MIGRATION DIALOGUE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (MIDSA)

What is MIDSA?

- The MIDSA process is an informal platform for consultative regional dialogue and cooperation. At MIDSA, SADC Member States discuss openly and exchange views on common challenges and solutions to migration related issues for the Southern Africa region.

The MIDSA Process

- The MIDSA process started in 2000. The IOM in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has provided support for MIDSA by fostering an understanding of various migration phenomena and strengthening regional institutional capacities to address migration.

- A recent development for MIDSA is that in 2010 it was elevated to Ministerial level and in this regard the first Ministerial MIDSA was held in Windhoek, Namibia in November 2010 where Ministers recommended among other things that the MIDSA recommendations should be integrated into SADC structures so that these recommendations may lead to concrete action.

- This recommendation has been successfully achieved through the development of a Regional Action Plan on Labour Migration for Southern Africa which was drafted at a MIDSA Technical Meeting that was held in 2012 in Mauritius.

- This MIDSA meeting in 2012 was attended by Senior Official from Ministries of Labour and Home Affairs and the theme was theme “Enhancing Intraregional Labour Migration toward Social and Economic Development in the SADC Region”. A key outcome of this meeting was the development of the Regional Roadmap/Plan on Labour Migration

- The roadmap contains sections on key priority areas pertaining to labour migration in the region that were identified based on the recommendations and proposals made during the course of the meeting. The key thematic areas consist of Policy and Legal Framework; Data Collection and Information; Rights (Protection) of Migrant Workers; Migration and Health; Portability of Benefits; Remittances; and MIDSA Governance.
• The action plan was subsequently approved at the recent Employment and Labour Sector meeting attended by SADC Ministers of Labour on 17 May 2013.

• The second Ministerial MIDSA is planned to be held on the 10 – 11 July 2013 in Maputo. This MIDSA conference will be attended by Ministers of Labour and Home Affairs to jointly endorse the Regional Action Plan on Labour Migration as well as discuss other thematic areas e.g. Irregular Migration, Migration and Health, National Migration Policies and so on.

MIDSA Topics

Over the years MIDSA has addressed a range of topics on migration. Examples include:

• Irregular migration
• Forced migration
• Migration and Health
• Human trafficking
• Migration and Development
• Labour migration

Migration in Southern Africa

• All SADC states are affected by migration either as source, transit or destination countries. While some of the migratory movement is related to conflict and insecurity, most of the migration within the region is related to economic reasons, as people are looking for greener pastures elsewhere.

• Since the SADC Protocol on the Facilitation on Movement of Persons has not yet entered into force, no operational regional migration protocol exists today, which can coordinate migration management in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). MIDSA aims to fill this gap and foster consultative regional dialogue and cooperation on migration-related issues.