

The International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP)

Statement prepared for the Fifth Coordination meeting on International Migration, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York, November 20-21, 2006¹

The United Nations' High-Level Dialogue on International Migration concluded in September 2006 with member states calling for continued international dialogue to identify how international migration could be better managed to “enhance the benefits of international migration and minimize its negative impacts.”² To achieve this goal in the years ahead, member states decided to set up a Global Forum to discuss international migration and development relationships and to promote coordination within the United Nations system, and with the IOM and other international organizations working on international migration issues. The IUSSP will contribute to this dialogue through its new initiative on “International Migration and Co-Development” by developing new knowledge, data and policy recommendations that will be useful for policymakers in origin and receiving countries concerned about their international migration trends and impacts.

In background proceedings for the United Nations High-Level Dialogue and in a number of other activities carried out in recent years by several international, regional and national organizations, the argument has been advanced that international migration can be mutually beneficial to both sending and receiving countries. The Secretary-General reported to the General Assembly that “There is an emerging consensus that countries can cooperate to create triple wins, for migrants, for their countries of origin and for the societies that receive them (p. 5).”³ In October 2005 the Global Commission on International Migration released its report entitled *Migration in an Interconnected World* in which it concluded that migration could benefit both sending and receiving countries if countries took steps to develop “comprehensive, coherent and effective migration policies (p. 3).”⁴ While there is room for optimism regarding the positive impacts of international migrations on sending and receiving countries, the empirical and theoretical basis for these contentions is weak. For instance, in a 2005 forum organized by the Center for Migration Studies, several scholars argued that there are winners and losers in international migration flows and expressed skepticism that flows could be coherently and effectively managed by governments.⁵

¹ Mary M. Kritz, Cornell University, prepared this Statement in her capacity as ex-Secretary-General and Treasurer of the IUSSP, 2002-2005.

² Background paper for the United Nations Fifth Coordination Meeting on International Migration, New York, 20-21 November 2006, [The High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and Beyond](http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/fifthcoord2006/Highlevel_Dialogue_and_Beyond.pdf). Online at http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/fifthcoord2006/Highlevel_Dialogue_and_Beyond.pdf.

³ United Nations General Assembly, International Migration and Development. Report of the Secretary-General, 18 May 2006 (A/60/871) http://www.un.org/esa/population/hldmigration/Text/Report%20of%20the%20SG%28June%2006%29_English.pdf

⁴ [Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action](#), Report of the Global Commission on International Migration, 2005, available online at <http://www.gcim.org/en/>.

⁵ Joseph Chamie and Mary G. Powers, Editors, [International Migration and the Global Community: A Forum on the](#)

The IUSSP will contribute to future discussions about the impacts of international migration on sending and receiving countries by producing empirical data and analyses that identify how the types, scale and composition of population movements between countries are changing. Several questions will be examined by the IUSSP in the years ahead, including why international migration flows are changing? How the types and scales of international migration flows are linked to globalization forces that tie the economies of developed and less developed countries closely together and that reduce travel and communication costs between them? What role do social and institutional networks play in facilitating migration and furthering Diaspora exchanges? Why and how the skill composition of migrants has changed and what are the implications of “flight capital” for sending countries? Whether concepts regarding who belongs to the national population need reconsideration and how measurement of national population membership, Diasporas, and residency could be improved as the composition and usual residence of national populations become more fluid and undergo regular change? Which policy measures have been effective in sending and receiving countries for maximizing the positive effects of international migration and minimizing its negative outcomes? And whether there are other promising policy measures that countries should consider?

As the international professional association of demographers, the IUSSP is well positioned to carry forward this agenda. The IUSSP has a membership of 2,100 members in 140 countries and works to develop scientific knowledge and data on demographic trends and their relationships to economic and social development and human welfare. The IUSSP does not have a political agenda but does seek to improve policy discussions by developing empirical data and analyses that will advance understanding of how policy measures and development contexts shape demographic outcomes. While many IUSSP members have served in policy-making positions in their homelands, when they participate in IUSSP activities they do so as professionals seeking to improve understanding of complex relationships. In addition, the IUSSP has a long history of working as a neutral expert body and is widely respected by demographic and development experts throughout the world.

