



# BORDERS: WALLS OR BRIDGES?

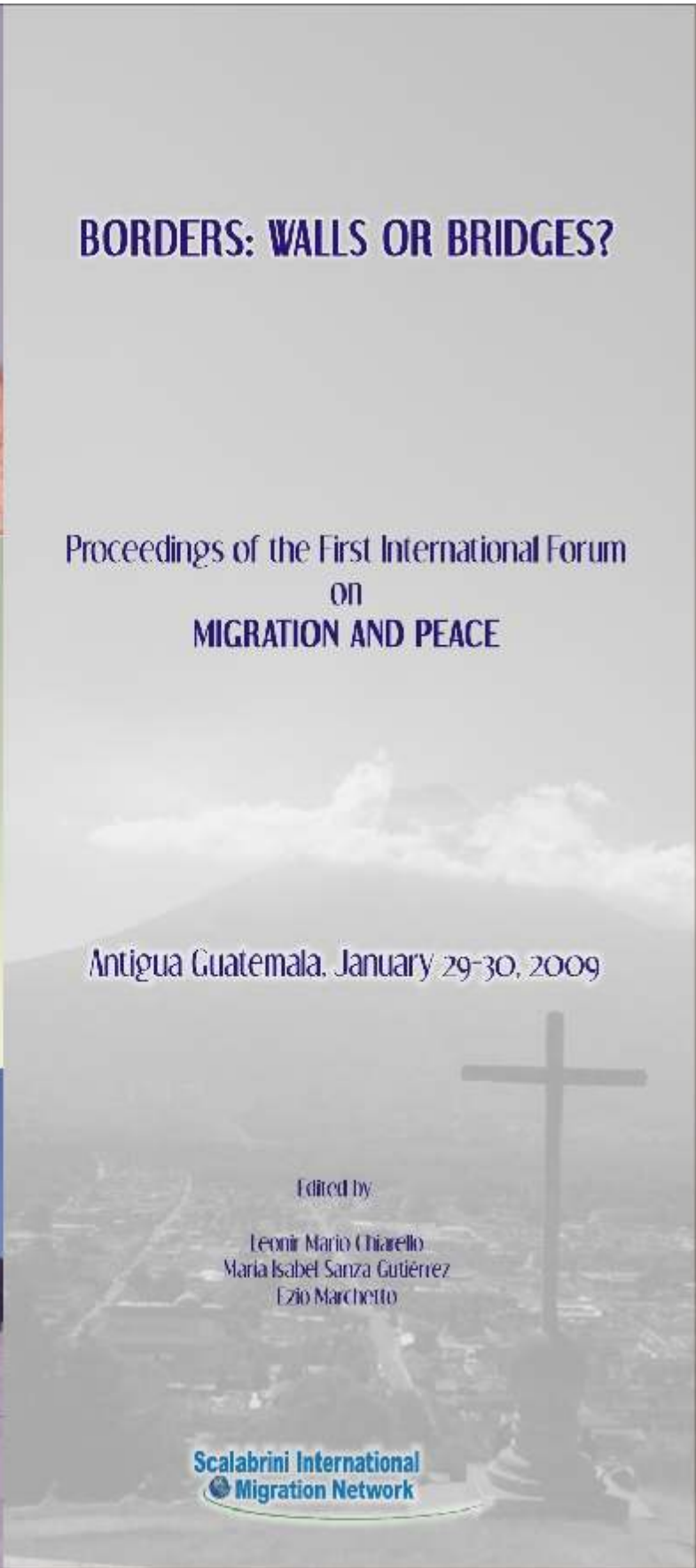
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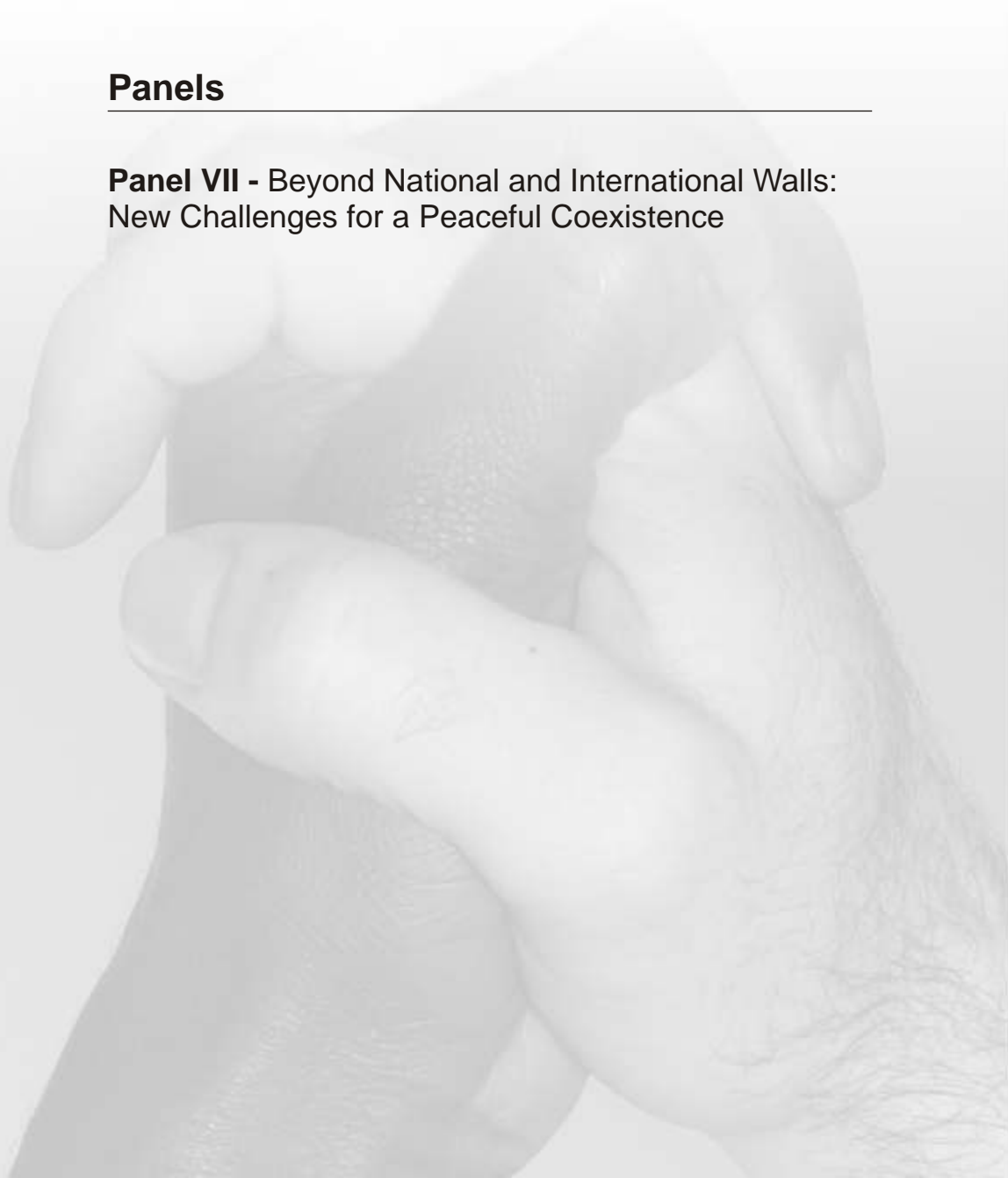
Scalabrini International  
Migration Network



## **Panels**

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**Panel VII** - Beyond National and International Walls:  
New Challenges for a Peaceful Coexistence





## Introduction

### **Mrs. Irene Palma**

*Executive Director Central America*

*Institute of Social and Development Studies, Guatemala*

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It is a great honor to have the opportunity to moderate this panel. Our main objective is to formulate proposals and initiatives for establishing bridges toward a different understanding of migration and thus focus our discussion. The contributions that will be presented are very important for the debate that will take place during the workshops, especially because we will have the opportunity to listen to the presentation and determine approaches for outlining proposals on public policy and specific actions. In addition, we will also listen to remarks on the management of international migration and peace, in institutional spaces related to the context of globalization.

