



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR V MADONSELA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA, AT THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (New York, 3 April 2006)**

Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of G77 and China. We in the Group of 77 and China regard this meeting as an opportunity to engage on international migration from a development prism. We believe that addressing global migration is supportive to the achievement of the international agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

In the coming days, we will seek to cooperate with all delegations to agree on the role of migration in achieving sustainable human development. The way we exercise our responsibilities towards migrant populations is central to achieving the objectives that were agreed to at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994. We also believe that our discussions this week will be of significant importance in preparation for the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which will take place in New York from 14 – 16 September 2006.

We wish to thank the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the materials that inform and guide our deliberations. We particularly refer to reports *E/CN.9/2006/3, 4, 5 and 6*. This includes the *Compendium of Recommendations on International Migration and Development: The United Nations Development Agenda and the Global Commission on International Migration Compared*.

Chairperson,

The Group of 77 and China re-affirms its commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Key Actions for its Further Implementation. However, having read the Secretary-General's report on financial resource flows, we note with concern that resource mobilisation for the implementation of the ICPD programme of action remains inadequate for addressing current needs, especially in the areas of mother and child health.

Over the years, the Group of 77 and China has emphasised that the relationships between international migration and development are numerous and extremely complex, and mutually reinforce each other. The current era of increased global economic integration, quicker and cheaper transport, high mobility of people, and information and communication technology, provides a new context within which the movement of people between countries takes place and should be understood.

We also wish to reiterate that there is no question regarding the primary responsibility of the State for the welfare of its people, and the Group of 77 and China remains committed to taking bold steps in the fight against poverty and hunger. The ability of developing countries to do so is hampered by other imperatives. Speedier and deeper debt relief, along with increased flows of ODA, and fairer terms of trade will further enable developing countries to make greater progress in meeting their needs and hopes for a better future.

Chairperson,

In today's debate, we would like to focus our intervention on the following three issues, i.e. the development potential offered by migration, the human rights of people who migrate, and the Millennium Development Goals.

Firstly, the world that we live in today offers great opportunities for human resource development, skills and knowledge transfer, trade, and enhanced income distribution between countries. These opportunities will only translate into development if all people can gain reasonable access to them. However, the persistence of inequality within and between countries continues to recreate differential access to the opportunity for people to develop to their full potential. In this regard, migration could place many people in a position of better access to resources for development. Indeed, well managed migration has the potential to be an enabler of improved and integrated global, regional and national development strategies. This would require that our approach to human migration should move beyond a primary preoccupation with regulatory concerns and focus on development potential.

Secondly, migrants have historically often been deprived of their rights and subjected to discriminatory and racist actions and policies, including exploitation, expulsion, persecution and other abuses. At the 2005 World Summit, Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the resolve to take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and members of their families. We have also agreed in Beijing in 1995 to protect women migrants against violence and exploitation. A further particular concern that needs continued attention is women's vulnerability to HIV and AIDS which is greatly increased in an environment of social exclusion and exploitation.

Finally, last year we recommitted ourselves to the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals. The Group of 77 and China believes that we should pay specific attention to understanding the relationship of migration to the MDGs. The achievement of the MDGs is a shared global commitment and should benefit everybody, especially the poor communities.

The Group of 77 and China would also like to emphasize the need to adopt policies and undertake measures to reduce the cost of the transfer of migrant remittances to developing countries, and welcomes the efforts of governments and stakeholders in this regard. The migration of skilled persons from developing countries leads to a drain in expertise and deprives their populations of the much needed human resources. Other countries benefit from the movement of highly skilled, particularly young productive people. It is for this reason that we should seek ways to encourage the circulation of expertise through the Diasporas by creating better knowledge through the use and transfer of information, knowledge and skills.

Chairperson,

The G77 and China has noted with concern in the report of the SG that resources directed towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development has been consistently below target. To address this concern, the G77 and China would like to appeal to donors, UN organisations and other international organisations to enhance their financial and technical support to developing countries, including in the field of capacity building.

It is for this reason that the Group of 77 and China supports the principle of a multi-year work

programme with a two year planning horizon, as we believe it will add further value to the work of the commission, and will improve our focus on meeting the internationally agreed development goals. The Group of 77 and China will continue to participate in the debate on the working methods of the commission.

Thank you.

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