

**Statement by Mr. Michel Dorais
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I am very pleased to have an opportunity to participate in this discussion on Migration in a Globalized World. I have listened with interest to the comments of my colleagues. And I wish to thank the IOM for having prepared such a clear and helpful paper to stimulate discussion on the vital and increasingly visible link between migration and the many issues that make up the global agenda.

I want to take up the implicit challenge that the paper gives us by trying to address some of the questions it raises. For many of the questions, I think we recognize the need for more work. For others though, I think we have enough experience already at least to suggest options. More specifically, I want to make some suggestions on how we frame the issue of migration because I think this is crucial to how we move forward.

First, I think it is becoming apparent that we are living in a new Age of Migration. This is not the first age of migration nor will it be the last. What distinguishes it from previous periods of migration, however, are its *magnitude*, the sheer number of people living outside their countries of origin, and its *global reach*, a consequence of the ease and affordability of modern travel, but also a sign of how global communications has increased knowledge about distant parts of the world. What began in the late 1980s for Western countries, largely as an asylum movement, has metamorphosed over the past 15 years into a far more complex phenomenon. Significantly, migration has begun to echo other aspects of globalization. More and more, migrants are making informed choices about where they want to live. It is important, therefore, that we are no longer constrained to find a narrow "migration" response to what is, in reality, a broad public policy issue.

Migration needs to be understood in connection with such issues as trade, development, governance, human rights and security. Migration, as the IOM paper suggests, has become "one of the defining global issues of the early twenty-first century". I would go further and predict that the ability to manage migration will become the essential measure of successful countries in the 21st century. The human capital that immigrants bring will precede and follow the circulation of goods and investments and fuel the economic, cultural, scientific, technological and social development of successful countries. Migration brings diversity, an essential ingredient to innovation. The 21st century will belong to countries that can innovate and imagine a different world.

One of the challenges we face in trying to link migration to other public agenda issues is the sharply drawn differences of opinion between the developed world and the developing world on the question of migration. For the developed world, the issue tends to be viewed predominantly in terms of responsibility—the responsibility of individual travellers to comply with the rules of international travel, the responsibility of transportation companies to ensure their passengers are properly documented, the responsibility of countries to recognize and take back their citizens. For the developing world, the issue is seen more in terms of rights—the rights of migrant workers to have access and fair treatment in developed countries. Both positions need to be discussed with other aspects of migration and the underlying concerns understood. But advanced as they currently are, like rallying cries, they lead only to political and intellectual stalemate. Neither is broad enough to encompass the issue of migration.

We need first to step back from our positions in order to build a level of trust and understanding and respect for each other. We need to stop framing our positions in sentences that begin "you must . . ." and begin thinking in terms of "We can . . ." or "I will . . .".

We can begin by examining the language we use to frame the issue. The words we use to describe ourselves are inaccurate and misleading. We speak of ourselves as either “sending” countries or “receiving” countries. Some of us like to insist we are merely transit countries. In reality most of us are all three. Canada is well known in the world as a country of immigration. This year, for instance, we will receive 220,000 new immigrants. But Canada is also a country of emigration, a “sending” country. Every year thousands of Canadians leave Canada to live and work in other countries. Some will return; others will become citizens of other countries. In addition, as we are frequently reminded by our southern neighbour, thousands of people simply see Canada as a stepping stone to the United States. While few countries have the formal immigration structure that Canada does, all of them experience the same phenomenon of people arriving, passing through and departing. We are all, in fact, “countries of migration” with perhaps more interests in common than we like to admit.

This is not easy for some countries to comprehend. For centuries, they have seen their nationals leave to look for opportunity elsewhere. Yet the reality is that countries in the developed and the developing world receive hundreds and thousands of migrants a year. The absence of a legislative framework to allow immigrants to enter, remain and leave our countries, and the non-existence of data collection systems to count them should not blind us to the reality that people are in fact arriving, filling empty jobs and remaining in our countries, returning to their country of origin, or leaving for a new destination.

Migration is a natural phenomenon, as old as history. People move to escape danger and to seek opportunity. And they will continue to do so. But the benefit is not only for the individual immigrant. Countries benefit too. But this is not always evident. Sometimes, it takes a while for immigrants to get on their feet and start to contribute. Sometimes, it does not work out. And sometimes, the migrant represents a threat. We need to recognize that there is a positive as well as a negative side to immigration and that the key factor that distinguishes the two is the extent to which we are able to manage migration. Without migration management, our respective citizens will see only the negative consequences—a problem without a solution.