Since the 1970s, the IUSSP has worked to advance understanding of international migration. Because of the poor quality of data on international migration compared to other demographic processes, the IUSSP has paid close attention to measurement and data gathering practices that would lead to improvements in the quality of data on international migration. In 1978, the IUSSP set up a Working Group on Methodology for the Study of International Migration that examined the quality of data on international migration flows and concluded that it was essential for countries to include a place-of-birth question in their national population censuses. That Working Group also recommended alternative methodologies for estimating emigration based on questions that could be included in population censuses or household surveys.⁶ These efforts contributed to efforts made by the United Nations Statistical Office to encourage countries to add a place-of-birth question to their national censuses.

Report of the Global Commission on International Migration. New York, Center for Migration Studies. 2006.

⁶ Measurement of Emigration Using Indirect Techniques - Manuel for the Collection and Analysis of Data on Residence of Relatives, Basia Zaba, Ordina Editions, 1986. (Also available in Spanish and French)

In the 1980s the IUSSP carried out an in depth review of international migration in different world regions which concluded that international migration is not a random process that stems from differentials between countries in economic development and population growth but is closely linked to other ties between countries. The IUSSP reported that distinctive international migration systems had evolved in different world regions between countries linked by historical ties, cultural affinities, transportation networks, and geographic proximity and that these systems were sustained by migrant social networks and macro institutional linkages.⁷ Subsequent IUSSP work on international migration refined theoretical and empirical understanding of international migration determinants by examining how economic, social and political forces promote migration flows.⁸ That IUSSP review concluded that economically motivated emigration is more likely to occur in countries that have already reached a certain level of development and are advancing economically, rather than in countries that are low on the development scale and experiencing stagnation.⁹ This pattern occurs because the development process itself is destabilizing and, over the short run, increases rather than decreases emigration pressures. Furthermore, free trade and investment flows can accelerate economic growth among trading partners, leading to alterations in relative prices, wages, incomes, and job opportunities. If migration networks already link groups of persons adversely affected by development changes to compatriots living in another country, increased out-migration is likely to result.

In 2006, The IUSSP installed a new IUSSP Council headed by John Cleland (United Kingdom). One of the Council's first decisions was to launch a new scientific initiative on international migration. A major component of that initiative will be to examine trends in South-to-North migration and take a hard look at the complex interrelationships between migrations on the one hand and economic development and social change on the other. The South to North review will be directed by Graeme Hugo (Australia) and draw on the expertise of international migration experts from different world regions. Preliminary plans have been set to organize three substantive and policy meetings to consider international migration and co-development linkages in order to identify policy measures to enhance the positive effects of migration and ameliorate its negative effects.

The first IUSSP activity carried out by the new Panel will be a "Workshop on New Definitions of 'National Populations' in a Globalising World" in 2007. In today's globalising world characterized by increasing transnationalism, international population movements, and multiple national identities, the standard single definition of national population is usually based

⁷ International Migration Systems: A Global Approach, edited by Mary M. Kritz, Hania Zlotnik and Lin Lean Lim, IUSSP/OUP Series on International Studies in Population, Oxford University Press, 1992.

⁸ Worlds in Motion: Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium, edited by Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J. Edward Taylor, IUSSP/OUP Series on International Studies in Population, Oxford University Press, 1998.

