



**NOTE ON THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION:  
A BELGIAN PERSPECTIVE**  
Romeo MATSAS  
IRRI-KIIB

*On June 12, 2006, the Royal Institute for International Relations (IRRI-KIIB), in partnership with the Belgian Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs, organised an expert seminar on the global governance of international migration<sup>1</sup>. This event brought together Belgian and international experts from governmental agencies, international organisations, universities, ngo's, the private sector, and migrant communities with the purpose of discussing the elements of a possible Belgian position on improved management of international migration in the perspective of the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development of September 2006. The present note is based on this seminar's proceedings but also draws on other sources. Its content is not necessarily attributable to the experts having participated in the seminar nor does it involve any endorsement from the Belgian authorities.*

### **Introduction**

International migration is a complex phenomenon combining social, human, political and economic aspects. It is also an ineluctable phenomenon, the development of which is closely linked to the progress of globalisation; its effects are felt across the world in a wide range of policy areas. However, today the governance of migration is fragmented and incomplete; the political framework is one of variable geometry according to the issues or the countries concerned.

International migration is also a global issue that sets a double governance challenge. First, by touching upon different policy areas (employment, aid, integration, trade, security, etc...) it requires coordination between various policy sectors, which may fall under the – sometimes overlapping – jurisdiction of different levels of governance (from the municipality to the regional, national, and international level). Second, by impacting nearly on all countries worldwide, migration also requires a global governance response. In 2004, the Royal Institute defined global governance as “enhancing the coherence, effectiveness and legitimacy” of the existing multilateral institutions, and filling the gaps in the regulatory framework when needed<sup>2</sup>. On the specific issue of migration, it suggested that “only by a joint effort can we tackle the challenges posed by international migration and the flows of millions of people everywhere in the world” and that “friction, fear and mismanagement are in large part also generated by a lack of actionable information on the overall trends, scale and implications of these movements of people.”

This note will focus on the global governance of international migration from a Belgian perspective. After a brief presentation of the challenges migration sets for Belgium, it will tackle the two issues of institutional coordination at the international level and of domestic coherence of policies. Prior to this analysis, it will quickly present the context in which this expert seminar took place.

---

<sup>1</sup> See proceedings online : [www.irri-kiib.be](http://www.irri-kiib.be)

<sup>2</sup> Royal Institute for International Relations, “Global Governance, The Next Frontier”, Egmont Papers, Nr. 2, Academia Press, Brussels, 2004. Report accessible on line at <http://www.irri-kiib.be/paperegm/ep2.U561.pdf>

## 1. Context

The “Global Governance of International Migration: A Belgian Perspective” expert seminar was held in Brussels on 12 June 2006, at a time when the international community was invited by the UN Secretary General to react on his report preparing the High Level Dialogue (see below). Prior to this expert seminar, the Belgian government hosted two major events respectively addressing, first, the management of international migration at the broader European level and with respect to the major European policies such as political cooperation, the Lisbon agenda, and security (January 2006, in partnership with the IOM) and, second, the ‘migration and development’ nexus (March 2006, in partnership with the IOM, the World Bank and the European Commission).

### *Migration as a Global Issue (1990s)*

Even if the 1995 “Our Global Neighbourhood” Report still stated that “migration (...) is one area where policy is overwhelmingly unilateral”<sup>3</sup>, it is now broadly accepted that the UN International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 was key in turning migration from a domestic into an international issue<sup>4</sup>. In parallel, as economic and social interdependence increased at the global level throughout the 1990s, migration started to be perceived differently; management at the international level became more and more needed.

As a matter of fact, as the UN Secretary General’s report on international migration reminds us (see below), migration has tremendously changed during the last decades, as labour markets and society became more global and as a result of the revolution in transport and communication : “*Just a quarter of a century ago, going abroad in pursuit of opportunity, or in flight from conflict, meant a wrenching, long-term separation. Contact with home was, at best, a precious five-minute phone call every month, perhaps a visit every few years, and a cherished newspaper that arrived weeks late.*” (§14) In parallel, new phenomena are taking place such as the rise of “South/South ” migration; the increase in highly skilled and female migrants and the impact of migrants’ remittances and transnational communities.

