM proposals for follow-up activities (*EEF.GAL/7/09 REV 1*). During this year's Forum process our relationship with the IOM has been strengthened significantly and we would like to make use of this excellent co-operation to present a number of specific project proposals.

A first proposal - the development of a regional data collection system as a sound basis for policy-making in Eastern Europe & Central Asia – aims at building the capacity in establishing a harmonized data collection process through the development of common statistical indicators on migration. This would allow for the comparing of migration data in the regional context and could eventually lead to possible regional forecasts. The project would be implemented in close cooperation with regional organizations such as EurAsEC, EUROSTAT and the CIS Statistical Committee.

A second proposal focuses on the links between migrant savings, investment and development in the OSCE region. It would consist in a Regional Conference on Diaspora and Development. Its main objective would be to contribute to networking and exchanging information and best practices, leading finally to the development of possible projects on topics such as researching migrant savings and remittances, raising awareness of the banking sector on the nature and volume of migrant savings, and facilitating investments of migrant savings and remittances etc.

A third project proposal would pay particular attention to the needs and challenges faced by female labour migrants in the OSCE region. It would build on the newly produced Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies. The main objectives would be further awareness raising on the importance of the inclusion of gender-sensitive measures into labour migration policies, and capacity building through organization of two sub-regional training workshops in countries of origin. It would end with a final workshop in a major destination country.

Other proposed activities would assess the links between migration and environment. Through a combination of research and consultative meetings, projects would assess the potential influence of environmental degradation and climate-related natural disasters on future migration trends in mountain areas of Central Asia and the South Caucasus countries.

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The successful implementation of these follow-up activities will require political support as well as voluntary financial and in-kind contributions from *you*, our participating States. I hope that our discussions over the past few days have convinced you of the useful role our Organization can play in the migration field and will enable you to provide us with the support we need. Let me now turn to the commentators for their views on the outcome of the Forum process and possible follow-up.