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Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)  
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## **2013 United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development**

### **IOM activities and possible “high road scenarios” for the four round-table themes<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Introduction**

For many years, the relationship between migration and development was reduced to a simple “problem”: migration is driven by a lack of development in countries of origin. Today, there is a more nuanced understanding of the positive and negative links between migration and development for host and home countries and for migrants themselves. There is also greater recognition of the relevance of migration to all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.<sup>2</sup>

While migration carries significant development potential, positive development outcomes – for migrants and countries of origin and destination equally – are by no means guaranteed. Migration is integral to development but not a substitute for it, and, by the same token, migrants can be agents of development but are not responsible for it. The positive impact of migration on development therefore hinges on appropriate policies for humane and orderly migration governance, which includes focusing on protection of the human rights and well-being of all migrants.

In the development debate, the focus is expanding from development as poverty eradication in some countries to development as the challenge of sustainability in all countries. Ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda suggest that a future framework may well be more universal in nature, with differentiated targets for high-, middle- and low-income countries.

As regards the place of migration in the evolving global development discourse, the challenge is to improve migration governance at local, national, regional and global levels in response to growing interconnectedness and the shared challenges of shifting demographics, global competition for skills, labour and care, managing inequalities, diversity and social cohesion, climate change and humanitarian crises, to mention but a few.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on excerpts from a document prepared by IOM for Twelfth Session of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance (SCPF) on 13 and 14 May 2013, in response to priorities expressed by the Member States.

<sup>2</sup> Sustainable development was defined as encompassing an economic, a social and an environmental pillar by the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/288: The future we want) and in *Realizing the Future We Want for All. Report to the Secretary-General*, UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, which states that the future development agenda should be organized along four key dimensions: (1) inclusive social development; (2) inclusive economic development; (3) environmental sustainability; and (4) peace and security.

In view of these realities, IOM works with governments to promote a 'high road scenario' for migration governance, one in which facilitating, not restricting, migration is the priority, which sees migration as a process to be managed rather than a problem to be solved, and which strives to expand the possibilities for people to realize their human development aspirations and potential through mobility. A high road scenario aims to offer governments a range of options for meeting short-, medium- and long-term national interests within the framework of the rule of law, through evidence-based migration policy and in a spirit of multilateral cooperation. In its global efforts to harness the positive impact of migration while mitigating its negative consequences, IOM promotes comprehensive migration approaches that empower migrants, protect their rights and promote safe and dignified migration, and ensure that migration is beneficial for sustainable development in home and host communities.

### **Possible “high road scenarios” for the four round-table themes of the High-level Dialogue<sup>3</sup> and IOM activities**

#### ***Round table 1: Assessing the effects of international migration on sustainable development and identifying relevant priorities in view of the preparations of the post-2015 development framework***

A high road scenario under this theme is based on the understanding that migration is relevant to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and to peace and security.<sup>4</sup> It aspires to enhance migration's benefits equally for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination. A high road approach should be based on objective analyses of how migration can help, hinder or be harmonized with the achievement of development goals in each of the four dimensions, recognizing that outcomes may differ for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination. Conversely, policymakers should consider how development policies and outcomes can influence patterns and levels of migration. In a high road scenario, migration would be mainstreamed into development planning at local, national and global levels and in both developing and developed countries. Likewise, a high road approach would integrate migration into broader planning in sectors such as health, education, the labour market, disaster risk reduction and environmental policy, and include migrants in the target populations for these policies. Concrete measures to improve the development outcomes of migration include investing in more systematic and comparable data collection, for example by including migration questions in national censuses, reducing recruitment and remittance transfer costs, ensuring broader access to financial services, providing greater protection and support for families separated by migration (especially children remaining in countries of origin), and engaging with diaspora and transnational communities to enhance their contribution as development partners.<sup>5</sup>

The following areas should feature high among the priorities shaping migration policy agendas: the relationship between human mobility, climate change and environmental factors, which highlights the need to link disaster preparedness, climate change adaptation and sustainable development; the growing significance of migration among developing countries (often termed 'South-South migration' for short); the interactions between migration and humanitarian crises; and the impact of demographic trends on migration and development policies, in particular regarding youth unemployment and ageing populations. Lastly, migration needs to be factored appropriately into the post-2015 development agenda. For example, migration could be a cross-cutting “enabler” under different thematic components of a new framework, or part of a new partnership goal.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> As determined by United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/219 on the modalities of the High-level Dialogue, adopted in December 2012

<sup>4</sup> See note 2.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://diaspora.iom.int/>.