There will be five experts on this panel, whom I am pleased to introduce: first, Representative Luis Fernando Galarreta Velarde, from the National Congress of Peru. Next will be Dr. Lelio Marmora, Director of the Master's Program in International Migration Policies at the University of Buenos Aires. Third is Dr. Bela Hovy, Secretary of the Migration Section of the Population Division of the United Nations in New York. Fourth will be Ambassador Alfonso Quiñones, Executive Director for Comprehensive Development and General Director of the Inter-American Agency for the Cooperation and Development of the Organization of American States. To conclude this panel, we have Rev. Alfredo Gonçalves, Provincial Superior of the Scalabrinian Missionaries, São Paulo, Brazil.

## **Deputy Luis Fernando Galarreta Velarde**

*Representative of the National Congress of Peru*

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Good afternoon. First of all, I would like to congratulate the organizers of this Forum and to thank you for the invitation to represent the National Congress of Peru, where, in spite of the reduced visibility of the matter, we are seeking to promote initiatives related to migration.

Considering the important matters presented during the first day of the Forum, I want to begin my presentation with two premises. First, I was very pleased when the former president of Ecuador, Mr. Jamil Mahuad, remembered so well the words of a Peruvian song, that he made me remember that crucial time in the history of Peru and Ecuador. I agree with his assertion that the resolution prevented deaths on the Ecuadorian and the Peruvian side. Mr. Mahuad noted the importance to also listen to other points of view and, at the same time, to seek to overcome challenges. We all know that the current international economic crisis has generated an attitude of rejection, fear, and even xenophobia against immigrants in the destination countries. In spite of that, I want to raise this first premise: There is no justification, in any part of the world, for the violation of human rights.

The second premise I want to present, which is also related to the matter of how to face the international migration challenges, is about the justification that we generally get for the inability to meet challenges: "It is their fault." That is what I have read in some books and that express the attitude we often have regarding the unpleasant situation experienced by our fellow countrymen abroad. If we take that perspective we run the risk of focusing solely on the consequences, as opposed to the causes of migrations. In other words, like Mr. Mahuad said, the victimization approach is a mistaken approach, which can lead us to a bad negotiation, if we want to build peaceful coexistence. This coexistence obviously requires cultural interchange, it requires negotiation. It is even harder to find peaceful coexistence when our societies or our leaders are noticeably farther from God every day. This is a complicated situation, but it is the reality of our current world.

Starting from these premises, I want to recall that in our Latin American countries we have basically sought for years to associate

migration with the existence of dictatorial governments in the region. In the face of this perception I ask: Why is there still migration when the majority of our Latin American countries have democratic governments today? The next big question is: Why haven't we been able to provide health services, education, and opportunities for a decent life to our populations in over 400 years? I come from Peru, where the macroeconomic statistics reveal a growth of seven to eight percent. It is probably one of the few countries to grow, in this year of economic crisis, but that is the reality of one part of the country. The people who live close to Bolivia, in an abandoned apartment, do not know what the economic growth is. Yet, faced with this situation, the temptation is to proclaim: "It is their fault." This raises the need to question the responsibilities of our societies and our leaders. As we saw during the first day of the Forum, there is an aggressive position toward the countries of destination; and, perhaps, a less aggressive position toward those responsible for governments that have not been capable of generating better living conditions for their citizens or that have been corrupt. I would like to invite us all to reflect during the debates of this Forum, and in the workshops, also about our responsibilities as source countries of migration.

The most basic concept of globalization relates to the free flow of information, capital, and people, but the migratory barriers reveal that what is happening is obviously very far from what is globalization. This process is going the wrong way, because if there is no freedom of movement, like it existed during the last century in great regions of our American continent, we realize that globalization is evolving. In this sense, last century was more globalized than this one and even more so than the one before last. This does not mean that globalization is wrong, but that some societies and some countries are moving away from globalization. They are globalized only with regard to information exchange.

How do we face this challenge, a challenge that finds us before an already clearly unfortunate situation? Who is not going to denounce what we saw happening yesterday to those who were incarcerated and deported from Postville? The first step in facing this challenge is to have a correct analysis of the actual situation in Latin American countries, mainly the situation in which the migrants live. The analysis we make is that the countries of destination have a radical, uncivilized, inhuman position. I ask: is that the real analysis, or are we just analyzing one point of view? It would be good for us to wear the other shoe, at least to know how they think, and to

solve the problem, because when two people with a problem talk and evaluate a problem, they normally seek the solution together. The concern I raise is that to face the challenge we have to do a correct and complete analysis of the situation.

I will present two concrete examples that could help us in considering the different aspects of a specific situation. The first example is from my family life. When I was 11 years old and my brother was 13 years old, my mother's brother had a problem, and he was evicted from his house. Facing this situation, my uncle talked with my mom and one morning my uncle arrived with his wife and five children. My brother, my father and I said: "Welcome." The house was a small apartment, 75 square meters, and both families were accommodated in the two bedrooms. My cousins had different habits from my brother and me. For example, in the morning while having breakfast, my cousins would chew with their mouths open and my brother was annoyed, they yelled a lot and we talked without yelling, we prayed before eating and they did not pray. My brother, already annoyed, found out one night that the beds we used to sleep in had been joined and they had put my four cousins and me together, trying to fit us all. My brother was stubborn and he pulled one bed and obviously both beds opened up and we all fell in between. After this, the next day my mother talked to my brother and my uncle about this state of differences, and that, even though it was not their intention, our family felt somehow invaded, in own home. My brother's attitude was corrected by my mother, who made him understand that we had different habits but that tolerance and search for understanding were the only way to coexist.

The second example is about our fellow Peruvian countrymen in Chile. Three years ago on July 28<sup>th</sup>, I saw a video of our Peruvian brothers celebrating their country's independence in one of the main parks in Santiago. During this time of celebration in Peru, we eat our typical food from vendor carts. Our fellow countrymen did the same in Santiago. The scenes from the next day was a disgrace, there was a chaos of beer bottles and trash all over a park that is always clean and well kept. Obviously, if the Chilean authorities get mad in that moment and punish the Peruvian people with an act of violation of rights, it has to be denounced, but if the Chilean authorities are naturally outraged, and they call on the Peruvian authorities to correct this situation, the reason is understood.

I cited these two examples to insist on the need to analyze more than

just how bad we are treated. I repeat: there is no justification for human rights violations, but to find the solution to the problems of peaceful coexistence between migrants and local communities, the analysis has to consider and evaluate both sides. With this I want to say that in order to move on with the formulation of migration policies that will benefit our people, we have to at least, at some point, put ourselves in the receiving countries' shoes, to see what the best strategy would be, the best way of solving some of the problems, even if we cannot solve them all.

When one speaks about peaceful coexistence, and this is why I mentioned the previous examples, one has to consider that the difference in itself is not the aggression, but it can generate aggressions. In my opinion, to reach a peaceful coexistence we have to not only put ourselves in the shoes of others but to also try to consider the four necessary stages, to do this. The first stage is to avoid the exodus of our citizens and this is not the responsibility of a globalized world, but primarily of our governments. The second stage is to provide orientation for migrants, so that the culture shock and the different customs they will encounter in the destination countries may be less traumatic to both sides. The third stage is the protection of migrant rights, especially the most vulnerable groups and the victims of human trafficking. The fourth stage is the repatriation of those who want to return to their own countries. An example of that is the tax incentives offered by the government of Peru for returning citizens, when they, obviously, bring their goods and resources.

