

IBERO-AMERICAN GENERAL SECRETARIAT (SEGIB)

IBERO-AMERICAN FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (FIBEMYD)

Cuenca, Ecuador, 10-11 April 2008

CONVENING DOCUMENT

Background

The Heads of State and Government of the twenty-two Ibero-American countries gathered at the Salamanca Summit held in October 2005, approved the Declaration of Salamanca, which established international migrations as a central topic of the Ibero-American Community and started the path to design a coordinated agenda based on the principle that migration is a common good, part of its heritage and essential for its social development and cohesion.

Following one of the mandates of Salamanca, the Ibero-American General Secretariat, SEGIB, organised the Ibero-American Meeting on Migration and Development in Madrid in July 2006, carried out with the cooperation of ECLAC/CELADE and IOM. Its results and conclusions, gathered in *Unidos por las Migraciones* published by the SEGIB, constituted an important input for the 16th Ibero-American Summit, held in Montevideo in November 2006 with the central topic of Migration and Development.

In the aforementioned Summit, the Heads of State and Government adopted the **Commitment of Montevideo on Migration and Development**, which established a positive agenda on migration within the framework of the principles of international law regarding human rights and represents a continuing action since the Declaration of Salamanca.

According to the meaning of the migratory phenomenon and the multiple interrelations it is characterised by, this agenda covers diverse dimensions and challenges linked to the migratory governability in the context of Ibero-American development and the promotion and strengthening of human rights.

Indeed, the Commitment of Montevideo points out, amongst other, the need to: coordinate policies to organise the approach to the migratory flow; promote human rights as part of the migratory practices; promote the prevention and fight against trade in human beings and the illegal traffic of migrants; facilitate the effective integration of migrants in their destination; eradicate all forms of discrimination; pay special attention to the problems of migration in women and vulnerable groups; and promote experiences of co-development.

Recognising and emphasising each State's sovereignty in defining their migratory policies, the Commitment of Montevideo became a milestone in the

governability of the phenomenon. This governability must be sustained not only by the adhesion of the countries to the regional and international instruments regarding human rights, but also by strengthening dialogues, consensus, diplomacy and multilateral agreements and opposing unilateral actions.

To this end, the Commitment of Montevideo has decided to establish and celebrate an **Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development (FIBEMYD)** in Cuenca, Ecuador, in 2008. It will serve as "a space to exchange good practices and coordinate consensus and actions shared by the Ibero-American nations on the matter", something that represents a challenge and a substantive action to implement and continue the mandates of Salamanca and Montevideo.

Likewise, at the 17th Summit held in Santiago de Chile in November 2007, the Heads of State and Government subscribed the Declaration of Santiago and the Action Programme that contains the mandates for its implementation. Article 17 of the Declaration emphasises the importance of the Commitment of Montevideo on Migration and Development, and Paragraph 21 of the Programme of Action reads as follows: "To entrust the Forum of Cuenca, to be held during 2008, with the design of an action plan on migration that, according to the Commitment of Montevideo on Migration and Development, promotes the protection of the human rights of migrants".

The Ibero-American Forum of Cuenca will allow to consolidate a shared view about migration in Ibero-America and to make progress in the consensus on operative principles and criteria for migratory governability in an international arena with a close historical and cultural affinity such as Ibero-America. The participation of Spain and Portugal is especially important, given that the migratory relations that in the past linked the European states of the Ibero-American community to those in Latin-America have now reversed and both countries have become the destination of an important migratory flow from this region. Under these circumstances, cooperation and the systematic treatment of the Ibero-American migrations between origin, transit and destination countries constitute an essential requirement for the migratory governability.

The aforementioned objectives coincide with the guidelines of the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, organised by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and held in New York in September 2006, and of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), the first meeting of which took place in Brussels in July 2007. The latter marked the beginning of a new consulting, informal and non binding global process aimed at promoting the positive impact of migration in development through the adoption of a consistent political approach, the identification of new instruments and best practices and the establishment of cooperation links amongst the different parties involved. The next meeting of the GFMD will be held in the Philippines in 2008.