Research also started to perceive migration differently. In his book *High Noon* e.g. former World Bank Vice-President for Europe Jean-François Rischard listed ‘migration rule’ as part of the 20 global issues to be settled in the next decades<sup>5</sup>. Other internationally renowned authors, from Samuel Huntington to Amartya Sen or even novelist Amin Maalouf, have dealt with these issues of migration and mixed identities and communities.

Today, the dialogue on migration within the United Nations focuses on the positive aspects of migration for development more than on security concerns, with a clear willingness to stress its positive impact on the world economy and to avoid its criminalization.

---

<sup>3</sup> *Our Global Neighbourhood*, Report of the Commission on Global Governance, Oxford University Press, 1995, chapter 4

<sup>4</sup> Chapter X of the Cairo Programme of Action already called for an “orderly international migration [that] can have positive impacts on both the communities of origin and the communities of destination” and mentioned issues such as remittances, temporary migration, transfer of knowledge, skills and technology, transferability of pensions and other work benefits as fields of international actions, urging governments “to adopt transparent international migration policies and programmes to manage those flows”. It further recommended that governments “support the gathering of data on flows and stocks of international migrants, factors causing migration, and the monitoring of international migration” and support the international organizations with mandates in the area of migration.

<sup>5</sup> Rischard J.F., *High Noon, 20 Global Issues and 20 Years To Solve Them*, Perseus Press, Great Britain, 2002, page 146.

### *The GCIM Report<sup>6</sup> (2005)*

Launched in 2003, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) released its report in 2005. This report presented 33 recommendations for better managing migration “in an interconnected world” and was based on six “principles for action”: i) migrating out of choice, rather than necessity; ii) reinforcing the economic and developmental impact of migration ; iii) addressing irregular migration ; iv) strengthening social cohesion through integration ; v) protecting the rights of migrants ; and vi) enhancing the governance of international migration through coherence, capacity and cooperation.

On the last issue, the report stressed that policy coherence at the domestic level and the “whole of government” approach are a precondition for increased coordination at the international level. More specifically, it stated that the governance of international migration involves four challenges: i) policy coherence at the state level; ii) coordination of policy-making and implementation; iii) strengthening capacity; and, iv) further cooperation among states.

The GCIM report therefore supported a multilevel governance model for international migration (starting from the State level, through bilateral and regional initiatives such as the Barcelona Process, the OSCE and the EU, to the global level). At the global level, it stressed the need for coordinating the various initiatives undertaken by international actors, in order to bring together their proposals and recommendations and avoid overlap.

Various alternative solutions were therefore proposed, from creating a new agency, to merging IOM and UNHCR and bring the IOM into the UN system, to creating a global agency for economic migration, etc... As a first step, the GCIM nevertheless proposed the creation of an Interagency Global Migration Facility with the objective of linking the activities of the various international organisations working in this field. This facility could notably help in data collection, policy analysis and planning, facilitate consultation, serve as a funding framework, and enhance the development impact of migration (remittances, capacity building etc.).

### *The Report of the UN Secretary General on International Migration and Development (2006)*

In 2004, the UN General Assembly decided to organise a High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Migration and Development to be held in September 2006. In this perspective, the UN Secretary General released a “Report on International Migration and Development”<sup>7</sup> (hereafter the UNSG Report) in May 2006.

Focusing mostly on the economic gains resulting from migration, this report presents migration as “an ideal means of promoting co-development, that is, the coordinated or concerted improvement of economic conditions in both areas of origin and areas of destination based on the complementarities between them”.

With its main focus on the economic situation of the countries of origin, the report reminds us that “poverty does not lead automatically to higher migration. The poorest people generally do not have the resources to bear the costs and risks of international migration. International migrants are usually drawn from middle-income households.” (§53) It therefore promotes a more development-friendly approach of migration to be undertaken at the international level but also at the host countries’ domestic level such as integration policies, family reunification, portability of pension rights and regularisation of irregular migrants. On the other hand, the economic impact on host countries is also analysed, asserting that migrants are often complementary to native workers, performing tasks that would not get done by them, while only competing with low-skilled native workers and former migrant groups. It further states that

<sup>6</sup> Global Commission on International Migration, *Migration in an Interconnected World : New Directions for Actions*, Switzerland, 2005, 88 pp.

<sup>7</sup> International Migration and Development, Report of the Secretary General, A/60/871. The UNSG was assisted by his Special Representative, Peter Sutherland, former European Commissioner and Director General of the GATT and the WTO.