These elements are essential to outline a State policy on migration. Parliaments like ours, which are normally detached from such matters, should get involved in the formulation of an explicit migration policy. That is the message I take back to my country after these two days in the Forum, after listening to people so committed to this topic, and frankly, different from us who have not been as committed. But now we know better, because the politicians and decision makers can make better decisions based on the experience of experts and that is you. What I am presenting now is an idea, a proposal to reach a solution.

In conclusion, I think that another important aspect to be considered in order to overcome the challenges to peaceful coexistence in the field of international migrations is to look for the positive aspects that always exist in all situations. I believe that there are also competitive advantages. For example, I have a great advantage compared to you if we go to a cool place

like Peru where in some cities the temperature reaches 5 degrees below zero. Since I do not have hands, I don't need gloves to cover them and my advantage is in the savings. In this sense, we know that there are some advantages in the European countries where the demographics are aging and the retirement system will require the contribution of young people to be sustained. That is where our authorities need to look, to find those vantage points and it attractive for the countries of destination, in order to formulate a migration policy where our fellow countrymen and countrywomen have better results.

Thank you so much for your attention.

## **Dr. Lelio Mármora**

*Director of International Migration Policies Master Program  
Universidad de Buenos Aires*

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Thank you very much. First of all I would like to thank the *Scalabrini International Migration Network (SIMN)* and our friend, Leonir Chiarello, for the invitation to this Forum.

I am going to consider the matter of “bridges or walls” from a slightly different perspective. I would change the expression “bridges or walls” to “bridges and walls,” because we currently find that in the last 20 years we cannot talk about a single policy or governability logic on migration, but rather what we see is that different perspectives or policies have been developing, which are not mutually exclusive. Some points are addressed, but they have been developed independently. To put this in a more or less schematic form, I would say that today we have at least three models or three logics of governability in migration policy.

The first is the perspective of *security*, of control, generally used or carried out, each time with greater force by the developed countries that receive migrants. The second perspective considers migration as a variable of adjustments in the job markets. The third is that migration is part of human development.

The first perspective informs us that migration is a problem. Migration is seen as a political, labor, economic, cultural problem. In the second one, migration is seen as a social-labor phenomenon, which could be a problem as much as a solution. In the third or human development perspective, what is being raised is basically a matter of ethics: the human being as the center of the migration policy. This is what would distinguish the basic logic in each of them.

There are also differences regarding the question of migration and development. In the first case, in the policy of security and control, migration is considered an unsustainable cost or would be an unsustainable cost for the receiving countries. On one hand there is talk about an uncontrolled migration wave, while on the other hand, the migration of qualified human resources is encouraged.

In the second case, in the policies directed to job markets, the

suggestion is a co-development where “everybody wins” and where migrations would be as positive for the countries of origin as for the countries of destination. This is the position maintained by many international organizations and it is being promoted through different programs.

In the third case, of migrations contributing to human development, the suggestion is, as Raúl Delgado Wise said yesterday, that migrations are fundamentally beneficial for receiving countries. It is the source countries that carry the negative effects of migration, whether in family separation, the cost of training or education of technical professionals, or the loss of opportunity for not having the technical staff when you are in a position to develop, especially in this “knowhow” society in which we live. Yesterday we saw an estimate of the cost of training compared to the value of remittances. In the Argentinean case, they would need 30 years of remittances to cover the cost of professional training of Argentinean qualified personnel migrating abroad.

As for the causes, there are also differences in the perspective of how to look at the causes of migration. In the first case, the case of security, the sending countries are to blame or at least are seen as primarily responsible for that exodus of people, whether because of overpopulation, institutional inability, imperfect democracies, or corruption. There is a very interesting example also in the case of Argentina, of how this corruption phenomenon is many times linked not only to local elements but also to multinationals. One very well known case in the courts of the United States is the agreement between the multinational company Siemens and the Argentinean government. In the 1990s, an agreement was signed by which the company was going to charge 1.2 billion U.S. dollars to computerize border controls and make a new national ID. Later, the agreement was broken by a subsequent government because of administrative problems in the way it was done. It is estimated that the real cost to the company was an investment of 80 million U.S. dollars, and there was another 80 million U.S. dollars that had been distributed among corrupt Argentinean employees, while the multinational company was taking the small difference of a little over 1 billion U.S. dollars in profit. In other words, it is important to consider one basic thing: where there are corrupted, there are corruptors, and generally the corruptors take the bigger slice.

Regarding the second perspective, the causes of migration are seen

as a variable of adjustment in the job markets and as a product of globalization, in general. Globalization would be producing more information, better means of transportation, and the establishment of networks among migrants to facilitate migration. On the other hand, migration would respond to the excess of manpower in the source countries and the unmet demand in the countries of destination.

In the third approach, migrations as contributing to human development, the causes of migrations are seen as directly linked to the negative effects of a neoliberal globalization, an asymmetrical, monopolized, and exclusionary globalization. According to United Nations data, the existing gap between the five richest developed countries and the five poorest developing countries went from 30:1 in 1960 to 60:1 in 1990 and to 74:1 in the year 2000. This demonstrates that the gap is not just an income gap: it is a gap in access to education and in parity of purchasing power. For example, the relation between Spain and Tanzania in terms of parity of purchasing power is 30:1, while the relationship between the United States and Mexico is 5:1. These would be the objective factors presented within this analysis as to why people migrate.

In terms of human rights, the perspective of security addresses *the undocumented (ilegales)*. As already mentioned in this Forum, the illegal would be committing a crime by entering the receiving country in an irregular manner, therefore, creating a criminalization of migration.

From the perspective of the variable of adjustment in the job markets, human rights are considered from the point of view of establishing bilateral agreements to allow the controlled and secure movement of manpower. An example often cited is the case of the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates, whereby it is suggested that a well-protected migrant is more productive. In other words, this is basically a cost-benefit perspective.

From the point of view of migrations fostering human development, there is recognition of vulnerability, rejection of the criminalization of migrants and the principle of coherence. If human rights are expected to be observed in the countries where the migrants arrive, the source countries should also have a position of respect for the migrants who come to their countries. And migrants are seen as subjects with full rights, of free mobility, free residency, equal treatment, and expanded participation in citizenship.

With regard to shared responsibility, which is something that is much discussed, the perspectives are also different. In the first case, shared responsibility means sharing the responsibility for preventing migration, or to help migrants be deported through the notorious “voluntary return.” The only voluntary aspect of this form of return is: “you can choose to stay in jail or you can choose to get on the returning plane.”

In the second case, the responsibility to regulate the flow of temporary labor migrations would fall on the sending countries as much as on the receiving countries.

In the third position, the responsibility is seen from another perspective: it is a shared responsibility where the developed countries and those in development must equitably share in the benefits of commerce, technology, environmental protection and information.

Another important point is the coexistence between the newcomer and the one who is already there. From the perspective of security, the concept of coexistence is that of digestive assimilation. This perspective expects the migrant to be a clean slate that enters and adjusts to the culture and norms of the country of arrival, and refrains from bothering anyone. And, for many, it would be ideal if migrants arrived at 8am and left by 8pm, working of course, according to the local needs. As an example of this perspective, there is an interesting case. The Dutch Minister Rita Verdonk, who is the Minister of Integration and Immigration, known also as *Iron Rita*, has not only proposed prohibiting Muslims from wearing their veils in public places, but has also manifested her desire that only Dutch be spoken in the streets of Holland, and to pay a commission to police officers who detain illegal immigrants. This is one of the examples that falls within this perspective.

From the second perspective, coexistence is no longer seen as assimilation, but as a coexistence of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism was proposed by American sociologists the 1960s, during the struggle for civil rights. It was later picked up in different parts of the world, mainly in Australia and Canada. Multiculturalism basically prescribes tolerance for those who are different.

In the human development position, what is assumed is not multiculturalism but inter-culturalism, or even cross-cultural interface, in terms of coexistence, living together, and building new identities and cultures.