<sup>6</sup> For example when revising Millennium Development Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

In order to further such a high road scenario, IOM's primary goal is to facilitate the orderly and humane management of international migration and to address the migratory phenomenon from an integral and holistic perspective, including links to development, in order to maximize its benefits and minimize its negative effects.<sup>7</sup> IOM activities to that end include:

- Programming and capacity development on all aspects of migration management: migration policy and dialogue, international migration law, labour migration, immigration and border management, migration health, engagement of diaspora and transnational communities in development and post-crisis reconstruction, remittances, counter-trafficking, and preparedness and response to migration and displacement in crisis and post-crisis situations;
- Support for mainstreaming migration into national development agendas, sector policies, and disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies;
- Migration data collection, research and analysis to promote coherent migration policies that support sustainable development, for example through the Migration Profiles;
- Contributions to global discussions on migration and development, including through the provision of expert and technical support to the Global Forum on Migration and Development and involvement in preparations for the post-2015 development agenda and in United Nations negotiations on climate change and sustainable development.

***Round table 2: Measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, with particular reference to women and children, to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, and to ensure orderly, regular and safe migration***

Here, pursuing a high road scenario means promoting a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to migration that ensures access by all migrants to their human and labour rights. A rights-based approach promotes fair and transparent migration policies grounded in due process of law and has at its centre the principle of non-discrimination, while taking into account differentiated vulnerabilities stemming from gender, age, health, legal status and other factors. Concretely, this would encompass the decriminalization of irregular migrants, pathways to obtain legal status, reinforced integration policies, options for return in dignity where stay is not possible or permitted, migrant-sensitive health and education policies, specific protection for migrants in sectors not always covered by labour laws (such as migrant domestic workers), ethical labour recruitment practices to protect migrants from potential abuse and exploitation, reinforced capacities for consular assistance, alternatives to detention and access to justice. A high road scenario would extend social protection to migrants throughout the entire migration cycle, starting with pre-departure, during transit, in destination settings and after eventual return. This includes the rights to decent working conditions, to health, adequate housing, clean water and sanitation, to education for children of migrants, irrespective of their or their parents' legal status, and to access to social security systems (where appropriate and available). Without these guarantees, the social and financial costs of migration – for migrants and for societies as a whole – can increase and ultimately outweigh the positive effects of migration. Harmful forms and effects of migration, especially human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, and specific challenges facing irregular migrants need to be firmly counteracted, without criminalizing the migrants involved, and balanced by genuine and accessible opportunities for legal migration. Furthermore, priority should be given to addressing the situation of stranded migrants in distress and to the protection and development implications of humanitarian crises for migrants and migration.

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<sup>7</sup> See the opening paragraph and in particular points 3, 4 and 5 of the document entitled *IOM Strategy* (MC/INF/287).

A rights-based approach is best realized through engagement with migrants and broader communities affected by migration. This means actively moderating myths and misinformation about migrants and migration, while addressing public perceptions and legitimate concerns. A high road scenario will require efforts by governments and civil society to counter anti-migrant sentiment, xenophobia and discrimination and raise awareness of migrants' overwhelmingly positive contributions to societies of origin and destination. A more mobile world requires flexible and creative integration policies, based on a concept of integration as a two-way process of adaptation between migrants and societies and with the principal aims of protecting rights and building inclusive and cohesive societies.

IOM supports a rights-based approach in all its programmes. It helps States design rights-based migration policies and develops and implements measures that reduce migration-related risks and help migrants achieve their human development potential through better awareness of their rights, improved health and well-being, and reduced exposure to discriminatory or exploitative treatment.<sup>8</sup> IOM activities to that end include:

- Promotion of effective respect for the international legal framework relevant to migration, including the human rights of migrants, for example through training in international migration law, technical assistance for developing and revising national legislation and policy consistent with relevant international norms, instruments and best practices, awareness raising and cooperation with monitoring mechanisms;
- Information dissemination and communication to encourage migration that is safe, orderly and regular, promotion of ethical labour recruitment frameworks to ensure fair and transparent processes, and placement of migrant workers in conditions that ensure their rights are protected;
- Migrant training and (re-)integration assistance, both before departure and on arrival;
- Direct assistance and protection for migrants, especially vulnerable populations such as victims of trafficking and other exploited migrants, unaccompanied migrant children, stranded migrants, migrants caught in crises and migrants in mixed migration flows.