⁹ International Migration: Prospects and Policies, edited by J. Edward Taylor and Douglas S. Massey, IUSSP/OUP Series on International Studies in Population, Oxford University Press, 2004.

on a count of the number of people residing within national boundaries on the night of a census enumeration. Increasing long-term and short-term population movements between countries and growing immigrant and Diaspora populations in a number of countries have led some population experts to argue that demographers need a new conceptualization of national population membership. One idea suggested is to develop and collect data on different conceptualizations of national populations that could be used for different population size estimates. Rethinking of national population membership is needed given that many countries have growing Diasporas, defined as persons born in a given country who reside on a long term or permanent basis elsewhere but retain close links with their homeland. The IUSSP will explore methods for using censuses to assemble counts of Diaspora population from a particular emigration country. To carry forward that agenda, the IUSSP will draw on its earlier work carried out in the 1970s which recommended using "place of birth" questions and "relatives living elsewhere" in national population censuses as a means for improving data on international migrants.¹⁰

Another component of the South-to-North Review will be to seek funding to hold a "Seminar on Emerging Dynamics of South-North Migration" in 2008. There is a lack of understanding of the precise nature of South-North migration that is an important barrier to the development of effective policy measures that would maximize the positive economic and social benefits of emigration. This Seminar will address that issue by examining the shifting scale, patterning and composition of international population movements. The changing role of permanent and circular forms of migration and transitions between permanent settlement and temporary movements will also be examined. The nexus between student migration and permanent settlement is one important example of transition in migration form. The second major component of the Seminar will analyze the causes of new forms of South-North migration. This exercise will involve analyses at a number of levels and go beyond the "Ds" of difference (demography, development and democracy) in order to understand how macro level factors shape migration trends. The operation of forces at community, family and individual levels will also be investigated, particularly the role of migrant networks and Diaspora populations in sustaining migrations. The gender dimension of migration will be examined in depth. The final element in the investigation will be the changing role of policy in shaping the nature of migration.

The third component of the South-to-North Review will be to organize a "Seminar on Policies to Facilitate the Role of Migration as a Positive Influence in Development of Origin Areas" in 2009. This Seminar will focus on how emigration can facilitate economic and social development in the South and be based on detailed case studies of contexts where migration has had positive impacts, including from a range of African, Asian and Latin American countries. That Seminar would also examine mechanisms that lead to positive emigration impacts,

¹⁰ Measurement of Emigration Using Indirect Techniques - Manuel for the Collection and Analysis of Data on Residence of Relatives, Basia Zaba, Ordina Editions, 1986. (Also available in Spanish and French). Also of interest is a collection of articles edited by Hania Zlotnik, Measuring International Migration: Theory and Practice, International Migration Review, vol. 21, 1987. This collection of articles was generated by a collaboration between two IUSSP scientific committees – The Committee on International Migration and the Committee on Data Collection and Processing in LDCs – and presented at a Workshop entitled "International Migration Statistics: Their Problems and Use" that took place in Ottawa, Canada, in November 1987 with support from Statistics Canada and the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

including financial remittances, social remittances, trade, return of permanent migrants, and retirement migration, as well as others. Contexts where emigration has had negative effects on development and wellbeing in origin areas will also be examined. Special attention will be given to the effects of the loss of highly skilled human capital and health and education personnel. The case studies will be conducted at different levels of analysis, including national, regional, community, household and individual. The second part of the Seminar will draw out the lessons from these studies for developing effective policy in both origin and destination areas that facilitate positive impacts and prevent or ameliorate negative consequences. Regional reports prepared for the meeting will identify promising experiences in different regions. The IUSSP organizers will then have the task of drawing out a set of general guidelines for the formulation of more “development friendly” migration policies in both origin and destination countries.

In addition to developing the initiative on South-to-North migration, the IUSSP is seeking funding that would allow it to examine the linkages between international migration and other trends. One activity being planned is to examine the integration of immigrants and second-generation descendants of immigrants in receiving countries. Countries receiving large numbers of immigrants differ considerably in their approaches to immigration, citizenship, and integration. Whereas some countries encourage immigrants to stay and give them the opportunity to become citizens within a few years of arrival, others take more restrictive approaches and do not want immigrants to settle permanently. It is important to examine the implications of different country approaches for migrant economic and social wellbeing. The IUSSP is also exploring the feasibility of carrying out two additional studies. The first study would evaluate how out-migration affects poverty reduction in sending countries. The second study would examine the consequences of different types of migration for adolescents, particularly how it affects their job opportunities, health, and education.

The IUSSP welcomes collaboration with other international organizations in carrying out its new initiative on international migration.