



THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF FORMER  
UNITED NATIONS INTERNES AND FELLOWS, INC.

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ALUMNI SUPPORT

**Statement of**

**The World Association of Former  
United Nations Internes and Fellows (WAFUNIF)**

**To the**

**Informal Interactive Hearing of the General Assembly with Non-Governmental  
Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and the  
Private Sector on International Migration and Development**

**On**

**Segment 4: Policy Responses -- Promoting the Building of  
Partnerships and Capacity Building and the Sharing of  
Best Practices at all Levels, including the Bilateral and  
Regional Levels, for the benefit of countries and migrants alike**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

**12 July 2006**

1. The World Association of Former United Nations Internes and Fellows (WAFUNIF), an international non-governmental organization in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and associated with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), welcomes the opportunity to address this Informal Interactive Hearing of the United Nations General Assembly with Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and the Private Sector on International Migration and Development.

2. WAFUNIF has carefully reviewed *The Report of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development* (document (A/60/87) that presents a useful review of critical policy issues related to international migration and development, policy responses needed to address them in an interlocking fashion and the new windows of opportunity for international cooperation that have re-emerged in order to deal in an

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integrated way with historical structural problematiques – such as the Reverse Transfer of Technology (RTT) commonly known as the "brain drain"- generated by the dynamics of international migration and its relationship with development.

3. The Secretary-General's Report reveals that, as the second half of the first decade of the third millennium moves forward, the international community is faced with a new multidimensional process of international migration that cuts across several sectors of world society. As such, new policy responses from the international community are called for in order to deal in a more coherent way with the challenges and opportunities that present and future international migration dynamics pose to world governance.

4. WAFUNIF believes that to be successful and sustainable, efforts in the international migration and development dialogue, to promote "the building of partnerships and capacity-building and the sharing of best practices at all levels, including the bilateral and regional levels, for the benefits of countries and migrants alike" have to take into consideration certain realities of asymmetries and principles to forge more just, equitable and peaceful societies.

5. Within the context of international cooperation for development, poverty reduction and development strategies, as well as building-up, strengthening and retaining the scientific-technological and skills base for national and regional priorities within the South, the concept of co-development and its practice that is currently being pursued presents policy opportunities and constraints for developing countries. In addressing migration, poverty reduction and sustainable development the *2004 UN World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*, points out that, "the co-development approach seeks to target Official Development Assistance (ODA) at emigration areas, with government support supplementing the contributions of migrants to their home communities (Weil 2002). Assistance may also be provided to migrants who voluntarily return, in the form of grants of funds to begin small businesses. A drawback to the approach is that it may target ODA at better off communities that can support the migration of their residents and benefit from remittances." WAFUNIF concurs fully with this assessment and believes that it should constitute a guiding premise for evaluating both the potential and limitations of this approach.

6. It is important to note that the question of remittances will not be the solution to the development needs of the developing countries since there are other policies required in order to dynamize the development and increase the productivity of these economies. Thus, the question of remittances should only be one policy strategy from which to channel resources to the economy for development. It is imperative that Governments, from both sending and receiving countries, understand that "international migration can easily masquerade as a substitute for sound development policies and countries can become dependent on remittance flows. Without the right economic environment, international migration can convert sending areas into 'nurseries and nursing homes' instead of producing dynamic economies, which, over time, may offer attractive alternatives to migration" (A/60/87, Para. 226).

7. More importantly, however, is the fact that co-development policies at the bilateral and multilateral levels have not resulted in the necessary structural transformation in international economic and trade relationships that would (1) promote the retention of skilled and qualified nationals of the South within the South, and (2) diminish the outflow of skilled and highly qualified nationals from the South to the North, even when there are shortages in the South of such skills. Consequently, there is a need within the South for long-term planning as regards the needs for skilled personnel that will allow them to transform their economies and enhance their development by creating critical capacity of human resources that will play an important role in innovation, research and development. In the medium- and long-term, these should be important vectors for qualitative leapfrogging in critical areas such as science and technology, agricultural development with high-added elements, as well as the production and export of high quality services. Partnerships with public, private and non-profit institutions should be undertaken with a clear commitment to accomplish these goals.

8. If a holistic approach to the structural relationship between international migration and development is to be promoted, the policy debate and responses have to be reframed to include the missing dynamics of North-North Migration and North-South Migration, as not only South-North, South-South or East-North migration are relevant. After all when we look at the historiography of migration, the formation of the geopolitical spaces denominated North, South, East or West came about because of migration both forced and voluntary.