“migrants are often employed in sectors where wages are low or declining because of competition from low-wage countries. Thus migrants effectively slow down the decline of these sectors” (§108).

Concerning the global governance of international migration, the report first stresses that States “now share a core set of migration-related goals that include: enhancing the development impact of international migration; ensuring that migration occurs through legal channels; ensuring the protection of the rights of migrants; preventing the exploitation of migrants, especially those in vulnerable situations; and combating the crimes of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons” (§71)<sup>8</sup>. It promotes strategies of “co-development” and calls for a better integration of migration in poverty reduction and development strategies, including leveraging the impact of remittances on development (§189). On the institutional framework, finally, the report proposes: enhancing the role of the Global Migration Group,<sup>9</sup> and establishing a consultative Forum led by Member States and supported by the UN which would offer a venue to discuss international migration, share national experiences and engage “with relevant stakeholders (...) including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), experts and migrant organizations.” This Forum would not aim at negotiating outcomes or work under strict rules of procedure, but would maintain momentum and would complement existing partnerships. The details of its institutional aspects are currently under discussion, notably whether it will be supported by a Board and a small Bureau, as well as its link with the UN system.

## 2. The Expert Seminar of 12 June

As globalisation continues, migration will increase. As long as at the global level 20% of the population will receive 80% of the income, disparities will drive people to move abroad. At the same time, revolutions in communication and transport will facilitate these movements, and the demographic and social needs of the richest countries will act as pull factors.

International initiatives on migration are multiplying at the international level (UN High Level Dialogue, EU/ Africa Rabat conference, GCIM Report, ad hoc groups, and programmes of international organisations) and sometimes create coordination challenges for actors with overlapping mandates. At the domestic level, it is more and more understood that the security aspect alone is not sufficient for approaching migration, but that migration has linkages with other policy areas such as external relations, development, trade, labour and employment, social affairs, education etc. The pressures of international migration require a coherent approach in all relevant policy fields.

---

<sup>8</sup> Interestingly enough the report also lists the international normative framework on international migration, made up of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. It also refers in this perspective to the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, the 1951 Geneva Convention; the ILO Conventions (97 and 143), and the discussion around the GATS Mode IV.

<sup>9</sup> The Geneva-based Global Migration Group brings together the heads of ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNCTAD, UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC (the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) and the World Bank.

### *The Impact of International Migration on Belgium.*

According to the United Nations, there were 191 million international migrants in 2005<sup>10</sup> (i.e. 3% of the world population). A majority of them (115 million) lived in developed countries, while about one third had moved from one developing country to another<sup>11</sup>. In Belgium, there were 1.004.071 foreigners officially registered as of April 2006, mainly originating from EU countries (in decreasing order: Italy, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Portugal and the UK) while Morocco (81322), Turkey (42666) and the DR Congo (20994) were the main non-EU countries of origin.<sup>12</sup>

The world population grows by approximately 90 to 100 million people a year, mainly in developing countries' urban areas, where job creation is not sufficient to absorb this new workforce<sup>13</sup>. People consequently go abroad to find jobs, not only to 'Northern' but also to other 'Southern' countries (such as the Gulf States), and assist their relatives back home through remittances (which amounts to 20% of export earnings in Turkey, and 40 % in Morocco). There is thus a demographic pressure at the global level while, as the UN Replacement Migration Report<sup>14</sup> of 2000 showed, there is also a demand for migration in the developed countries in order to fill the gaps in their labour market.

Even though one can question the relevance of migration as a solution for developmental disparities as well as the viability and sustainability of this 'replacement' solution, analyses<sup>15</sup> support the view that temporary migration can fill gaps in the job market in developed countries'. These changes must therefore be associated with reforms enabling national economies and societies to accommodate this inflow, while taking also into account the social tensions possibly resulting from increased migration. The central issue is how to accommodate the type of migration and migrants that correspond best to the perceived needs and requirements, whether they are high or low-skilled, permanent or temporary.

At the same time, analysis shows that new immigrants compete with older groups of migrants. In Belgium these are mostly represented in industrial sectors very sensitive to economic changes. If we look at the unemployment figures e.g., while 8% of the Belgian population is unemployed, this figure reaches 27 and 29% respectively for the Moroccan and Turkish immigrants. It should nevertheless be mentioned that the influx of migrants has a far more limited impact on national economies than other structural changes (e.g. the baby boom).