In relation to space in each of these positions we can recognize the following perspectives. Under the first approach, evidently, there is the unilateral space represented by the walls. We have examples of walls that have been reinforced, for example, the walls of CETI-Melilla in Spain. The United States moves forward with their 1,300 kilometer wall, and walls have sprung up or are being kept between Turkey and Cyprus, North and South Korea, India and Pakistan, in Cashmere, between Botswana and Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, Kirghizstan and Uzbekistan, Thailand and Malaysia, in Holland at the port of Rotterdam, in Morocco at the border with the Polisario Front, the longest of all; and the Peace Line in Belfast between Protestants and Catholics, or the one dividing Israel and the Palestinians and enclosing the latter in some kind of ghetto. We could go on with many more examples.

The second perspective, in turn, privileges bilateral agreements that allow shared commitments between the countries of origin and destination.

In the third perspective there is a greater tendency towards the establishment of multilateral agreements that ensure the rights of migrants and their families.

The consequences of these forms of governability, considering the state of the current situation, lead us to ask: What is happening? Why are these policies adopted? What consequences do they have?

In the case of security, these policies are adopted generally as a function of pressure by groups of voting xenophobes. There is an electoral calculation in all, or almost all, of the positions that adopt restrictive migration policies, and Mr. Jorge Bustamante said it yesterday, that the majority of the United States population is anti-migration. And that anti-migration public opinion, in some way, is determining migration policies.

In the case of the variables of adjustment, what is being done is promoting correct policies according to the situation of the market.

In the case of human development, it is about avoiding forced migration, the protection of the right not to migrate, the supportive responses to vulnerability, especially of the migrants.

Regarding consequences, in the first case, they see the masses of migrants, they do not see them as signs of the "era of migration"; they read them as the era of illegal, irregular migrations. There are masses of irregular migrants, they are reinforcing the clandestine underground world, there is y

the impossibility of legalizing their situation, and this produces administrative corruption, more restriction, more corruption across the world, human and migrant trafficking, labor and sexual exploitation, unfair competition in the job markets, and a social exclusion that produces resentment.

In the second case, we find programs that, even though they do not address the whole problem, they try to deal with part of this migratory movement by regulating the flow of labor migration.

In the third case, what is sought is a diminished illegality, a measure of equity, social justice, and integration of migrants in the exercise of their own rights.

In conclusion, it is necessary to point out that currently, on one hand, there is a struggle between the universal awareness of human rights in general and of migrant rights in particular; and on the other hand, a factual situation: there are anti-migration sentiment in different social and government sectors of the receiving countries.

At the same time, new spaces of free circulation are being created, like in the case of South America, from the Andean Community to Mercosur. In the case of Mercosur, they have signed an Agreement for Free Circulation and Residency. In the Andean Community, progress is visible in the Andean Plan for the Human Development of Migrations, which provides for measures consistent with this third perspective.

Thank you very much.

## **Dr. Bela Hovy**

*Chief of the Migration Section*

*Population Division of the United Nations, New York*

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I want to thank the *Scalabrini International Migration Network* for organizing this meeting. They really do justice to their name; this is a place to network, not just to listen to formal presentations. Probably, you will have forgotten my presentation when the next speaker arrives, but this is also a place, at least as I experience it, to network, to meet old friends and to make new contacts. I want to thank Leonir Chiarello for inviting me to this meeting. I met him in Manila, when he very skillfully and very graciously Chaired one of the round tables of the Global Forum, and now I meet him again as a very graceful and apt organizer of this conference.

My presentation will be mostly about the governance of international migration, but before we get there I want to quickly define international migration and secondly, present a few global migration trends. We have heard already some facts, which I want to confirm. But also direct your attention to trends that are less well known, certainly through the media.

In the third part, and here is the governance, I will show you what is happening at the United Nations in the area of international migration and development. The fourth part will be on the Global Forum on Migration and Development, a completely new process in the area of global governance of migration and development. I will end with a few concluding remarks.

Why do we talk about governance? During the past one and a half days, we have heard about concerns, we heard about problems, but we also heard that migrants have dreams and that there are opportunities. With this presentation I want to show you what governments are doing at the global level. Are they listening to migrants? Are they listening to non-governmental institutions? What is happening there?

Let's quickly go through the definition of migration. Migrants are crossing borders. Borders are one of the themes of this meeting. If there were no borders there would not be any migration. IOM would not exist; UNHCR (ACNUR) would not exist. We wouldn't have this nice meeting. And I would be out of work. But borders are there and we have to deal with

them. There are internal borders and there are external borders. When we talk about the roughly 200 million migrants that we have estimated at the United Nations, we mean the international migrants who cross country borders. Internal migration, movements within borders, is much higher than international migration, but it is under the responsibility of only one government. International migration involves at least two countries.

A second very important distinction is between the reasons, or causes, for migration. During the presentation on ACNUR this morning, we heard about forced migration where persecution, conflict and disasters are the main reasons for migration. But the majority of international migrants migrate on a voluntary basis simply to find work, to stay in a country permanently, to join families, to take up studies, etcetera. We have heard earlier that these two categories are sometimes difficult to distinguish and I totally agree with that. Let me explain why the distinction is nevertheless very important. Forced migrants are running away from their own governments. They are no longer protected by the country of their citizenship. Yet, they do not have the full protection of the host country, because they are foreigners. Thus, every refugee needs international protection. In contrast, international migrants, when they're crossing a border for voluntary reasons, can still enjoy their rights as citizens through consulates abroad. That is why the distinction between refugees and voluntary migrants is so important. As an international migrant, I normally do not need international protection. If I am a refugee, I need it per definition.

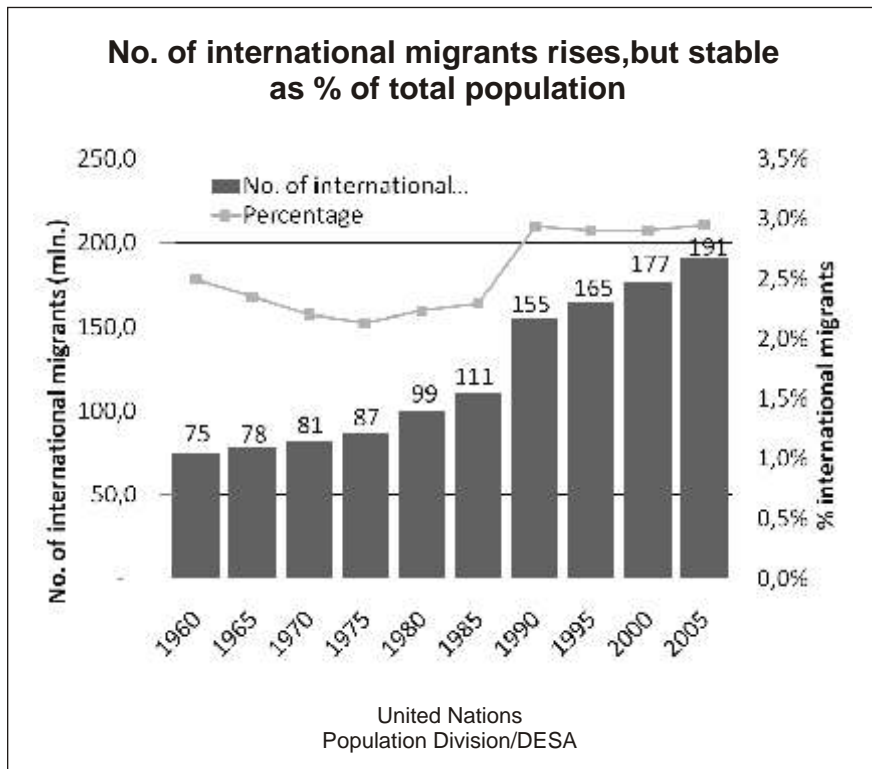
Then there is duration of stay. In the UN estimates of the number of international migrants, we count people who changed their place of residence, that is, people who move to another country for at least one year.