It is important to emphasise that the mandate given to the SEGIB to organise the FIBEMYD, to be held in Cuenca, Ecuador, on the 10-11 April 2008, is supported by the experience and the results achieved by Latin-American countries through the implementation of advisory bodies to coordinate migratory policies, such as the Regional Conference on Migration (CRM), the South-American Conference on Migrations (CSM) and the Specialised Migratory Forum of MERCOSUR. To fulfil such mandate, the SEGIB is carrying out the tasks linked to the preparation of the FIBEMYD with the cooperation of ECLAC/CELADE and the participation of IOM.

Cuenca, a city of the southern Andean region of Ecuador and capital of the province of Azuay, earned the honour in 1999 of being listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In addition, in April 2007 and as a celebration of the 450 anniversary of its foundation by the Spaniards, it was the venue chosen for the creation of the Ibero-American Network of World Heritage, Healthy and University Cities with the support of PAHO/WHO. The development of Cuenca and its region has been historically linked to the mobility of its population, both domestically and internationally. Since the seventies, the United States and Canada had been the first destination of this migratory flow; from the nineties, the destinations multiplied and the migration to Europe increased, especially to Spain. Today, Cuenca also receives a South-American migratory flow, mainly from Peru and, to a less extent, from Colombia.

According to the Commitment of Montevideo, the Declaration of Santiago and the Programme of Action, the content and characteristics of the FIBEMYD are next outlined.

General objective

To ensure that the FIBEMYD is the ideal arena to exchange good practices and shared actions about migration and development and to consolidate ways of cooperation that contribute to continue the implementation and the monitoring of the mandates of the Declaration of Salamanca, the Commitment of Montevideo on Migrations and Development and the Action Programme of the Declaration of Santiago.

Specific objectives

- To design an Action Plan on migration that, according to the Commitment of Montevideo, fulfils the mandate established in the 17th Santiago Summit.
- To discuss the results of the study on Migration and Development and to identify the challenges imposed to the Ibero-American area by the relations amongst migration, development and human rights.

- To analyse good practices that could be used in the Ibero-American area in order to ensure that migration is a dignified, secure and organised process.
- To consolidate different and efficient ways of coordination, cooperation and convergence amongst the FIBEMYD and the multilateral advisory bodies on migration and development.
- To promote the participation of networks of civil society organisations on migrations in the FIBEMYD.

Foreseen results

- To monitor the mandates of Salamanca and the implementation of the Commitment of Montevideo and the Declaration of Santiago, especially regarding the organisation and the establishment of the FIBEMYD and the design of its Programme of Action.
- Identification of the good migratory practices that can be used in the Ibero-American area with specific proposals for their implementation;
- Continuity and consolidation of the treatment of the topic Migration and Development in the Ibero-American Summits.
- Report on the first meeting of the FIBEMYD to be presented at the 18th Ibero-American Summit in El Salvador.

Participants

It is foreseen the participation of the following parties:

- National Coordinators;
- Other Government representatives of the states member of the Ibero-American Conference;
- Government representatives of those countries that are important destinations of Ibero-American migrants;
- Representatives of multilateral and regional bodies related to migrations, amongst others the Regional Conference on Migration (CRM or Proceso Puebla), the South-American Conference on Migration (CSM) and the Specialised Migratory Forum of MERCOSUR;
- Representatives of international organisations;
- Representatives of civil society networks involved in migration; and
- Invited experts on migration.

Structure and Programme¹

¹ Human Rights, Gender and Ethnicities will be considered in all the topics included in the programme.

It has been decided that the Forum and even the Inaugural and Closing Ceremonies will take place in plenary sessions. The programme foresees the following topics:

- **Study on Migration and Development**
- **Good practice that could be used at an Ibero-American level:**
 - o Remittances: proposals to reduce the transfer costs and programs to complement resources;
 - o Information campaigns on promoting the human rights of migrants, fighting against human trade and the illegal traffic of migrants and preventing irregular migrations;
 - o Regular temporary labor migration programs;
 - o Integration of migrants; and
 - o Links with emigrated nationals.
- **Round Table: Action Plan Design and Cooperation Modalities to implement the Commitment of Montevideo on Migration and Development**
- **Conclusion**