
PHILIPPINES

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**CHARTING THE COURSE OF MIGRATION THROUGH
PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION**

**Statement by
Hon. Arturo D. Brion
Secretary of Labor and Employment
UN High Level Dialogue of International
Migration and Development
14 September 2006**

Madame President:

The Philippines extends its warmest congratulations on your election as President of the United Nations General Asse

MIGRATION AS FAMILIAR GROUND FOR RP

Madame President:

International migration in the sense that it is happening today is a familiar experience for the Philippines.

We first launched the Philippine overseas employment program in 1974 as a conveniently available measure to ease our country's high unemployment and foreign exchange problems.

Over the years, we found that it is more than a transient strategy that we should nurture; we discovered that it is a national strategy that can have profound effects on our people's lives, our economy, and those of the

A last measure of protection is through the reintegration programs we provide for returning workers. These programs give them the chance to readjust to the home country upon their return, and to enjoy the fruits of their foreign labor to

the home country receives from its overseas nationals, and the very same assets that generate the brain gain migrants use in their home country after working overseas.

In these lights, both the countries of origin and destination benefit and have every reason to continuously nurture and replenish their common asset - the migrant workers' skills.

For migrants and their countries to reap the fullest benefits from migrants' remittances, the flow of these funds must be facilitated, i.e. rendered cheaper and more affordable, as well as faster and safer. This is another area where cooperation between the sending and receiving countries is acutely needed and will go a long way in furthering development.

The return for good of temporary migrants to their home country saves the receiving country the trouble of providing for residents with less than full economic utility, and is thus a gain for the receiving country. The latter should

Madame President:

Our experience tells us that among migrants, some are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, discrimination, and are easy prey to the crimes of trafficking and smuggling of persons. I refer to women and children who are already special concerns of specialized agencies of the UN. The Philippines proposes that further and added attention be given to them as vulnerable migrants needing focused universal support.

SUSTAINING THE POLITICAL MOMENTUM

Madame President:

I close my statement with the hope that the political momentum generated by this high level dialogue will lead to the critical mass of support for the establishment of a forum or an appropriate mechanism for the regular discussion and exchange of ideas and the enhanced cooperation among governments, civil society and all stakeholders on migration and its vast developmental potentials.

THE HUMAN FACE OF MIGRATION

Madame President:

I close this statement too on the reiterative note that migration is about human beings who uproot themselves from their familiar surroundings to venture and grope their way into the strange and unfamiliar. This is the human face of migration that we should all consider above everything else as we examine its multidimensional aspects.

Thank you for your kind attention.