



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL

**Migration and Development: a Euro-Mediterranean Perspective**

**26 and 27 April 2007**

**Rhodes**

**Governance and Partnerships in Migration Management and Development**

- Firstly, let me thank the OECD Development Centre for inviting me to participate in this very timely conference, and congratulate both the DC and IMEPO (Hellenic Migration Policy Institute) for the excellent work in putting together this interesting set of discussions around the Euro-Mediterranean perspective on Migration and Development.
- I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Development Centre and the EC Directorate for Employment and Social Affairs/the team for the report on “Gaining from Migration”, which I have read with great interest. If this report has the appropriate political projection it can make a major contribution towards the development of a new European consensus on migration. It is evident to all that the European economies require immigration, and there have been a number of political declarations underlining this point. However, we are as yet very far from a new consensus on this matter, and everybody is aware that around the themes of migration there are issues of enormous political sensitivity.
- Maybe I am too optimistic, but I think that it is a very good sign that the political temperature of the issue of migration has been relatively low, lower than many expected, in the ongoing elections in France, and also in the November elections in the Netherlands, which were even provoked by a government that fell because of a migration issue. I hope that in the regional elections in Spain next month this trend is confirmed. But the point that I would like to make is that in politics courage is fundamental but it is also fundamental to get the timing right. And in my view this is the right timing for us to demand some political courage in forging a new consensus on Migration. The “Gaining from Migration” report is precisely the kind of platform that is required for the exercise of political leadership. And I believe that the speech



## MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL

yesterday by the Minister of the Interior of Greece was a good example of the kind of leadership that I am talking of.

- Intensity of the debates around the issue of M&D during 2006 was very welcome: High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (September); IOM Conference in Brussels (March), the Rabat (July) and Tripoli (November) conferences, to name but a few. I have insisted on making it a priority to keep the debate alive during 2007. The organisation by the Belgium Government, of the Global Forum on Migration and Development is a very important initiative in the coming July, in order to evaluate where we can go from the 2006 debates. Portugal, as future Presidency of the EU, has leverage on maintaining this momentum and we intend to use this to stimulate progress on a new international consensus, namely within Europe. We will also extend our efforts into promoting solid steps for mainstreaming this linkage into policy definition and governance structures as well as into operationalising it on the ground.
- Of course we are not working on a blank page. Emerging partnerships are to a certain extent already reflected in ministerial conferences that have been taking place, but it is necessary to ensure that commitments negotiated are feasible and will produce a real added value, and do not remain mere empty declarations of intentions. There have been some criticisms of Rabat and Tripoli in this respect but I do not think that these are entirely fair. Or perhaps expectations were unreasonably high. For example, as follow-up to the Tripoli and Rabat conferences we have a number of instruments, such as the integration as first priority for the years 2007-2010 of Southern migratory route – South Mediterranean countries and Sub-Saharan African under the thematic programme on migration and asylum. Other EC programmes include AENEAS, the geographical instruments such as EDF, ENPI, DCI, as well as the political dialogue on migration under articles 8 and 13 of the Cotonou Agreement. The point that I am making is that we are undergoing a still timid transformation of our instruments to bring them into line with Rabat and Tripoli undertakings. This may not be spectacular but this is the way Europe works. Our task is to further energize this process with the appropriate political inputs.
- During the Portuguese presidency of the EU there will be a ministerial conference to address euro-mediterranean migration aspects (Faro, 18 and 19 November), and



## MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL

another one in September (13-14) on legal migration will include the three dimensions of legal migration, integration and development, and is being organised jointly by three ministries that deal with migration policy most directly: internal affairs, ministry that holds minority rights, and ministry of foreign affairs. Hopefully these political moments will allow us to inject the energy that I believe we need at this time, and “Gaining from Migration” needs to be present in our thinking during those events.

### **Development and Migration**

- Allow me now to turn more specifically to the development-migration nexus. This notion is present in all official documents, but I believe that we must be careful not to create false expectations. The “Gaining from Migration” report is right to downplay such expectations. Migration pressures are great because there are differences in development and more opportunities in some places than in others. This has always been the case and will likely remain so. Unfortunately development aid is not going to change this, even if we hope that it has some impact in terms of poverty reduction. So we should look upon development policies as being capable of making a contribution to the management of migratory flows, and of addressing some of the issues that arise in that context. The idea that development aid can reduce migratory flows by producing quick development results is a fallacy that must not be allowed to make further progress in public opinion and policy circles.
- Having made this point, there are some areas in which development aid instruments can be improved, with a view to addressing migration-related issues. This should be done without ever losing sight of the poverty-reduction objectives of development aid. Without seeking to be exhaustive, there are some clear examples.
- Work on remittances. Much progress has been made over the past few years, but I would say that we still have a lot that can be done in helping remittances to be channelled for development. Remittances are of course private, but the manners in which they are used can have a greater or lesser development impact. It is essential, on a case by case basis, that policies are devised to stimulate higher multiplier effect uses of remittances, and these policies often cost money. I think that it is a good use of development aid to support such policies, both in terms of the development of



## MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL

human capital, and physical capital. Sending countries should develop policies that stimulate high multiplying effects of remittances, and donor countries should be their partners in helping to pay for this.

- Training for success in migration. I believe that there is a role for the establishment of institutions that serve employment demand and supply matching purposes, and that are capable of devising appropriate training programmes in sending countries. The pilot project that the EU is setting up in Bamako, Mali, is a promising one and I look forward to seeing what comes of it.
- The brain drain issue is another area in which development aid can have a role. There is a clear tension between the objective of attracting highly qualified immigrants and the objective of promoting institutions in developing countries. Certainly, when it comes to scholarships, the regulations should be devised in a manner that promotes institutional capacity building in the country of origin, and not just individual capacity-building. The two must be linked. I am also sceptical, as is the report, of the voluntary codes of conduct regarding highly qualified personnel, but I think that development aid can have a role in devising mechanisms of support for strategic sectors for a country's development programme. The health sector is one obvious example.
- These issues are not new, but I do think that they can be worked on to create a better use of development aid in the migration-development nexus. For this to happen, I think that what we need is a “**migration and development profile**” for developing countries which would provide indications of how development aid can be used to increase the development potential of migratory issues. This profile would incorporate questions of brain and skill drain in particular sectors, the development usages of remittances, the roles of diaspora and civil society organisations, and information on legal migration opportunities for workers and employers. It would highlight the areas of capacity-building most needed for each country to focus on the opportunities that are present in migration.
- At the moment we deal with these issues in an ad hoc manner, and as a result the development aid contribution to the appropriate management of migrations is far short of what it might be. The Development Centre and/or IOM might be interested in thinking about a standard design that could be adapted to the particularities of



## MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL

each case. What is certain is that information management is fundamental for development aid to have a meaningful role.

### **Conclusion**

- In concluding, I would like to underline that this is the moment when we need to work hard at developing appropriate partnerships, bringing together the different actors – the sending and receiving countries plus the migrants/diasporas, at the international level and at the non-governmental level, be they on the aid side or on the corporate sector. This is an essential step in bringing about a new regime that is mindful of the needs of those different actors and of the rights and legitimate expectations of all those involved in the process. Politically I think that this is where we are at, and I think that we must make the best use of forthcoming opportunities to realise this objective.

**João Gomes Cravinho**

**Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation**

**Check against delivery**