Beyond this economic impact, immigration exerts an important influence on social cohesion, which stresses the need for a better coordination of migration and integration policies. Successful integration requires coherent integration policies that help migrants to blend with the host societies. This must be

<sup>10</sup> Sources: Global Commission on International Migration, *op.cit.*, and Report of the Secretary General, *op.cit.*. Figures on migrants are to be handled carefully. According to the UNSG Report (footnote 1): "Population censuses, which usually record the country of birth of the persons they count, provide the basic information leading to these estimates. Foreign-born persons are migrants because they must have moved at least once from the country of birth to the country where they live. But the foreign-born need not be foreigners. Foreign-born persons may be citizens at birth by, for instance, being the children of citizens of the country where they live, or they may be naturalized citizens." This does not take into account naturalization, mixed origin etc.

<sup>11</sup> In 2000, the most important host countries were the United States, Russia, Germany, Ukraine and India, while the most important sending countries were China, India and the Philippines.

<sup>12</sup> Source : [http://www.dofi.fgov.be/fr/statistieken/statistiques\\_etrangers/Stat\\_ETRANGERS.htm](http://www.dofi.fgov.be/fr/statistieken/statistiques_etrangers/Stat_ETRANGERS.htm) This number of foreigners actually gives an inaccurate view of the diversity in the Belgian population resulting from migration, since e.g. a lot of Moroccan and Turkish migrants have opted for the Belgian nationality and are not listed as 'foreigners'.

<sup>13</sup> According to Professor Wets, who participated in the expert seminar, with a world working force estimated at 3.6 billion people in 2025, 38 to 40 million new jobs will be needed every year. See his presentation at the expert seminar on [www.irri-kiib.be](http://www.irri-kiib.be).

<sup>14</sup> Released in 2000, this report showed that many Western countries and Japan should organise new types of migration in order to maintain certain balances on the labour market in reply to the decline and ageing of the population.

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/migration/execsum.htm>

<sup>15</sup> According to Professor Wets, also, to keep the Belgian active population at the same level in 2040, 15.000 migrants per annum are needed, but it is difficult to foresee what will be the needs of the labour market in the next future (e.g. more nurses may be needed as the population will get older). On the Belgian situation, see also Van De Cloot Ivan, *L'immigration entraîne-t-elle un gain économique?*, ING, Bulletin financier, novembre – décembre 2004 and Van De Cloot Ivan, *Immigration en Europe, l'impact sur l'économie belge*, ING [http://www.ing.be/xpedio/groups/ingbe/@public/@bbl/@secr\\_gen\\_et\\_comm/@economic\\_info/documents/other/144942\\_fr.pdf](http://www.ing.be/xpedio/groups/ingbe/@public/@bbl/@secr_gen_et_comm/@economic_info/documents/other/144942_fr.pdf)

accompanied by punctual projects enabling migrants to integrate into their new societies and strengthening the professionalism of their organisations, which can help authorities make integration more effective. But integration is a ‘two way process’, which also requires from host societies as a whole to rethink ways of living together in diversity, and consequently leads various stakeholders to define their own migration and integration policies (the private sector, the authorities, etc...).

Finally, the situation of irregular migration is of particular relevance, since it has an important impact on the economic and labour market and is also perhaps the most striking element for the public opinion. It is estimated that 2.5 to 4 million migrants cross international borders without authorization each year. According to Professor Wets, these irregular flows are often considered to be the “grease” that keeps developed economies growing, and it is often said that consumers create the market where irregular migrants find their job. Some estimates show that around 30% of those who are caught by police forces could not be sent back to the country of origin. It should nevertheless be noted that a person as such per definition cannot be illegal, but that this status results from government policy<sup>16</sup>. Being illegal further does not deprive undocumented migrants to benefit from basic (human) and other rights in the host country. In Belgium e.g. they enjoy education and emergency healthcare.

### *Institutional Coordination at the International Level*

Is migration out of control? This question may arise when one analyses the complex phenomenon of international migration, the management of which concerns several policy domains and impacts on nearly all states. International migration therefore sets a double governance challenge requiring more institutional coordination at the international level and more policy coherence at the domestic level.

