

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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### THESES FOR A STATEMENT (SPEECH)

In recent decade the Russian Federation became most acutely aware of all problems related to the immigration problems. The policy of the former USSR just did not make any provisions for migration from outside. Only after facing the real problems of mass migration of people and taking also the world trends aimed at regulating of migration processes into account Russia had to create in fact from zero the migration legislation. The modernization of migration policy is of special importance for Russia because of its vast territory and extensive borders with many states having different political systems and economic development levels.

In 2003 Russia approved the Concept of Migration Process Regulation. Its major priorities are the guarantee of common law standards, protection of human rights, insurance of legal order and legality, minimization of impact of negative factors on economic and social, and political or demographic or criminal situation in the country. The Concept includes a substantive estimation of the situation; it envisages the goals, objectives, principles and major trends in the activities to improve the migration processes in the country, to ensure the rights of migrants and to create the possibilities for their integration into society. The plan for the implementation of the Concept up to 2005 has been drawn up.

New laws were adopted to regulate the migration sphere: “*On Legal Status of Foreigners in the Russian Federation*” and “*On Exit from and Entry into the Russian Federation*”.

Within the framework of the administrative reform, the operation of the Federal Migration Service, being the leading agency responsible for the implementation of the national migration policy, has been significantly re-arranged and consolidated.

Historically, after the dissolution of the USSR, the Russian Federation achieved highest success in the post-Soviet territory in the economy and production sectors both at the federal and regional levels. It makes our country attractive for labor migrants from the CIS countries, China, Vietnam and India. A rather significant share of migrants are, in fact, ethnic Russians who found themselves outside their motherland after the dissolution of the USSR and we do our utmost to facilitate their return to the historic motherland.

Meanwhile the analysis proves the availability of already established ways for illegal immigration to Russia. As a rule, a migration pressure is experienced in the Russian mega polices, such as Moscow, St.-Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don as well as in regions with most favorable weather and economic conditions. The entire enclaves are being formed to embrace, as a rule, the representatives of the same diaspora. The major concern is caused by a concentration of these ethnic groups in the border regions of the country and an ousting from the labor market of local people because these migrants are ready to do the similar work for less money. The regions with the compact living of diasporas become non-transparent and have a higher level of criminal activity. For example, the Azerbaijanis specialize mainly in retail trade, oil and gas production, the Tajiks – in construction and trade, the Chinese – in small wholesale trade and

timber felling. All these facts curb the process of their normal integration into society because they live in a closed community and do not try to preserve their traditional way of life.

As a result of an over-saturation of the most favorable regions of the country with migrants, problems emerge in the social sphere, in the sphere of medical services, in meeting the requirements for dwellings both for local population, and the migrants. We, of course, are very interested in the experience of other countries in control and management of migration flows that would be of use in Russia.

The world community is well aware that the migration processes are used actively by the international criminal groups, dope dealers, контрабандистами, dealers of forfeiting products, stolen cars, extreme and terrorist organizations. For Russia, the southward direction where after the dissolution of the USSR the unprotected border line with Kazakhstan several thousand km long emerged, is of utmost concern. This very route is a preference route for dope dealers from Afghanistan to deliver heroin to Russia and as a transit to EC and other countries. And this threat is an ever increasing one. According to available data, the crop of raw opium in Afghanistan this year amounted to 4,600 t, i.e. 1,000 t over the last year. According to modest calculations, the “crop” collected will be enough for the production of 460 t of heroin.

A lack of due inter-governmental coordination and common standards in the fight against terrorism facilitates their activities in many aspects. For example, foreigners trained in the camps terrorist training in the countries that do not have common border with Russia and who penetrated into the Russian territory after trespassing many states were among the terrorists who made the defenseless children their hostages at Beslan. In particular, a certain Abu Farug, an Arab citizen who was distinguished for his particular brutality had the documents with stamps confirming his transit passage through three country borders. Khattab, known for his atrocities, was replaced in Chechnya by Abu Khafas (or Amjad) from Jordan who, together with Basayev, heads at present the terrorist organization called the Supreme Majlis ul Shura of Consolidated Forces of the Mojahedeens of Caucasus – a subdivision of Alkaida. And these examples are not isolated instances.

The migration challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a transnational and a global problem. One can not solve the problem without international cooperation and a common strategy for the management of migration processes. We seek for the practical implementation of our approaches. At present we negotiate with our Euro union partners on the “road map” of common space of security and justice. The key issues of the map should be joint efforts against international criminal, threat of narcotics and terrorism.

At the Russian initiative, in cooperation with IOM and other international organizations a process was initiated that resulted in the adoption in 1966 of the Action Program by Geneva Regional Conference on Migration in the CIS Countries.

We are of the opinion that after completing a process of its implementation in 2005, the international community will manage to work out in the nearest future a new platform for a large-scale political dialogue in the sphere of migration that could also deepen cooperation on issues touched upon in a process of Geneva Conference. In this connection we feel it expedient to hold a follow-up conference in Geneva next year to discuss the results achieved, to draw up recommendations for the participating countries and analysis of cooperation perspectives in the field of migration for the forthcoming years. A review high-level meeting held in Minsk this spring confirmed once again the efficiency and validity of such form of international relations.

