



Remarks

by

H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe
President of the 68th Session of the United Nations
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High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development
Closing Plenary

Please check against delivery.

Deputy-Secretary General,
Special Representative of the Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the end of our second High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development.

While lasting only two days, this Dialogue was the culmination of many years of hard work and preparation, and benefited from the support of many individuals. I wish to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for his unwavering support in promoting and emphasizing this issue within the United Nations. My appreciation also goes to Mr. Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, for his tireless efforts in representing the United Nations at the Global Forum and for working with Member States to find practical solutions to one of the greatest challenges of our time.

I pay tribute to the eight co-Chairs of the four round tables for the enormous effort they exerted to make the interactive discussion among all stakeholders a success. I likewise pay tribute to the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, under whose effective leadership delegations debated and yesterday adopted a Declaration, which conveys and reaffirms many of our shared beliefs about migration.

Tribute is also due to Member States, representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector for their various contributions to both the national and regional preparations that preceded this Dialogue.

Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The four round tables of this Dialogue allowed for interactive, multi-stakeholder debates, insightful presentations and frank exchanges. Please allow me to highlight some key points.

In your presentations, we heard many examples of how migration can work for development and practical measures about how to address urgent migration challenges. You further announced concrete initiatives to implement some of the ideas put forward by the Secretary-General and affirmed many of the key messages from his report prepared for this meeting.

You expressed that migration can be a powerful enabler of development and should be an integral feature of the post 2015 development agenda. Efforts should focus on facilitating international mobility and enhancing the benefits of migration, while protecting and promoting the human rights of migrants and their families.

You likewise were emphatic that no country can address international migration alone, and that dialogue and cooperation on migration should be strengthened and coherence of sectoral policies at the national level promoted to fully harness the benefits of migration.

Participants stressed that migration can have positive development impacts if supported by the right policies and that the time had come to integrate migration into national development strategies and plans.

Much emphasis was placed on the need for access to decent work and decent working conditions in countries of origin, transit countries and destination countries. Respecting, promoting and protecting the rights of migrants, particularly vulnerable groups, such as migrant women and children, and migrants in crisis situations was also highlighted.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Apart from the substantive consideration of the question of migration and development, this Dialogue has once again demonstrated that international migration and development can be constructively discussed within the United Nations.

It is therefore now time to transform the key messages emerging out of this Dialogue into an action-oriented agenda with concrete follow-up.

The eight-point plan outlined yesterday by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon offers a clear roadmap of where we should focus our efforts.

I urge you to see in this, and in the many excellent proposals and ideas that have been put forward over the course of the past two days, a programme for action.

Seven years ago, you embraced the proposal by the Secretary-General to create a global forum. Undoubtedly, the activities and meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development have built trust and strengthened cooperation. I hope that, under the able leadership of Sweden, the Global Forum will become increasingly more focused on concrete follow-up, continuing to work with the Global Migration Group, the Special Representative on International Migration and Development, governments and civil society.

It is my hope that, we will be feeling justifiably proud of our progress, and that we might be able to confidently affirm that:

- migration has been fully integrated into the post-2015 development agenda;
- we are doing a better job of addressing the plight of migrants who are stranded in humanitarian crises;
- each individual act of migration is wanted and voluntary;
- sufficient legal channels exist to accommodate the demand for human mobility, and
- the various costs of migration have been reduced.

With initiatives like this High-level Dialogue, I firmly believe we are setting the stage to realize these shared aspirations.

Thank you.