

WELCOME REMARKS

**William Lacy Swing
Director General, International Organization for Migration**

**International Dialogue on Migration 2009
Human Rights and Migration:
Working Together for Safe, Dignified and Secure Migration**

**Second Intersessional Workshop
Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants:
Ensuring Respect for Human Rights
09-10 July 2009**

Excellencies, Distinguished Officials,
Members of the United Nations Family,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the 2009 International Dialogue on Migration (IDM).

It is a pleasure to open this workshop on “Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants” on behalf of IOM Director General, William Swing, who unfortunately is on an official trip abroad in support of Regional Consultative Processes, a commitment of long standing.

It is an honour to greet such a broad array of experts at this workshop: governmental representatives from all continents, civil society, the private sector, as well as our partners from the UN system.

This year’s Dialogue is dedicated to the overarching theme of “Human Rights and Migration -- Working Together for Safe, Dignified and Secure Migration”.

It is the abuses and violations suffered by migrants around the world that lend weight and urgency to this debate. We therefore applaud IOM Member States and Observers for selecting this ambitious theme to guide our discussions.

The first workshop in March on the topic of “Effective Respect for the Human Rights of Migrants: A Shared Responsibility,” reaffirmed the importance of human rights as critical components of migration governance. Three key outcomes emerged from that discussion:

1. Governments agreed that individual migrants, irrespective of migratory status, are entitled to full respect for their human rights;
2. Violations of the human rights of migrants stem less often from shortcomings in existing laws and frameworks than from obstacles to their effective implementation; and
3. Shared responsibility was considered essential to making the human rights of migrants a reality.

This second workshop addresses the darker side of the migration experience: exploitation, and in particular, exploitation through trafficking in persons.

Despite progress in the fight against human trafficking, only a small number of victims receive the necessary assistance and protection.

Moreover, we know now that the issue of migrant exploitation is broader and deeper than the issue of human trafficking. The plight of exploited and abused migrants requires greater attention and action.

Our responses to trafficking must be embedded in a firm commitment to the human rights of all migrants. We must focus on the practical application of provisions contained in the Trafficking Protocol and human rights instruments.

The aim of this workshop is to evaluate current approaches, assess remaining challenges and exchange innovative ideas for further progress in combating human trafficking and migrant exploitation.

This is a goal that IOM is committed to achieving in its day-to-day activity – to working with you, our membership, to give effect to the human rights of migrants.

IOM’s mission, Constitution and Strategy mandate the organization to “uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants” (Mission), to look into the “specific situation and needs of the migrant as an individual human being” (Constitution) and “to enhance the humane and orderly management of migration and the effective respect for the human rights of migrants in accordance with international law” (Strategy activity 2).

One of the areas where this is of utmost relevance is counter-trafficking, undoubtedly a priority area of IOM’s work. IOM’s efforts span victim support and rehabilitation, research and data collection, prevention, and institutional capacity building. The side event (*flyers are on your desks*) later on today will present to you the broad spectrum of practical activities IOM undertakes to support governments in ensuring the protection of the human rights of migrants and assisting migrants in need, in particular victims of trafficking and exploitation.

There is a great deal of experience and expertise assembled for this important forum and I wish you there very best in what surely will be an exciting two days.

I would like to extend a special welcome to Mike Dottridge, who will deliver the keynote address, and IOM Honorary Goodwill Envoy, Valeriya Perfilova — a renowned pop singer and celebrity well-known throughout the Russian Federation and the CIS countries.

Valeriya is an activist committed to the cause of combating human trafficking. The title of Honorary Goodwill Envoy was conferred upon her nearly a year ago. Since then, her participation in major events, her donations, and her pro-bono work have been invaluable in supporting and promoting IOM’s Counter Trafficking activities in Russia and beyond.

Most recently, Valeriya has been donating proceeds from her latest single to the IOM rehabilitation centre for Victims of Trafficking in Moscow.

We are most grateful to have her with us today

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