So what’s involved in managing migration? What are some of the specific things that we need to do? Well, first of all, we need to be more honest about our labour market needs and the role that immigrants play in them. The IOM paper notes that “a growing number of countries are pursuing policies of increasing and facilitating the flow of regular labour migrants”.

But this is not the whole story. Let us be honest. In many countries, there is no legal mechanism for the migrant to enter the country to take the job. Often, the only way to get into the country is to enter illegally or to claim asylum. In other words, we have created an expensive legal problem for ourselves when the original challenge was, in fact, how to fill a labour market shortage.

So the first thing I would suggest is that we need to find ways of regularizing labour migration. There are vacant jobs and there are available workers. We need to establish legal ways of bringing the two together. This will not solve the asylum issue. But it may make it slightly less complicated. I would recommend for consideration the programs that Canada and Australia have put in place for skilled workers. I would also recommend that consideration be given to programs for temporary workers and permanent immigrants. If the job is temporary, then a temporary worker is the solution. But if the job is really permanent, then a temporary solution can lead to other complications and we therefore should not simply create another problem.

The second issue that we face is the issue of integration. There is a great deal of interest in many countries about *how* you go about integrating immigrants. But there are two important questions that need to be answered before we get into the “how”. The first is *when* do you start integrating immigrants? And the second is *what* are you integrating the immigrant into? As long as we persist conceptually in viewing immigration as a temporary phenomenon, we will hesitate to integrate them. Why would we go to the expense of trying to integrate migrants when they are going to

leave soon? Worse, it might attract others. But also, why should migrants integrate when we tell them that they are temporary; they are not part of us. Experience tells us that many immigrants do not leave, and, in many cases, they don't leave because we need them. The job they are doing still needs to be done. So we create a *de facto* permanent immigrant who remains apart from the mainstream of society, a potential threat to social cohesion.

To integrate immigrants, we have to come to grips with the fact that integration means making someone a full member of society with all the rights and privileges of the native born. In Canada, one Canadian out of five was not born in Canada and 85 percent of all migrants, and refugees, become Canadian citizens after a few years. You may think that, for a multicultural country like Canada, this is easy. But, in fact, our experience with multiculturalism and immigrant integration did not come naturally at all and it is not as old as you may think. In fact, it is less than 40 years old. And it is the result of deliberate decisions and, at times, difficult adjustments that native-born Canadians had to make. In terms of what we have learned, there are three key elements. The first is that you need to begin to integrate immigrants as soon as possible—in Canada we consider integration to be part of the selection process. The second is that you need to find ways of bringing immigrants and the host population in contact with one another. And the third is that you have to be prepared to offer and, in fact, promote full membership in society.

There are a number of other issues which have been properly addressed, such as remittances and return of migrants, which could clearly benefit from a fresh, broad and creative approach.

In attempting to craft a new migration paradigm, we need to create some new approaches and balances. We need structures that create benefits and responsibilities for individuals and benefits and responsibilities for states. Individuals who abide by their responsibilities should be able to enjoy the benefits that come from migration. States that abide by their responsibilities should also be able to secure benefits. Conversely, those that do not abide by their responsibilities, both individuals and states, should lose those benefits. We need to ensure that any new paradigm is realistic and workable. We don't need theoretical models that cannot be implemented by states or can only be implemented at such a high cost that would dissuade countries from participation. We need to address issues—such as what is temporary and what is permanent—and what that means for designing migration programs. Finally, we need to ensure that there is a place for migrants in all countries around the world, that all of us recognize that we are countries of migration not “sending” or “receiving” or “transit” countries.

We do not need rules, additional human rights instruments or institutional changes at this time. We need to begin to have an honest and open discussion about how we can achieve a win-win outcome in the area of migration. From this would hopefully emerge a model of mutual benefit and responsibility. It will not be easy; we don't all start from the same starting point. Some countries have far more experiences than others. All of us still have a lot to learn.

The discussion we are having today is but one of a number of discussions taking place on various aspects of the migration issue. I am aware of the Berne Initiative, the IGC, regional forums like the Bali Process and the Puebla Process, and now the Global Commission on International Migration. I also understand that the ILO and the WTO are taking an increasing interest in the topic. And, of course, on the asylum side, we have the UNHCR Executive Committee and Convention Plus.

All this activity is good and necessary but achieving a consensus around a new paradigm will take us years, require significant investment and must involve a wide spectrum of points of view early on. Forcing a consensus too early will polarize and politicize the debate before interesting ideas have had a chance to emerge. If we could only agree that nobody has found the perfect model and stop putting labels on ourselves as sending, receiving or transit countries, we would already be a long way towards managing migration in the 21st century.