A fourth important distinction is legal status. Although it is difficult to count irregular migrants, our estimates normally include them. How is this possible? The main source of our estimates is the population census, which normally counts all persons residing in the country, both legally and illegally.

In chart number 1, the bars represent the total number of international migrants. It has increased slowly but surely from 75 million in 1960 to 191 million in 2005. Yesterday we heard a prediction that migration

proportion of the total population that is an international migrant. Some three percent of the world's population has crossed an international border, a figure that has been stable over time.

Chart 1



Where are the 191 million international migrants residing? [In Chart 2] the bars on the left refer to 1990, the bars on the right to 2005. The greatest increase since 1990 took place in high income developed countries. Development leads to more migration. There is also a significant increase in the number of international migrants in the high income developing countries, particularly the oil-producing countries in the Middle East. Middle and lower income countries have not gained any migrants.

Chart 2

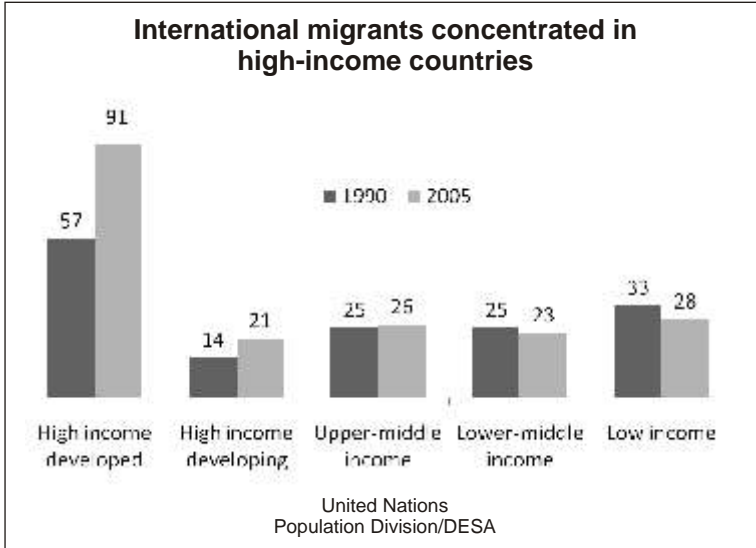
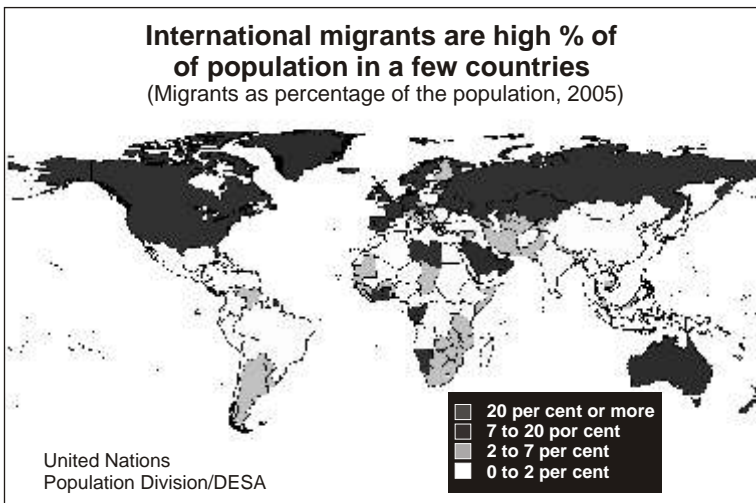


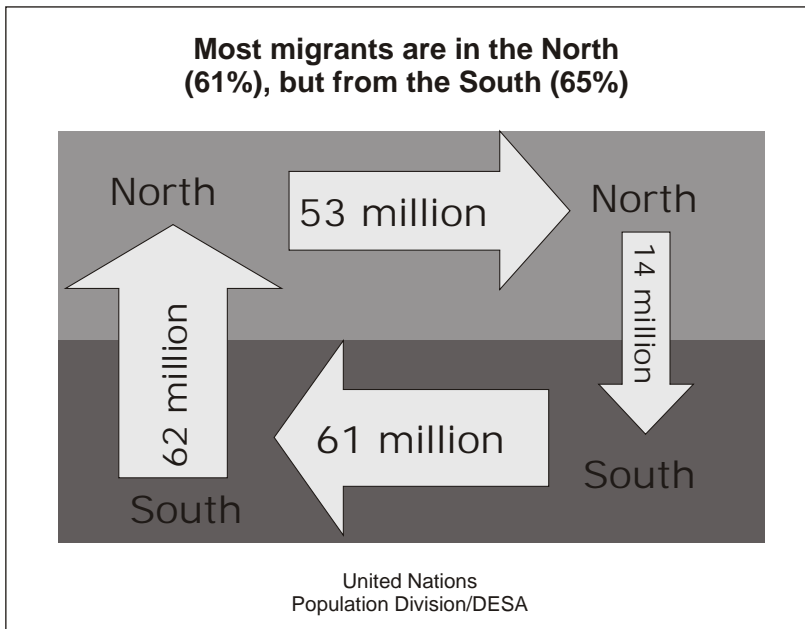
Chart 3 shows the same picture, not in absolute numbers, but as a proportion of the total population. The more developed countries host a higher proportion of international migrants than the developing world.

Chart 3



This chart indicates the origin and destination of international migrants. We know that most migrants are living in the North and we have also heard that most migrants are from the South. I want to focus on the blue and the yellow arrows. The yellow arrow represents the number of migrants from the South that moved to another country in the South: some 61 million. Compare that to the blue arrow that represents migrants from the South who live in the North. This is about the same number, 62 million. What we see here is that South to South migration is roughly as important as South to North migration. Clearly, migration is more than just migration from the South to the North.

Chart 4

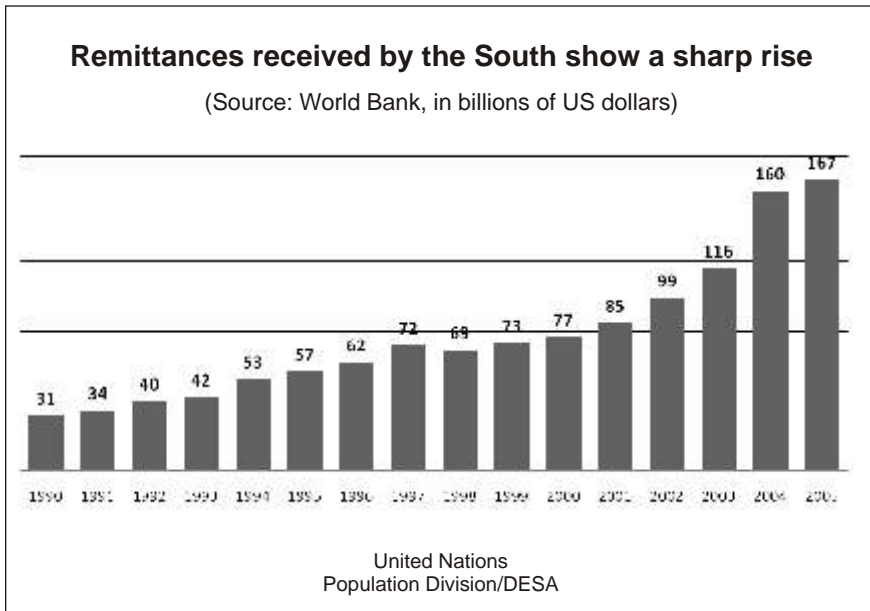


The remittances are going up [See Chart 5] and it is a very important contribution of international migration for development.

At the UN, we are also monitoring population policies. Let me point out a myth here. At this meeting, we've heard a lot about restrictive policies, but in fact government migration policies are becoming less restrictive. For example, a number of countries have introduced new policies to allow for

selective migration of highly skilled migrants. Also, new schemes for temporary migration were established for migrant workers from Guatemala to Canada and to Mexico. Similar schemes have been created in other parts of the world. Lastly, it should be pointed out that migration policies remain very diverse between countries.