***Round table 3: Strengthening partnerships and cooperation on international migration and mechanisms to effectively integrate migration into development policies, and promoting coherence at all levels***

Under a high road scenario, governments would commit to cooperation with all partners while recognizing the sovereign prerogative of States to determine the entry and stay of non-nationals in their territories, within the limits set by their international legal obligations. A high road scenario would strive for integrated policymaking to maximize synergies and minimize contradictions among different policy sectors. To do this, governments would pursue 'whole of government' and 'whole of society' approaches to migration, for example through inter-ministerial and multisector coordination; they would also engage with non-governmental players. In particular the private sector – employers and recruiters – has a stake in well-managed migration and its specific roles and responsibilities should be clarified. In countries of origin, a high road scenario for successful migration mainstreaming into national development planning depends on national ownership of the process, designated institutions or inter-ministerial coordination bodies and due consideration of cross-cutting policy issues. Countries of destination would consider how migration fits into broader growth, employment and labour market strategies, for example by pursuing a mix of foreign recruitment in cooperation with countries of origin and providing the local workforce with incentives to meet

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<sup>8</sup> See IOM Strategy, op. cit., particularly points 2, 5, 8, 9 and 11.

demands in certain sectors, such as health-care and domestic care workers in ageing societies. Under a high road scenario, policy coherence is also relevant in other areas, such as the role of human mobility in disaster risk reduction strategies, disaster preparedness, national climate change adaptation programmes and sustainable urban planning. Lastly, inter-State and inter-agency cooperation on migration is fundamental to a high road scenario and the number of venues for multilateral, multi-stakeholder and inter-agency collaboration has grown significantly in the last decade,<sup>9</sup> most notably through regional consultative processes on migration and other regional or interregional forums, the Global Forum on Migration and Development in terms of intergovernmental dialogue and the Global Migration Group for inter-agency cooperation.

Partnerships are a central tenet of IOM's work, both in coordinating activities with partner agencies and in promoting cooperation among governments through bilateral and multilateral dialogue and agreements on the full range of migration issues.<sup>10</sup> IOM activities in this respect include:

- Promotion of policy coherence and evidence-based policymaking by facilitating multisector coordination on migration within governments and making available the necessary research and data;
- Support for the development of specific national migration and development policies, for example in the form of tools, training and programmes on links between migration and development;
- Support for and facilitation of global and regional policy dialogue on migration (including through the International Dialogue on Migration, regional consultative processes, the Global Forum and other forums); support for strengthened inter-agency cooperation and partnership on migration (including through the Global Migration Group).<sup>11</sup>

#### ***Round table 4: International and regional labour mobility and its impact on development***

A high road scenario for international and regional labour mobility and its impact on development would aim to enhance the positive contribution of labour mobility to growth and development in countries of origin and destination and to the human development and well-being of migrants themselves. Importantly, there need to be opportunities for labour mobility at all skill levels, according to real labour market needs. In view of demographic trends and the growing demand for care work, 'global care chains' are becoming a significant feature of global migration patterns, with impacts especially on women migrant workers and families in countries of origin. Temporary labour migration programmes can be effective where labour needs are genuinely temporary, with specific provisions to protect the rights of temporary labour migrants, for example by not tying permits to a single employer. A different set of solutions is needed for more structural, long-term labour needs. Ideally, high road approaches would lead to the harmonization of labour migration policies, labour market needs and development priorities of both countries of origin and destination. A high road scenario would ground all policies in relevant international and regional labour standards, in particular the principle of non-discrimination in labour standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue. In this regard, particular challenges relate to regulation of the recruitment industry to prevent indebtedness and abuse. In the same vein, migration only improves development outcomes for individuals and societies if migrants are employed at a level that corresponds to their skills. A high road scenario would thus take action against 'brain waste' and de-skilling – which affect female migrants in particular – including through better systems for recognizing foreign qualifications and targeted initiatives to support and empower working women migrants. Lastly, under a high road scenario, governments would recognize that twenty-first century mobility means that individuals can

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<sup>9</sup> The fact that IOM's membership has more than doubled in the last decade is further evidence of this trend.

<sup>10</sup> See IOM Strategy, *op.cit.*, in particular points 3, 4, 6 and 7.

<sup>11</sup> IOM will chair the Group between July and December 2013.

be connected to more than one country. Governments can acknowledge this reality through multiple entry visas, portable social security and welfare benefits, measures to promote family unity and laws permitting multiple nationalities, thus fostering fruitful transnational links that can translate into circular migration, trade and cultural exchange.

IOM supports safe and regular international and regional labour mobility, including short-term temporary or circular movement, by helping States devise appropriate policies, facilitating the necessary cooperation between States and promoting international and regional legal standards in relation to labour migration.<sup>12</sup> IOM activities in this respect include:

- Technical assistance on labour migration management and labour market integration, including through research and by facilitating bilateral agreements, skills matching, training and vocational programmes;
- Policy support to promote regional labour mobility in the context of regional integration, including in a South–South context;
- Support for governments and diaspora/transnational communities to facilitate the transfer of the human capital and skills of qualified nationals to their countries of origin.

