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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 23rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 27 October 2014, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Stepowska (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Poland)

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*In the absence of Mr. Cardi (Italy), Ms. Stepowska (Poland), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 21: Globalization and interdependence**  
(continued) (A/69/203)

**(a) International migration and development**

(continued) (A/69/207 and A/69/392; A/C.2/69/2)

**(b) Culture and sustainable development**

(continued) (A/69/216)

1. **Mr. Golitsyn** (Ukraine) said that migration must be included in the post-2015 development agenda and that specific targets were needed to monitor the progress of improvements to the impact of migration on development. Ukraine was a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants and, with over 330,000 foreign nationals relying on the Government to ensure their rights, it was committed to improving its laws and policies concerning migrant access to employment and to services such as education.

2. Ukraine emphasized the protection of all migrants' human rights and sought to guarantee migrants' integration. Nationwide programmes were designed to provide representatives of migrant communities and national minorities with information on the protection of minority rights, and the Government and civil society organizations were receiving instruction on how to create regional platforms for dialogue about migrant integration. Projects had been organized to facilitate intercultural understanding and combat discrimination by, among other means, using media to improve public perceptions of migrants. To help migrants secure gainful employment, criteria had been developed to recognize qualifications that were acquired through informal education programmes. The national migration evidence base had been strengthened through cooperation with international organizations, and steps had been taken to combat human trafficking and modern-day slavery.

3. Internal migration had significantly increased due to the crisis in Ukraine. That posed many challenges, including a higher risk of human trafficking, particularly involving children. The implementation of a joint project with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to prevent trafficking was a priority, and Ukraine was also focused on assisting

victims of trafficking through national mechanisms and information campaigns.

4. **Ms. Al-Mulla** (Qatar) said that the question of international migration was closely related to the stages of development of countries of origin, transit and destination and should therefore be addressed in a manner that took into consideration social, economic and environmental factors and human rights. Qatar had been promoting the rights of foreign workers and was taking steps to review its legislation in that regard with a view to making changes and to improving the standard of living of foreign workers and their families in conformity with international conventions. To that end, residential projects were due to provide tens of thousands of new homes to expatriate workers.

5. Culture was directly linked to the three pillars of sustainable development, and in finalizing the post-2015 development agenda it was important to recognize cultural diversity and local contexts. Culture contributed to social integration, poverty eradication and global peace and security, while cultural understanding facilitated conflict prevention and resolution and reconciliation and recovery. As part of its national vision, therefore, Qatar sought to become a global hub for culture and a primary partner in the development of public cultural institutions and projects worldwide. In the context of globalization, culture and its exchange were indispensable in the education of children and young people. It was an essential investment in developing societies and played an important role in the development of policies on education and the environment.

6. Qatar sought to meet the needs of present and future generations and, in that regard, the contribution of culture and its central role in developing effective policies at all levels needed to be recognized. Culture must receive special attention in the post-2015 development agenda.

7. **Ms. Carías** (Honduras) said that the international community should act to deal with the problem of Honduran and Central American children who migrated northwards, often unaccompanied by adults. The President of her country had recently declared a humanitarian emergency. The numbers of migrant children had increased as a result of unprecedented violence in her country, which had become one of the main battlefields of drug traffickers. Honduras was not responsible for that war, which involved consumers

further north and producers further south. Thousands of children and adolescents in vulnerable situations had been pressured to join international criminal networks, and many of them had preferred to take the path of irregular migration despite the risks of physical harm. A recent report had found that 70 per cent of migrant women and girls suffered sexual abuse during their journey to the United States.

8. Her country had activated its social protection system to provide assistance to minors and their families and effect their orderly repatriation, so that they could return to their homes and schools. It had also launched programmes to reduce the numbers of unaccompanied migrants and offer training and employment opportunities to single mothers.