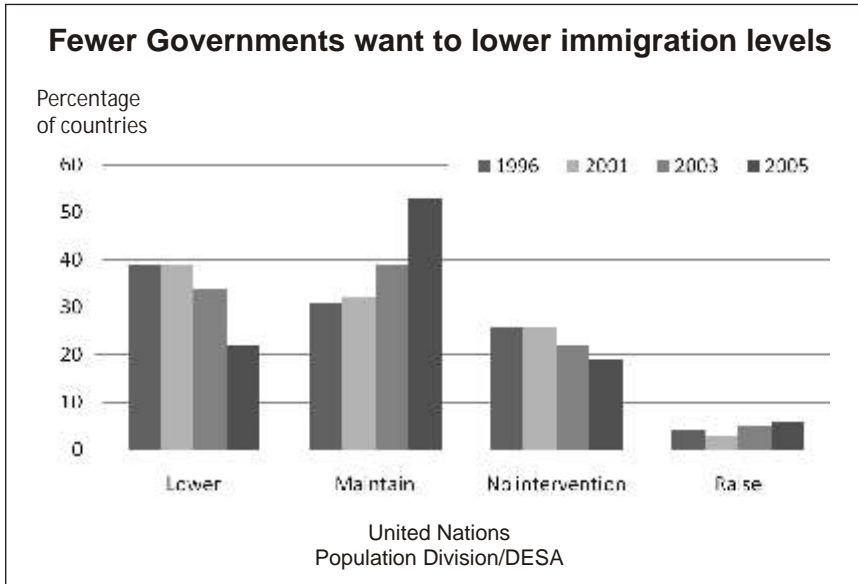
*Chart 5*



The number of governments that want to lower immigration levels has decreased from around 40 per cent in 1996 to 20 percent in 2005. If government migration policies would become more restrictive, as we heard a lot during the conference, the trend should have gone up, not down. [See *Chart 6*]

Regarding the governance at the United Nations, at this meeting, we have heard a lot about a rights-based approach. I have listed nine major international instruments on international migration. I'm sure you are familiar with some of them. First, there is the Migrant Worker Convention of 1990, ratified by only 37 States. None of these countries are major migrant receiving countries, a main weakness in the application of the convention. Then there is the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, each ratified by some 144 countries. The

Chart 6



protocol to combat trafficking of persons, which was adopted in 2000, has already been ratified by 123 countries. The protocol against migrant smuggling has received a similar high level of interest: some 114 countries have ratified it as of today. The issue of stateless persons, the subject of two United Nations Conventions, has gained in importance in recent years. There is more money to reduce and prevent statelessness and UNHCR is working harder to achieve that. Lastly, there are two ILO Conventions to protect migrant workers, but they are not widely ratified.

There are three major milestones when it comes to migration governance at the United Nations. In 1994 there was an International Conference on Population and Development. Twelve years later, there was the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The 2006 High-Level Dialogue was a watershed in the global governance of migration. The Secretary-General proposed the creation of a Global Forum on Migration and Development. He appointed a Special Representative on migration. He decided to strengthen interagency coordination by creating the Global Migration Group. Third, the United Nations General Assembly has just decided to hold another High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013.

Regarding the Global Forum process, how does it work? First, let's look at the chairing arrangements. Currently, the Greek Government is the Chair. The previous Chair was the Philippines. Next year's chair will be Argentina. These three countries currently form the Troika. Then there is an "executive," a steering committee of some 25 countries. The Friends of the Forum, an "assembly" of all interested Member States, officially endorse the steering committee's decisions. There is a small secretariat. Finally, there are the relationships with civil society. I want to underline that the Global Forum is not a United Nations process, but it does have close links with the United Nations.

There are six annual Global Forum meetings on the agenda. The meetings in Belgium (2007) and the Philippines (2008) have taken place; Greece will host the third annual meeting from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Future hosts are Argentina (2010), Spain (2011) and Morocco (2012).

What are the plans for Athens? The proposed theme, nothing has yet been decided, is integrating migration policies into development strategies for the benefit of all. There will thus be a strong focus on development. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, there will be two civil society days. The governmental Forum will have three roundtables: one on migration, development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), one on facilitating regular migration, and one on institutional coherence and partnerships.

I would conclude by saying that international migration and development has become a priority on the UN agenda. We have seen the High-Level Dialogue in 2006. It was a talk-show, that is correct, but I have seen results as well. I have been to regions where governments said: "We do not have a migration policy right now. In six months we need to go to the Forum in Brussels and we better formulate a policy." There is work in the countries and in the regions in order to prepare for these meetings. The Global Forum does not make any decisions, it is not normative, and it is outside the United Nations. But at least it offers a possibility to informally discuss migration and development at the global level. Six of these global forums will be held. In December 2008, the General Assembly decided to organize a second High-Level Dialogue in 2013 as well as a one-day informal thematic debate in 2011.

So, is the glass half-full or half-empty? I will let you decide. And where do you, civil society, come in? There are many opportunities for out

participating in the Global Forum. There are more than 150 countries which attended the Manila meeting. Talk to your governments about organizing a preparatory process so that your issues will be considered by the country delegations. Secondly, there are the civil society days. With your NGOs you can contact the Onassis Foundation which is the foundation that is running the civil society days in Greece and you can find out how to participate. To conclude, there are many possibilities for participating in the governance of international migration and a lot depends on you.

Thank you.

For more information, check: [www.unmigration.org](http://www.unmigration.org)

## **Ambassador Alfonso Quiñones**

*Executive Secretary for the Integral Development  
Organization of American States (OAS)*

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Thank you very much. It is really an honor for me to participate in this First International Forum on Migration and Peace. This matter is certainly of the utmost importance to the Organization of American States, and we trust that the results of this event will provide important inputs to promote the debate on the impact of migration in all of its dimensions, especially in the peace and development of our countries. I congratulate the organizers of the event, and thank you for the invitation. I would also like to point out that it is especially relevant to have this Forum here in Guatemala, since Guatemala has the *pro tempore* presidency of the Regional Conference on Migration.

As we know, the main cause of migration is the search of a better economic future for the people who migrate. For this reason, there is more need every day to integrate migration matters with the development strategies and policies of our countries and regional agendas. We, at the Organization of American States (OAS), consider it essential to understand migration as a part of development processes, both in terms of its causal relationships, as well as the effects the phenomenon has in the socioeconomic realities of the countries of origin and destination. In this sense, migrations are related to the unequal development of the hemisphere, which generates very uneven per capita incomes, causing in great measure the migration movements and determining their directionality. At the same time, migrations benefit the countries of origin through remittances, which have become an effective tool in the fight against poverty; and it helps destination countries, by providing manpower in the sectors that require it, contributing with taxes, and counteracting demographic imbalance, among other benefits. Also, on a local level, migrants are important agents of technological and cultural globalization. We have seen indigenous communities that inhabit remote Andean regions appropriating communication technologies through their migrants, and this has allowed them to connect with other regions; and we have seen the cultural richness contributed by the immigrant communities in the receiving countries.

However, it is also important to notice that in great measure, the positive impact that migration can have on the development of the countries of destination is related to the conditions of integration into these societies available to immigrants, as well as their integration into the job markets, the general economy, and the social and cultural life. Certainly, unfavorable conditions for immigrants have serious implications regarding the contribution they can make to these receiving societies. We all know that there are negative effects such as discrimination, abuse, lack of information about their rights, violent acts, social exclusion, and lack of access to justice.

Considering this, it is very important to promote inclusion and integration without discrimination in the receiving communities, and to point out the fundamental importance of peaceful coexistence, tolerance, and support in the societies. A greater degree of reception should be promoted on the part of the communities of destination, appealing precisely to the benefits of migration and the principles of tolerance and inclusion. On one side, this is accomplished through understanding and valuing the contributions made by the migrants and their families to the cities of destination; it favors the political space to comply with labor laws, the implementation of cultural integration policies, and access to health services and education. In this sense, they have carried out important work in civil society, churches, and immigrant communities, in establishing integration mechanisms, offering information and support channels both formal and informal, and promoting respect for the human rights of migrants.

