Working Group A:
DATA ON MIGRATION AND SECURITY

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Security in the traditional sense relates to individual State protection of its territory.[1] Events surrounding September 11 have redefined State security and the importance of global information sharing and collection.[2] New security measures and agreements have an impact on migration. While the flow of persons across borders has always been monitored with respect to State security, the current focus is on pre-checking personal profiles and more meticulous efforts to prevent persons identified as possible security threats from crossing borders. Preventative measures include the use of biometrics such as facial recognition, iris scans, finger imaging, and hand geometry. Beyond an increase in technology, there exists an increase in dialogue on security and information-sharing across borders resulting in agreements and changes in legislation.

Currently global data on international migration and security is limited, and is developed primarily at the national and regional levels. Bilateral agreements which include data exchange are common and can be illustrated by those between the US and Canada, Russia and CIS states and also Hungary and Europol. Regional dialogues such as the Inter-governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC); the Central American Commission for Security held in October 2001 in Honduras; and the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) include a significant focus on security and information sharing. Meetings of the latter two dialogues resulted in guidelines and a plan of action for control and security of migration, including the RCM's *Declaration against Terrorism* of May, 2002.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR CONSIDERATION

Collecting reliable data on migration and security is a difficult and sensitive task. The following are long-term goals and challenges for consideration:
- Developing clear definitions for data to be collected in a systematized way, allowing for transferability of information;
- Storage and security of data to protect personal information while allowing for cooperation with international partners;
- Securing funds to build information-sharing systems, especially for developing countries and countries with a substantial outflow of migrants;
- Constructing a mechanism to assure the protection of human rights and security while sharing data.

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[1] The Oxford English Dictionary defines security as the condition of being protected from or not exposed to danger; freedom from care, anxiety, or apprehension: a feeling of safety or freedom from or absence of danger, orientation to future risks and focus on risks of falling below some critical threshold of deprivation.
[2] "International Terrorism and Migration," June 2003, *International Organization for Migration*

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What information may be shared among States, while ensuring the protection of personal information?
2. What are the differences in State legislation on data protection and how may this be coordinated?
3. What data collection mechanisms are available for the screening of forced migrants and refugees?
4. How can information be shared without encroaching on State sovereignty?
5. What is the feasibility of setting up information collection and checks at points of departure?