States have only recently – after the aforementioned Cairo Conference of 1994<sup>17</sup> – acknowledged that migration requires coordination at the international level and is not a phenomenon taking place across very strong national boundaries. Quite the contrary, as former Executive Director of the GCIM Dr. Rolf Jenny mentioned during his intervention at the June 12 expert seminar, today migration is taking place in the “global village” and countries face the same challenges across the world (see e.g. Japan and the EU with regard to integration). States consequently need to know what their neighbours are doing.

Several considerations tend to make clear that the global governance of international migration should be multilevel, starting from the state level, through regional processes, to the global level.

As a matter of fact, if it is now widely accepted that international migration simply can not be managed at the state level. Many governments have also experienced that discussing migration in global venues such as the UN is difficult, due to conflicting expectations and interests. Consequently they have turned to regional consultative processes in order to manage international migration. A specific example is the longstanding partnership on migration between the European Commission and African countries. This partnership takes place at various levels. At the “bilateral” level (Commission – country of origin or transit), several projects have been launched on fighting irregular flows, strengthening links on remittances, the role of diasporas etc. At the sub-regional level, dialogue has been established with

<sup>16</sup> In this respect, one has to keep in mind that even if today it is hard to make a distinction between politically and economically driven migration the concept of “economic refugee” is not internationally recognized, since the term of refugee can only be applied to those qualifying under the Geneva convention.

<sup>17</sup> If the 1994 Cairo Program of Action, being the first of its kind, suffered of a lack of implementation, the fact that the High Level Dialogue of September 2006 will also be the first opportunity for States to gather on migration and development at the high level also raises concern about its possible outcomes. Another international gathering that suffered of a limited outcome is the one that led to the 1990 *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*, the ratification rate of which is limited to 34 mostly sending countries. It is often considered that most of the principles included in this convention are actually granted within the EU, even if none of the EU Member States is part of it due to some of the principles the convention integrates (such as the recognition of specific rights to undocumented migrants for instance). In this respect, it should also be noted that this convention is currently undergoing its first monitoring review; its relevance for international migration will be more clear as this review comes to an end.

ECOWAS, East Africa and various African countries, such as at the Rabat conference of July 2006. Finally, these partnerships are complemented by dialogue at the continental level which sets long-term partnership and principles.

According to Mrs. Klein Solomon of the IOM, regional consultative processes offer multiple advantages for States, such as bringing together sending and receiving countries concerned by the same issues, and allowing punctual cooperation initiatives (e.g. an Australian-Indonesian initiative in training officials) which are of key relevance if treaties are to be implemented in the field. These processes are present everywhere (some countries are part of several); state owned; non-binding; and benefit from the input and expertise of international organisations. For all these reasons, regional groupings have been able to play the role of “laboratories” in bringing States together on migration, and helping them develop a common language on this topic that did not exist in 1994.

On the other hand, from a governance perspective regional consultative processes do not cover the entirety of the debate that international migration requires (but are usually mostly centred on return policies). Another inconvenience is that they could not be scaled up as such to the global level, which rather requires the definition of new (and e.g. more binding) tools that would complement them (see below).

When addressing the issue of the global governance of international migration, it must be repeated that States remain the cornerstone of the international architecture. Consequently, they have the ultimate responsibility for reform. Beyond sharing experience and partnering among themselves, States must thus not only increase their domestic policy coherence on migration, but should also review the existing agreements regulating international migration in a more coordinated manner. As mentioned by Dr. Jenny, “a lack of coherence at the State level tends to cascade upwards and can affect the way international agencies operate”.

While today regime’s failures can be perceived as resulting from overlapping mandates of international organisations and from States’ domestic incoherence, it might be expected that the current proposals for migration governance put forward at the international level – global migration facility or UN supported Forum of States – will improve coordination and the effectiveness of the system, without necessarily creating new institutions or discarding the existing ones.

### *Policy Coherence at Home*

Migration is an issue that requires a “whole of government” approach at the domestic level. Pressures coming from the international arena impact on numerous fields of policy (from foreign policy, including development, to employment, social policies, education etc.) and require coordination among the several administrations in charge of these domains. This coordination is further made difficult in Belgium due to its multiple levels of government active in this field (from municipality, to sub-national entities, to the federal government and the EU). As we have seen, more policy coherence at the domestic level is key in achieving more institutional coordination at the international level and vice versa<sup>18</sup>.