From a broader perspective, the matter of migrant integration in the receiving community and/or transit community should be guided by the principles of equality and non-discrimination stated in the declaration of human rights. Migration policies should tend to reconcile, on the one hand, the sovereign right of States to control the entry and presence of migrants and, on the other, the greater good regarding the human rights of all human beings in search for better opportunities.

In the Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of Migrant Human Rights, including migrant workers and their families, which was approved by the member States of the OAS, in a 2005 resolution of the General Assembly, it is stated that: “The objectives of promoting and protecting Migrant Human Rights are compatible with the sovereign rights of each of the member States of the OAS for controlling their borders and enforcing their laws.” And it also adds: “The discretion of the States to

regulate the entry of foreigners in their territories and determine the condition of migrants should be exercised in a manner consistent with the applicable international law on the Human Rights of refugees.” In the same way, the program suggests to the member States, among others, the implementation of activities oriented towards the protection of the physical integrity of migrants and the appropriate measures to prevent, combat, and eradicate violence and other forms of crime such as fraud, extortion, and corruption committed against migrants.

Within the framework of this program, the work of the OAS focuses on the protection of the human rights of migrants, by means, on the one hand, of the Works of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, and particularly the Special Reporter of the Commission for Migrant Workers and their Families; and, on the other hand, of the political entities of the organization, particularly the Special Commission of Migrant Matters of the Permanent Council of the OAS.

We also have organizational events, projects, and programs in which we develop cooperative activities. For example, with the aim of coordinating efforts in this area with other international organizations, and with the internal General Office, and at the same time work in unison and transversal fashion in the area of migration, we created in 2008, within the Executive Office of Comprehensive Development of the OAS, the “Migration and Development Program.” Through this program we will seek to contribute to the drafting of public policies that promote just, secure, and organized migration processes.

I will now, mention some of these projects and events:

The Continuous Reporting System on Labor Migration for the Americas (SICREMI) has as its objective to gather standardized, timely, and current information on migration flows. Some of you may know the Migration Data Collection System SOPEMI (French acronym), implemented for over a decade now by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development for its member States. We are trying to implement a similar system for the member States of the OAS. We are also developing an Interactive Map of Temporary Employment Programs for migrant workers (MINPET), creating a database and a web page that compiles the migration norms in the region, developing and promoting state and regional assistance models for migrant women affected by violence, and also identifying educational programs for migrant youth and children and

promoting their dissemination and advertisement. We are also working in the support and training of regional migration officers, security forces, judges and prosecutors, for the identification, protection and assistance of human trafficking victims and also the elaboration of tools for promotion and dissemination of material related to the human rights of migrants.

By the same token, we are carrying out a study of the role of education in the promotion of cultural diversity in societies and schools, and a project on the tendencies of early transition education policies in rural, indigenous and border communities.

In the labor context we have an annual meeting of labor ministers of the hemisphere, a meeting that, in its last session, adopted a declaration that includes this paragraph: "All immigrants, regardless of migration status, should be afforded full protection of their Human Rights and full compliance with applicable labor laws, including labor principles and rights contained in the International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration, regarding fundamental labor principles and rights."

In this sense, in February 2008, we will carry out a workshop in the city of Quebec, Canada, on labor migration and labor market information systems.

I have presented this brief review of the activities of the OAS on migration not just to point out the importance that this matter has for us, but also to point out the need for migration policies to have a multi-dimensional approach, because they will hardly be effective otherwise and will hardly contribute in fostering societies that are more inclusive, respectful, receptive, and tolerant, for conducting prosperity, development, and peace.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that for this to be possible, it is necessary to create awareness and to educate. This has been mentioned repeatedly in this Forum, but for that effort to be effective it is necessary to deepen the study and dissemination of information on effective incorporation and integration policies in terms of inter-cultural coexistence and job markets, the effects of the current economic and financial crisis on migrant populations and their communities, the promotion of peace, and also the repercussions of these reconciliation processes. All of these are matters that we have been working on during these two days. In the same way, in this effort we should consider the role of the different actors, including, beside the migrants themselves and their communities, the

the migration agenda has been focused on negative and conflictive aspects, and it is our task, for those who are convinced that it is not like that, to work for a turnaround in the approach to migration matters.

Again, I would like to congratulate the organizers of this First International Forum on Migration and Peace and mention that the matters discussed here are of the utmost importance, and should be considered by policymakers, so that in this way instead of walls we will have, maintain, and extend bridges.

Thank you very much.

## **Rev. Alfredo Gonçalves**

*Provincial Superior*

*Scalabrinian Missionaries, São Paulo, Brazil*

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### **Some Observations on the Notion of Borders**

My task in this Forum is to share with you some observations on what a border is. We know that words reveal concepts and concepts in turn are like seeds. Just as a seed in the earth sprouts into a plant or a tree, so is a concept translated into words capable of producing a vision of the world, a mentality and a culture. I will subdivide this topic into three distinct and complementary parts: the ambiguity of border areas, the various types of borders, and the border as a brand new theological site.

#### **1. The Ambivalence of Border Areas**

To begin with, border areas are not well-defined places; they are ambiguous, unstable, with flexible boundaries. There languages, currencies, and flags intermingle; faces also mingle, along with traditions and values. Not only people, but also identities blend and interact and end up reshaping each other.

Borders are free, often confusing and pluralistic spaces, where encounters can easily occur and just as easily be forgotten. Such spaces are ideal for daily commercial exchanges, for the traffic of drugs, weapons and even people; and for constant arguments over commercial and economic interests. The same space is equally useful for building new human relationships, albeit quick and short-lived.

If, on the one hand, the border remains open to the most unforeseen novelties, hourly surprises and unexpected events, on the other hand along the same border new friendships and contacts are possible, and new paths open up. Although it is a place of daily struggle for survival, a border is also a stage where conflicts become more serious and evident, just as new forms of solidarity are created. The border thus turns into an area where conflicts coexist along with solidarity. Generally borders are lawless areas but they are also open to all kinds of informal agreements and contacts; a no man's

land that can become every man's land.

As Paraguayan sociologist Tomás Palau states, in the Latin American context these border areas show evidence of a new and vigorous migration within a new globalized economy. According to him, border migrations constitute one of the most telling aspects of the new world order, which is increasingly asymmetrical and exclusionary. The massive displacements of people, particularly in the border regions, are a barometer of international relations fraught with injustice and discrimination.

Through them new social habits and new human relationships are born which in the long run can give rise to a world without borders. This is migration's hidden and silent potential: by repeatedly crossing borders, migrants are aiming at a world where borders will slowly disappear.

In this sense it is not an exaggeration to speak of a border-culture where at the same time all is forbidden and all is allowed, and where identities simultaneously open up to one another, but can just as easily turn on each other. Borders are places where people live and work together in a spirit of solidarity, but they are also places of violence and death. Every day, life and death are pitted against each other, seeking predominance. Ultimately, however, we should always keep in mind that the true border between good and evil, violence and peace, life and death passes primarily through the depths of our heart.

In conclusion, borders are spaces riddled with paradoxes. Not only are they fertile ground for dangers and risks, but they also represent new opportunities as well, and a ground for reflection, capable of new cultural expressions where values are continuously re-created. All situations and moments of crisis, be it of a personal or familial nature, be it institutional or historical are always an opportunity for learning and rethinking, and a time for suffering and pain, a time for giving birth and for rebuilding faith and hope; in a word, a time and a terrain favorable to evangelization.

