

4 October 2006

**HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING  
(Warsaw, 2-13 October 2006)**

**Working Session 5: Humanitarian Issues and Other Commitments**

**STATEMENT**

**MIGRANT WORKERS AND INTEGRATION OF LEGAL MIGRANTS**

Mr. Moderator,

Migration and integration is a subject matter of close concern to Turkey.

Since the Helsinki Final Act, protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers and their families legally residing in host countries have been the concern of all participating States. Thus, the OSCE participating States have undertaken a series of commitments in this field. We see today's discussions as an important opportunity to assess where we stand in the implementation of these commitments and to share best practices in order to cope with the challenges of migration and integration.

Although labor migration is not a new phenomenon, the need to devise effective policies of immigration and integration has been recognized relatively recently by many receiving countries. Despite sustained efforts by the Governments, new restrictions on family reunifications, new and hardened legislations for naturalization, discrimination in job finding, barriers in social mobilization and difficulties in normal and professional education of the children of immigrants continue to make the lives of immigrants difficult and the success of the integration policies very incremental.

Our attention has also been drawn by several speakers 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 affect not only the code of social behaviour but also governmental policies.

The measures taken to fight terrorism add to the complexity of the situation and have a crippling effect on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrants. There is also a close connection between the issues of undocumented migration and trafficking. Therefore, we recommend the OSCE and the ODIHR to look at these issues from a multidisciplinary human rights perspective. We appreciate the efforts of the High Commissioner on National Minorities to initiate a

discussion on the integration of new minorities in established democracies. We are equally satisfied with the ODIHR's initiative to organize a side event on the rights of migrants after this session.

Turkey on her part encourages expatriate Turks, 3.5 million in Europe only, to live in harmony and integrate with the host societies. As a result of this policy, Turkish immigrant communities have never given credit to proponents of confrontation. Turkey also supports preservation of their cultural identity. This policy, pursued mainly by the provision of teachers and religious instructors, aims to address the challenges of a possible identity crisis and promotes harmonious relations with and active participation in the host society. We hope to increase our dialogue and cooperation with the Governments of the host societies to be able to contribute more in the integration process of the migrant workers.

Overall, we can say that 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 the social and cultural diversity. This should be recognized.

In closing, I would like to recommend to the participating States and the OSCE the following:

- The OSCE participating States should sign and ratify the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
- OSCE and its institutions should focus more on the human dimension of migration and integration. Protection and promotion of the rights of migrants should be one of the priorities.

Thank you.