We share a necessity for a new impulse to a process of developing modern approaches to solve migration problems at the universal level, an importance of “synchronization of watches» while analyzing the migration policy of various nations and shaping the prospects for inter-state cooperation. In this connection, the work of the Global Commission of International Migration deserves all-round support. Last week, the Russian delegation that included high-level authorities responsible for migration issues took part in the European regional hearings held by the Commission.

The Bern Initiative has good perspectives in the implementation of which the IOM occupies a noticeable position. We hope that the coordination of the Program on International Migration placed on the agenda of Bern Conference in December this year will make it possible to establish a mechanism that facilitates the elaboration and planning of migration policy in individual countries and promotes the development of international cooperation.

We appreciate the readiness of IOM to use its possibilities in the implementation of Program recommendations.

A special issue is to ensure the mobility of the European population.

Russia stands for efficient advancement towards no-visa status in Europe. A real step in this direction might be asap signing of the agreement with EC on mutual facilitation of visual procedures. We substantially moved forward in the negotiations of this item with former CEC Commissioner Mr. Vitorinu and we hope for the continuation of the constructive dialogue with Mr. Frattini who occupies now this position. An accord with the European Union will be of great value if this accords goes further beyond our agreements with Germany, France and Italy. We feel also that a package signing of an agreement with EC on no-visa and readmission might be an efficient legal instrument of counteraction to illegal immigration. In Russia a central bank on labor vacancies is being established to facilitate foreign workers in their search for jobs in Russia before their entry into its territory. We would be grateful to our foreign partners and to the International Organization for Migration for assistance in the implementation of this project.

Russia supports the measures undertaken by the leading countries to draw up and introduce passport and visa documents of a new generation that include biometric information. It is clear that while implementing this work, a close inter-governmental cooperation is required to develop coordinated approaches and common approaches. Only in this context that the highest effect be achieved in the struggle against illegal migration and related negative consequences.

The efficient struggle against illegal migration is impossible without clearly defined accounting of entering into and leaving the country foreigners, persons without citizenship, and their identification. These days a number of foreigners who use legal ways to enter the country with a subsequent change in the motives of their stay in Russia increases. To stop such actions, work is being carried out in the Russian Federation to develop an automated system of registration and supervision over the staying of foreigners. We see enormous opportunities in this sphere for a wider cooperation, including expert assistance in the improvement of normative basis as well as technical and financial participation in the creation of such a system.

A joint with IOM project in this field might be functional preparation of centers for refugees and acceptance and distribution centers for illegal migrants.

A major task that faces the Russian Federation is further development of the Russian legislation in the sphere of migration and refugees. It seems that in certain instances an expert assistance on a part of the International Organization for Migration might be needed at a stage of

examination of projects of relevant normative documents and target-oriented governmental programs.

A great potential for cooperation with IOM might be in the development of IOM programs of cooperation with the Russian governmental structures in the solution of a problem of transit illegal migrants who do not need international protection. We think that a mandate and an extensive experience of the Organization in this field will contribute to an increase in financing the programs of voluntarily return of illegal migrants to their homeland. We also rely on the IOM support in strengthening a dialogue with the governments of the countries of exodus in order to set up a mechanism of return of legal immigrants to their homeland.

One of the acute problems and concerns of Russia is a situation in the North Caucasus. The leadership of the country does everything to facilitate the position of peaceful population and to ensure the rehabilitation of the economy of Chechen Republic, within the framework of programs of cooperation with the international organizations inclusive. At the same time an experience in work with the forced displaced persons from Chechnya in Ingushetia proved an acute necessity for coordination of actions of local authorities and humanitarian organizations when rendering assistance to this category of population. A lack of such coordination may have a negative impact on the results of such activities. For example, the humanitarian aid was channeled not to Chechnya where people most acutely needed it but to the tent camps in Ingushetia, thus stimulating an exodus of people from Chechnya. Moreover, members of Basaev and Maskhadov combatants found their shelter in these camps where they gained strength and the humanitarian aid was used to support them.

The situation changed drastically after the election campaign in the Chechen Republic and measures undertaken by the federal and local authorities to implement the federal target-oriented program "*The Rehabilitation of the Economy and Social Sphere in the Chechen Republic*". About one million Chechens returned to Chechnya voluntarily. At present, population is about 1.200, 000. One should note that almost a similar number of people lived there prior to 1989, i.e. before the arrival of Dudayev.

We note with satisfaction the IOM role in the assistance of the solution of a painful (from foreign policy point of view) problem of Meskhetian Turks staying in the territory of the Russian Federation.

In conclusion I would like to note that the solution of migration problems is among important political priorities of Russia and is accepted as a well established fact. We are ready to наращивать increase our efforts not only for the further harmonization of migration processes inside the country, but to contribute also to the improvement of migration situation at the global, regional and sub-regional levels. We expect that our partners in the international community will continue to treat with respect the Russian problems overcoming outdated stereotypes and avoiding politicization of purely migration issues and a practice of double standards, thus displaying due constructive approach.