## **2. Types of Borders**

At this time, a distinction should be made among the different types of border. First there is a *geographical or territorial border*, where two or more countries have set their boundaries. It is a place where the territory of one nation ends and that of another begins. The boundary could be a river, a bridge, a man-made sign or mark, or the sea. Today, with the war on

terrorism and drug trafficking, new more or less visible walls are being erected between neighboring countries such as, for example, Mexico and the United States, Israel and Palestine, etc. In the territorial border Immigration and Customs Services are located. Ports and international airports are also to be considered territorial borders: through them products and persons come and go on a daily basis. As we all know, Latin America has a considerable number of these types of borders, between two or even three countries.

Secondly, there are *political borders*. This is not a matter of territory or geography but mostly of laws regulating immigration in some countries. This border is to be found in national Parliaments or Congresses, in each country's capital city. Here migrants are subject to the laws and the Constitution of the country they enter; and for the migrant, changes in migration laws and their enforcement represent another real border: to be able to obtain citizenship or not.

Finally, there is the *ethnic-cultural border*. Differences between peoples and nations are often the most complex and impenetrable borders. Language, history, traditions, values, and identities too often produce insurmountable barriers. In this case, the border is everywhere a migrant is found. Relationships between migrants and local people could be easy or difficult depending on the degree of mutual openness among cultures. Barriers are found at the heart and soul of people. The cultural expressions of one group stand side-by-side with those of another.

Many migrants succeed in crossing territorial barriers but not political barriers, and remain in the country of destination in an irregular status. There are millions of undocumented migrants in the world, mostly in rich countries but also in our Latin American countries. They live under conditions of extreme vulnerability to many forms of exploitation. Almost always, they hold the dirtiest, toughest, and most dangerous jobs. Others succeed in crossing territorial and political borders but not the ethnic-cultural ones. They end up forming ghettos amid the local population: they are exposed to prejudice and discrimination of every kind, and are victims of hostilities on both sides. In this regard, nowadays we are witnessing an adverse and widespread rise in xenophobic and racial attitudes.

The differences among these three types of borders (territorial, political, and ethnic-cultural) allow for a better knowledge of both, the distinct areas and activities that could develop in each and the coordination,

who work with migrants at geographical borders and those who seek to be active in the political border are very different. Both in turn are different from the challenges of those who try to overcome cultural obstacles. The three types of borders present distinct challenges and require different commitments; they however are interconnected to one another.

Those who work at a geographical border have to deal with documentation issues, housing, providing food, personal, work-related, and psychological assistance and orientation, as well as many other similar things of a practical and concrete nature. Here, the most important task is to provide immediate assistance and shelter. A migrant who is hungry and cold cannot be left on the street; he needs a temporary "home." Those who work in the political field, usually in capital cities, seek juridical assistance, collaboration with authorities, consulates and embassies, lobbying for the drafting and passing of migration laws. Knowledge of the law is critical for them. Those who are active within an ethnic-cultural border have to create opportunities for cultural and religious expressions across ethnic groups, trying to promote opportunities for mutual enrichment.

The challenge is not so much in dealing with a multicultural environment, but rather with an intercultural one. In fact, it is not enough to secure tolerance and peaceful coexistence; what is necessary is for the groups to interact with each other and enrich each other with their different values.

What is important is realizing that even though the challenges and opportunities are different for each type of border, the motivations and objectives are the same: that is, the welcoming and integration of migrants in the country of arrival. These distinctions are just a framework for a better distribution of services. Being acquainted with each other's different responsibilities ensures better coordination and integration. Those who work at a geographical border are aware that they can count on the backing of those who work in the political border. Both, in turn, can count on the backing of those who are active in the field of culture, promoting encounters and seeking exchanges among groups and individuals. Once again the responsibilities are distinct but they complement each other.

This reflection on the concept of border can also help us to rethink the concept of democracy. Historically democracy is born and grows strong within a predominantly homogeneous ethnic and cultural identity. It is the democracy of a given people, with its own history; namely, a democracy

among equals. Presently, in the context of migration, and considering the growing religious and cultural pluralism, democracy is seeking a new foundation: not the equality of a common ethnic, cultural, and historical background, but the equality of human rights. The challenge, then, is to establish democracy among un-equals. The basis for this new form of democracy is not the homogeneity of historical and cultural roots, but the heterogeneity of different peoples and cultures. This issue was debated in depth by scholars such as A. Touraine (in *Can We Live Together?*), J. Habermas (in *The Inclusion of the Other*) and G. Gadamer (in *Truth and Method*).

Democracy among subjects from diverse backgrounds is a much tougher matter. The basis, now, is not consanguinity, or common origin, much less history, but the right of each individual citizen. The most important document is not a passport or an identity card, but a birth certificate. The fact that one is born guarantees the right to live with dignity wherever one happens to be.

### **3. The Border as a New Theological Place**

This was the topic of my contribution at the seminar on the Theology of Migration, held in April 2006 at the *Instituto Teológico de São Paulo*, Brazil (ITESP). On that occasion, I insisted that borders are privileged places for theological reflection. Borders are a kind of “non-places” where many people move, at times without documents, roots, destination, family, or country. It is a space where identity and security are constantly under scrutiny, where loneliness, anonymity, and forlornness could very quickly turn into despair; a place where people, wounded and disfigured by the tragedies of migration and displacement, are ravaged in body and soul by the scars of too many repeat trips.

However, in symbolic terms, this border, this “non-place” could turn out to be the basis for a “new place.” The person who goes through the painful experience of the border becomes more open to changes, whether personal or family-related, financial, political, social, or cultural. Those who were fed with a silver spoon are not interested in radical changes; migrants, instead, by virtue of facing the border crisis, have become historically more receptive to new things. We can say that when migrants start moving, they set human history in motion. They even get the Church moving. As Scalabrini would say, “The world is moving fast, and we cannot

fall behind.” When masses of people are on the move, everything else moves: the whole world and even life itself are on the move. Migrations and historical changes are two sides of the same coin. Generally, migrations precede or follow great social changes; often they are their cause and/or the effect.

It is in this sense that Pope Benedict XVI, in his message for the 2006 World Migration Day, described migrations as “the sign of the times.”

As he moves along, the migrant draws a different border, across a world order built upon shameful social inequalities and in need of radical socioeconomic transformation. A migrant is a sign of contradiction: if on the one hand he denounces international relations based on the exclusion of millions of people, on the other he urgently calls for the establishment of new relations among peoples, groups, and countries.

We would do well to remember that Jesus himself was born and died outside the walls of the city. St. Luke, the Evangelist of Jesus' infancy (Lk 2,7), tells us “there was no room for them.” He came into the world and appeared on a border, at a “non-place” far from home. He lived among the poor and the excluded, (even surrounded by animals) and there he set his tent.

Maybe this was to remind us that the Kingdom of God has its truer roots in an ambiguous and marginal border space, and also to teach us that the poor will be the first to enter it.

Thus, the border becomes the place for God's revelation and, consequently, the privileged place for theological reflection. For this reason, as we begin to speak of borders from a theological standpoint, the first thing we should ask is that they be abolished. The good news of the Kingdom of God knows no borders. “I was a migrant and you welcomed me,” so says the Gospel (Mt 25, 35). In the same Gospel of Matthew we are told that Jesus was moving through towns and villages, and that upon seeing the great crowd, he felt compassion, because they were tired and discouraged, “like sheep without a shepherd” (Mt 9, 35-38). The same can be said of the episode of the disciples of Emmaus (Lk 24, 13-35), and of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10, 25-35). In all of these Gospel passages Jesus is on the move. He is a pilgrim among pilgrims; he follows in their footsteps, listens to their voice, looks into their faces, and strengthens their faith and hope.

The unforgettable John Paul II said: “The Church knows no foreigners, because we are all brothers.” And so, by virtue of his movement, the migrant is a prophet of the Kingdom, of a world without borders: the true protagonist of the new times to come, the maker of a universal citizenship. In closing these reflections, we can quote the words of Scalabrini: “Migration gives a man the whole world for a homeland.”

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