9. The causes of irregular migration included family reunification and the search for better economic opportunities due to a lack of jobs and high levels of poverty. In the light of the principle of common international responsibility, transit and destination countries should actively help to address those causes, in a spirit of compassion and solidarity, and in line with the principles of international humanitarian law and respect for human rights.

10. El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras had submitted to the Secretary-General a proposal for a plan to extend support and opportunities to their migrant citizens. That proposal would soon be circulated in an official document of the United Nations. The issue of migration should be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda since it had positive effects on sustainable development, economic growth and friendship between peoples. Those effects should not be eclipsed by the human tragedy that had befallen thousands of families in countries such as hers.

11. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that the human rights of migrants, especially women, children and other vulnerable persons, must be protected at every stage of the migration process. Migrants were frequently detained, and migrant children and children of migrant parents were often denied equal access to legal advice, education and health services. Cooperation on international migration must be strengthened, and the issue should be addressed as a priority in the post-2015 development agenda. His country supported the Secretary-General's proposal that periodic high-level dialogues on migration should be held to review the implementation of the

commitments made in the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

12. The international community should raise awareness of issues relating to unaccompanied migrant children and define instruments for their protection, rather than focusing on closing borders and criminalizing migrants. There must be an acceptance of the shared responsibility of the countries of origin, transit and destination. El Salvador was making efforts to improve the quality of life of its citizens and to educate its population about the risks associated with irregular migration, with an emphasis on the strong links between human rights, migration and development.

13. **Mr. Dayem** (Saudi Arabia) said that, given the significant challenges posed by migration, States must engage in meaningful dialogue, including under the auspices of the United Nations, strengthen their collaboration on migration issues and formulate common strategies to deal with that phenomenon. They must also take action to ensure the well-being of migrants, inter alia, by providing them with essential health-care and educational services. Further research on migration was needed, as was a clear definition of who exactly constituted a migrant. In that connection, it was important to draw a distinction between migrants and foreign workers. Although Saudi Arabia was not a destination for migrants and had no mechanisms for accommodating them, it hosted thousands of foreign workers on temporary work contracts. Those workers' remittances to their home countries totalled some \$40 billion each year, providing vital support to those countries' economies.

14. Like many other countries, Saudi Arabia was deeply concerned about illegal migration, which was placing certain States under considerable financial strain, forcing them to abandon established policies and undermining their efforts to promote development. It was therefore crucial that States should find effective ways to combat illegal migration, human trafficking and other related crimes. Saudi Arabia deeply appreciated the efforts of the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to address issues related to migration, including the repatriation of migrants to their home countries, and, in 2014, had provided \$1 million to UNHCR to support its vital humanitarian work.

15. **Mr. Hajilari** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, as macroeconomic policies had failed to generate a robust, sustained and balanced global recovery from the financial crisis, boosting growth and reducing external vulnerabilities remained challenging in developing countries. More effective international policy coordination was necessary, but economic policies must be tailored to the specific circumstances of States.

16. Culture provided a source of identity, innovation and creativity, contributed to social inclusion and the eradication of poverty and was both an enabler and a driver of sustainable development. It should therefore pervade the implementation of development goals and be seen for its inherent uniqueness and diversity. No single culture should dominate the integration of culture into policies; instead, the observation of cultural sensitivities should be part of any such process.

17. Cultural and human perspectives should be included alongside economic, social and environmental factors in the assessment of the effects of international migration on sustainable development. Since it was a basic human and cultural right for migrants to maintain relations with their countries of origin, the limitation of contact between the two should be avoided.

18. For the benefit of all countries and not any specific group of countries alone, the international community must jointly establish a fair, transparent and better-coordinated system and sound development goals which could be subsequently adapted to the particularities of individual States. The United Nations was the only global body that was capable of fulfilling that task.

