

High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development General Assembly Plenary Hall

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Statement

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On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Belarus I would like to thank the UN Secretariat for the excellent organization of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

The fact that Member States provide a high level participation to this forum clearly shows their readiness for productive cooperation in regulating migration and reducing its negative social effect. It also proves their commitment to protect the rights and freedoms of migrants and refugees, and their willingness to discuss major challenges of migration and the impact it has on development in the whole world.

Belarus largely supports a constructive international dialogue on migration and the need for effective measures to fight trafficking in persons and other emerging challenges. A vivid example is the initiative of Belarus to establish the Global Partnership against slavery and trafficking in persons in the XXI century. Belarus believes that the draft resolution of the General Assembly “Improving coordination of efforts against slavery and trafficking in persons” prepared by the delegation of Belarus is an important step towards a global partnership framework.

To support the initiative means to make a valuable contribution to fighting a practically forgotten evil which becomes an ever greater threat to human civilization. To give support for the initiative also means to give a solid contribution to a common effort of building international peace and security.

Meanwhile, human trafficking will never be eradicated as long as the large demand for trafficking continues to increase. Supporting stronger legal responsibility for those seeking sexual relations with the victims of trafficking, Belarus initiated an International High-level Conference "Fighting demand for trafficking: ways to improve international cooperation among the countries of origin and destination. Belarus is hosting the Conference on 26-27 October 2006.

In early 1990s migration process on the vast area of the former Soviet Union endured fundamental changes leading to enormous migration flows out of control. This process affected Belarus as well.

A timely state migration strategy along with the effective legal measures and two state programmes helped bring chaotic migration flows to order and ensure their stability within the country.

It is a fact that today Belarus has ensured sufficient legislation in compliance with international standards in the field of migration and a system of efficient legal and social assistance for migrants. Belarus has also established an effective legal regime for refugees and aliens staying in the country, and taken practical measures to fight illegal migration and human trafficking.

Currently Belarus is carrying out a third state migration programme for 2006-2010 seeking to strengthen state security, promote economic growth and make sure that migrants fully enjoy their legal rights.

The state migration policy of the Republic of Belarus has the following priorities: using migration potential to facilitate social, economic and demographic development; promoting migrants' social integration; encouraging decrease of flow-out rates of academicians; ensuring free access to job opportunities abroad; promoting international cooperation in the field of migration.

Acknowledging the negative impact that immigration of qualified and perspective professionals has on the national intellectual potential, Belarus shares the view of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the need to preserve qualified professionals in the countries which invest to their education and training.

It cannot be denied today that the challenge of migration has a global dimension. It therefore can be most effectively resolved only on the basis of international solidarity, cooperation and coordinated activities of all interested parties.

At the same time the primary burden of migration and the need to tackle it often weigh upon those countries which are unable to implement on their own programmes aimed at regulating migration processes, creating national shelter system and confronting illegal migration. These countries need assistance from international community to elaborate an effective migration policy and establish effective national control and statistical instruments for migration. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition to which Belarus belongs are facing similar problems.

Belarus actively participates in a number of international and sub regional fora focusing on migration issues and closely cooperates in this field both with states and international organisations. Cooperation with neighbouring countries is the most dynamic and productive.

The Republic of Belarus has initiated and is now participating in establishing the Euro-Asian Programme for Forceful Displacement and Migration. The Program presents a new mechanism of dialogue and interaction on the subject of the 1996 Geneva Conference.

Belarus supports the idea that there is a need to expand international cooperation and dialogue on migration and we still consider the proposal to establish a consultative forum on migration. At the same time we believe that while considering this proposal we need to ensure that already existing cooperating mechanisms and especially the experience and facilities of the International Organisation for Migration are fully utilised.

In conclusion I would like to express my confidence that the High-level Dialogue will encourage us to make not one but a number of steps towards a common objective – ensuring global peace and security.