9. Similarly, the coherence sought in the new international scenario must factor in the role played by non-governmental actors and Diaspora communities in the shaping of the policy responses. In this context, the universality of the United Nations system constitutes a comparative advantage as regards other international mechanisms that acting outside of the United Nations system have a limited mandate and role, with the risk that sometimes their actions may not be in accordance with United Nations Human Rights' standards, particularly with the most comprehensive international instrument of the third generation as it is the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. In this context, the key aspect is protection and as such there must be a United Nations body with the task of protecting international migrants and their families from the constant violation of their rights and uphold the implementation of the Convention. International migration and development need therefore this institutional umbrella in order to be available to the various stakeholders of the United Nations system, particularly the migrants. For example, regarding policy coordination and cooperation between the North and the South with respect to the Reverse Transfer of Technology, the mobility of the highly skilled, and trade in services in relation to migration and development, an institutional arrangement under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly, with multi-stakeholders participation, is called for in order to ensure a more efficient use of resources aimed at reducing developmental asymmetries and tackling poverty.

10. The Secretary-General's Report (A/60/87, Para. 294) informs about the creation of the Global Migration Group and its composition. In this connection, no information is

provided about the role of Civil Society in general and particularly of Diaspora and migrants' organizations in this non-elected mechanism as regards the rights based approach to be followed in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects and their delivery. The active participation of Diaspora and migrants' organizations and of organizations working with migrants is critical to make this process transparent and useful in finding long-term solutions. Moreover, why is the World Trade Organization (WTO) out of the Group given the importance of services and the relationship with migration?; Why is the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also out of the Group since remittances have not only to do with balance of payments but also with the growth of international reserves needed for development? In the same vein, why is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also not included in the Group given the need to combat ethnocentrism, racism and discrimination and the interesting work that this organization is doing in that area, as well as the globalization of education and the need to both nurture skill creation and improve the distribution of skills? If the aim is to promote coordination and enhance effective synergies through partnerships and capacity-building, then these and other organizations would need to be included. The Secretary-General's Report (A/60/87, Para. 40) proposes "a consultative forum, led by and open to all the 191 States Members of the United Nations" as a follow-up to the High-Level Dialogue, 14-15 September 2006. It is essential that such a consultative process should be open, transparent and fully inclusive ensuring the participation of non-governmental organizations, Civil Society organizations, and migrant organizations.

11. The role of migrants' organizations in the policy debates of regional processes and the appraisal of bilateral agreements in line with United Nations human rights instruments needs to be promoted and strengthened. Civil Society organizations composed of migrants and nationals from the host society must participate actively in the debates of the regional processes both in the formal and informal sessions. The implementation of decisions can only gain from the early participation of Civil Society guaranteeing a rights based approach in their operationalization.

12. The building of innovative partnerships between migrant organizations and banking institutions in both the destination and origin countries can give a different meaning to the channelling of remittances within a framework of sustainable development as well as the launching of practical capacity-building activities with the participation of migrant organizations not only as recipients but also as providers of training at cost-effective basis.

13. The capacity-building system needs to incorporate the valuable input of Diaspora and migrant organizations when designing and elaborating capacity-building activities. To this end, the training of governmental officials must also include the participation of persons from Diaspora and migrant organizations, civil society and the private sector with a view to ensuring an active process of networking that in the future will play an important role in defusing potential tensions.

14. Attention also should be given to adapting the capacity-building infrastructure of the United Nations System to enhance the capacities of migrants' organizations in optimising the use of remittances and skills for the development of their countries of origin and the strengthening of the existing Centres of Excellence in the developing regions via South-South Cooperation

15. In short, the aim of building partnerships and capacity-building must be to constitute on a permanent basis an epistemic community on international migration and development with shared values, principles and responsibilities. These partnerships can also be generated via the exchange of experiences of the various Diaspora and migrant communities with the various national or local stakeholders in order to enhance their cultural outreach and understanding.

16. The inclusion of the migration theme and its relation to development in the curricula of primary and secondary education can play an important role in reducing tensions at the school level and instead facilitate the interaction between migrants and members of the destination countries. This is an important task that UNESCO can play a leading role in partnership with Member Governments and civil society organizations composed of migrants and nationals from the host societies.

17. The sharing of best practices constitutes a permanent challenge for policy makers who must be kept aware by the various stakeholders with a view to improving their intervention capacity for the benefit of society. The permanent identification of best practices must be an impartial process where all the stakeholders must participate. This process shall make them more aware that they can work together in selecting examples that will help others overcome their limitations and transform positively their situation.