19. **Ms. Ünal** (Turkey) said that, as Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development until the end of December 2015, Turkey would spare no effort to strengthen the role of the Forum, which remained the largest organization of its kind for State-led, multi-stakeholder discussion and cooperation on migration and development. The 230 million international migrants across the world made positive contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of their host countries, and if they had guaranteed rights, were able to work productively and were well integrated in the countries in which they lived, they would benefit the development of their countries of

origin and destination and the well-being of their families and communities.

20. The Turkish chairmanship would implement its workplan under a theme that recognized the importance of partnerships and the involvement of many stakeholders for the effective management of international migration. It would also emphasize how human mobility could be a positive factor for development. The chairmanship would seek to highlight partnerships that ensured respect for migrants' rights and that reduced the human and financial costs of migration, and it would explore how migration impacted public policies. In particular, it aimed to examine how to make migration work beyond the post-2015 process. It would also seek to introduce the results of the Forum's deliberations into other regional and international agenda-setting processes and support the inclusion of migration among the sustainable development goals.

21. The debate on migration must address climate change and consider ways of combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Discrimination against migrants, in all its forms, had to be fought with all available legal means, since the potential that migration could offer would be unleashed only in a climate of tolerance.

22. **Mr. Seksenbay** (Kazakhstan) said that his country, which was predominantly a destination country for migrants, had introduced legislation that established the basic rules and regulations for immigrants, ensured the rights and interests of foreign workers and included provisions on residency and employment quotas. To make investment in the country more appealing, the procedure for employing foreign labour had been simplified for a number of organizations, including those that were participating in priority projects.

23. States in Central Asia and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) worked together to establish joint policies on migration. Information, data and trends pertaining to migration were discussed and shared by the heads of national migration authorities in CIS, and a CIS convention on the legal status of migrant workers and members of their families had been adopted. Efforts were being made to establish a common migration space for the member States of CIS and to create and implement an intergovernmental policy on migration management in the region.

Kazakhstan intended to take further steps to strengthen migration institutions and mechanisms to achieve social and economic stability in the region. Accordingly, issues of labour mobility were taken into account by the customs union and the common economic space in the region.

24. **Mr. Lasso Mendoza** (Ecuador) said that migrants were global political and economic actors and transnational citizens driving human development. As such, migration should be at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda. His country advocated a universal citizenship whereby countries of origin and destination guaranteed people's right to mobility and residence. The post-2015 agenda should take decent work for migrants into account, and migrants should have access to education and health care. In other words, they should be able to aspire to citizenship with the same rights and duties as native-born persons.

25. It was often maintained that migrants competed for jobs with workers in destination countries and were a burden on the public and social services of host states, while threatening social cohesion owing to their alien customs and traditions. That approach did not reflect the contribution of migrants to capital accumulation in recipient countries' economies. The main contribution made by migrants was to host countries, not to their countries of origin. Regular high-level dialogue was needed to improve the international attitude to migrants. A convention on migration and development, incorporating a rights-based approach, would mainstream migration fully into the United Nations system.

26. **Ms. Grobelaar** (South Africa) said that her country was intensifying its efforts to address migration issues and, particularly at a regional level, to build cooperation and common standards that were critical for the management of migration. The principles that guided the migration policies of South Africa derived from its Constitution. South Africa was therefore committed to the protection of migrants' human rights and their access to a broad range of social services and opportunities. At the same time, national interests had to be safeguarded along with commitments to international conventions and treaties.

27. Migration should be recognized as a potential tool for development. Through national, regional and international partnerships, it was possible for migrants to effectively contribute to their countries of origin,

transit and destination. For instance, a system of regulated and well-managed migration could help achieve national development goals, while the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could not be achieved when a critical sector of society, namely migrants, was ignored.

28. To strengthen the debate on migration and development, South Africa supported the idea of multilateralism, as expressed by the African Group, and the enhancement of existing partnerships and commitments. It appreciated the work performed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on behalf of migrants and believed that it was time to consider the question of the strategic relationship of IOM with the United Nations system.