## Conclusion

The 2013 High-level Dialogue is also an important opportunity to improve migration governance, the migration–development nexus in particular, while keeping the rights and well-being of migrants at the centre of the debate. In line with the high road scenario outlined above, IOM proposes the following key elements<sup>13</sup> for a comprehensive agenda to “enhance the benefits of international migration for migrants and countries alike and its important links to development, while reducing its negative implications”:<sup>14</sup>

- (a) Improve public perceptions of migrants;
- (b) Factor migration into development planning;
- (c) Protect the human rights of all migrants;
- (d) Manage migration in crisis situations;
- (e) Enhance evidence-building and knowledge-based policymaking on migration;
- (f) Promote policy coherence and institutional development.

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<sup>12</sup> See IOM Strategy, *op. cit.*, in particular points 8 and 12.

<sup>13</sup> For more detailed information on each of these, see the document entitled 2013 United Nations General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development – IOM Position Paper, available from [www.iom.int/cms/hld2013](http://www.iom.int/cms/hld2013).

<sup>14</sup> See the overall theme of the High-level Dialogue, set out in United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/219, operative paragraph 3(a).

## Annex

### IOM INITIATIVES

The following is a list of select current global IOM initiatives relevant to advancing issues on the agenda of the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

- **IOM World Migration Report 2013: Migrants' Well-being and Development:** analyses development in terms of “human well-being” indicators and considers migration and development in terms of South–North, South–South, North–South and North–North migration. The report is based on empirical data pertaining to 25,000 migrants surveyed in 150 countries by Gallup.
- **IOM International Dialogue on Migration 2013: Diaspora Ministerial Conference:** will bring together in Geneva, on 18 and 19 June 2013, ministers and top officials from the growing number of government ministries and departments with direct responsibility for implementing diaspora policies and programmes.
- **High-level Dialogue Round-table Series:** between January and July 2013, IOM, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund cooperate to prepare New York-based delegates and observers on the key thematic areas to be taken up by the four round tables at the High-level Dialogue.
- **Fourth Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration:** convened by IOM and the Government of Peru in Lima, Peru, on 22 and 23 May 2013, under the theme of “Defining the Place of RCPs in a Changing International Migration Landscape”.
- **Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning: A Handbook for Policy-makers and Practitioners:** initiated by IOM and endorsed by the Global Migration Group; implementation of pilot projects and start of the second phase of piloting under the leadership of IOM and the United Nations Development Programme in mid-2013.
- **African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Observatory on Migration:** implemented by IOM in a consortium with 15 academic partners and 3 associates, the Observatory has established a network of research centres and governmental departments in six regions of the ACP area to produce and collect innovative data on South–South migration and build relevant capacities in ACP countries.
- **Migration Crisis Operational Framework:** developed in consultation with and adopted by IOM Member States in a 2012 Council resolution, the Framework aims to enhance IOM’s response to crises with migratory impacts and to the assistance and protection needs of crisis-affected populations. The Framework places special emphasis on international migrants caught in crises in destination/transit countries.

- **Operational Framework on Migrant Health:** following the 2008 World Health Assembly Resolution on the Health of Migrants (WHA 61.17) and the 2010 Global Consultation on Migrant Health (convened by IOM, the World Health Organization and the Government of Spain), IOM is promoting the operational framework on migrant health, including through multisector approaches to social determinants of migrant health and roll-out at regional and country levels.
- **Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy:** a multi-year, multi-country project by IOM and partners to contribute to the global knowledge base on the relationship between migration and environmental change, including climate change, and the formulation of related policy within comprehensive migration management strategies.

Initiatives being developed:

- **Migration and development trainer manuals:** developed by IOM to provide policymakers and practitioners with a practical tool to improve their skills, knowledge, and abilities to undertake training activities that focus on the linkages between migration and human development.
- **IOM Worldwide Campaign: The Contribution of Migrants:** an information campaign to increase public awareness of the positive contribution of migrants to home and host societies and help bring about a more favourable, documented and balanced attitude towards migrants.
- **Migration Crisis Information Programme:** a research and information network to enhance understanding of humanitarian crises with migration dimensions, including by making more systematic use of IOM operational experience and data.
- **Annual global report on migration and development:** monitors progress made in achieving migration and development goals (e.g. relating to recommendations made at previous United Nations conferences, at the Global Forum on Migration and Development and in connection with the Millennium Development Goals).