29. **Archbishop Auza** (Observer for the Holy See) said that globalization must benefit everyone in the post-2015 development agenda. Enhanced multilateralism was necessary to achieve that goal and to manage the challenges that globalization presented. When it brought people together as unequal partners, globalization bred inequality, marginalization, exploitation and injustice. It could work for good or ill depending on the ethic and policies that drove it.

30. While culture could produce measurable economic returns, it provided numerous intangible benefits in the form of mutual understanding, social inclusiveness and the preservation of heritage and tradition. It should therefore not be reduced to the logic of market exchange. Culture was not meant to be privatized but shared, and it could facilitate dialogue because it spoke to a common humanity.

31. Migration could be managed effectively only if there was systematic cooperation between States and international organizations. The problems it raised affected everyone, but the cases of human trafficking and contemporary forms of slavery were particularly troubling. Even though migration was a complex matter, particularly with regard to its legal aspects, the human face of migration must always be considered.

32. **Ms. Stewart** (International Labour Organization (ILO)), speaking on behalf of her organization in its capacity as Chair of the Global Migration Group, said that people had to be central to sustainable development and that the root causes of migratory movements motivated by necessity or coercion rather than choice had to be addressed. She welcomed the targets and indicators on migrants and migration that

had been proposed by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and noted that the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2015 would be an opportunity to highlight the contribution to development of migration, diasporas and remittances.

33. In response to the call to mainstream migration into national development plans, the Global Migration Group had decided to develop guidance on migration for United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other national development planning exercises. It was also working to collect and share examples of good practice in areas such as the protection of international migrants' rights and the promotion of inclusive cities and societies.

34. In October 2014, the group had held a technical workshop on migration and post-2015 development, which had concluded that social dialogue could play an important role in improving sustainable development outcomes for all countries and migrants. The development of new and innovative mechanisms to better connect migrant remittances and savings and their potential contribution to sustainable development was also noted along with the key role that city and local governments played in the reduction of inequality and in promoting the social and economic inclusion of all migrants.

35. Speaking as representative of the ILO, she noted that the International Labour Conference, at its 103rd session, had called on ILO constituents to work towards setting an agenda on fair migration. The effective implementation of that agenda was key to making migration an option and not an obligation and would enhance the contribution of labour migration to sustainable development.

36. **Ms. Klein Solomon** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)), associating her delegation with the statement made by ILO on behalf of the Global Migration Group, said that, since the second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, there had been growing interest in migration, its link to sustainable development and the need to protect migrants' human rights. Challenges remained rife, however, as demonstrated in a recent IOM report that indicated that at least 40,000 migrants had lost their lives since 2000 while attempting to cross international borders.

37. The Secretary-General's eight-point agenda for action (included in his report on international migration and development (A/68/190)) was a priority for IOM, which was carrying out work in each of the key areas that had been identified for action in the agenda.

38. One matter, the integration of migration into the development agenda, was particularly relevant given the critical stage the discussions on that agenda had reached. For the agenda to be truly transformative, the potential gains from migration had to be facilitated through robust and practical recommendations on well-managed migration and human mobility. To be truly inclusive, it must incorporate measures to ensure the protection of migrants' rights.

39. In discussions on the agenda, IOM had consistently called for action in three key areas: firstly, the promotion of mobility partnerships and a migration target to facilitate migration and mobility alongside other cross-border development enablers such as finance and trade; secondly, the protection of the human rights of all migrants using targets, indicators and disaggregated data to support an approach that ensured access by migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons to their social and economic rights; and, thirdly, the reduction of forced migration and its consequences through the inclusion of a target that addressed the rights and needs of forcibly displaced persons and the fact that displacement due to conflict or disaster was a universal and developmental challenge that had profound political, economic, environmental and security implications.

40. If the post-2015 development agenda could set clear targets and mobilize global action, migration could tangibly enhance the development outcomes of migration for migrants, their families and their countries of origin and destination.

*The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.*