More important to explain this lack of coherence seems to be the fact that, since migration to Belgium officially stopped in 1974, there is no integrated and transversal migration policy. This further has an influence on irregular migration, since to enter the country people today mostly rely on illegal means or overstressing the interpretation of the Geneva Convention, not to mention the prolongation of study times, marriage etc. For the few cases of official labour migration, the policy is perceived as being

---

<sup>18</sup> By bringing together representatives from the migrant communities, the trade unions, the private sector and the ngo’s, this panel also answered an international recommendation on this issue, which is to open the debate on migration policy with all the stakeholders in order to increase coherence at the various levels of governance.

implemented on a case by case basis: a call for Romanian nurses in Brussels hospitals, opening the labour market to eastern European workers but not to Africans, etc...

As stated by Mrs. Regine de Clerq, the Belgian Ambassador for Migration and Asylum Policies who chaired this panel, a lot of work can be done and is under way to improve policy-coherence, in particular between migration and external policies including development. An example of the difficulty to see the need for coherence is provided by the fact that, even though the vast majority of Moroccan immigrants to Belgium came from the same region and even though it is widely accepted that migration must be perceived as an indicator of the need for development, no Belgian development cooperation project was carried out in the region until recently. As a matter of fact, one can easily see that this 'migration and development' nexus is going far beyond the sole domains of development cooperation, since it requires coherence with trade policy e.g. but also needs to take into account the social impact of migration on the country of origin (social disintegration, dependency etc.). In this regard, the proposal was made during the panel to launch an integrated study on the 'migration and development nexus' between Northern Morocco and Belgium that could be used as a transversal case study linking all dimensions and which could later be replicated for other migration 'corridors'.

Moreover, if migrants have to become actors of development cooperation, their social, legal and economic situation must be guaranteed, as stated in a 2004 Report on Migration and Development of the Belgian Senate. Intervening at the expert seminar, Mrs. Françoise Raoult put forward that, to capitalize on his/her migration, a migrant needs 5 years of staying in "good conditions" (ie. protection of social and human rights; being socially accepted; capacity for saving; and, with the perspective of return, favourable economic context for investment in country of origin). In this respect, it must nevertheless be noted that the privileged link with the country of origin is an option for migrants and not an obligation. The role of migrant associations in partnering with authorities to reach out to migrants and help defining policies was also stressed.

Addressing possible temporary labour migration policies presents other coherence challenges. They would have to be coherent with integration requirements (should learning the local language be compulsory for highly skilled temporary migrants?) and with the current asylum policies (as we may run the risk of sending back today irregular migrants who are experts we would need to bring back here in a few years). And, finally, whatever the need for those migrants, it would have to be coherent with the situation of the labour market and will have to take into account the existing high rates of unemployment among older groups of immigrants. Such a policy would also have to curb irregular migration and the black market, which may be the "grease" for our economy but also distorts competition. It would finally have to be defined at the EU level and linked with policies aimed at increasing mobility within Belgium and within the EU.

During the 12 June expert seminar, Mr. Henri Goldman from the Belgian Migration Monitoring Center put forward a 'triangular' proposal for increasing domestic policy coherence in Belgium. At the institutional level, he proposed the creation of a Secretariat of State for Migration reporting to the Prime Minister, which would coordinate policy initiatives undertaken by the various institutional actors of the various level of government (municipal, regional etc.). At the consultative level, he proposed the creation of a Belgian Consultative Council on Migration bringing together the various stakeholders active in this field (from institutions, to academia, the private sector, ngo's, trade unions, and migrant associations). The third level, the analytical one, would consist of the Migration Monitoring Centre, and would aim at expanding knowledge on migration and its impact on Belgium.

## Conclusion

Migration will not cease or decrease in the near future, so a coherent approach to this phenomenon is needed in order for Belgium to benefit from it. In terms of global governance, international migration sets complex challenges linking international and domestic issues and requiring interventions ranging from articulating the work of international organisations to enhancing the integration of migrants. Since these pressures from abroad impact on numerous fields of domestic policy as well as vice versa, as more policy coherence at the domestic level is a precondition for achieving better institutional coordination at the global level, the role of the Foreign Affairs Ministries is of key relevance.

In conclusion, one can question the current economic and development focuses determining the international debate on migration. Not only is this approach not prospective enough (no talk of the impact of environmental changes on future migration flows e.g.) or does it isolate development from other migration-related issues (asylum, human rights etc.), but it also overlooks the political, social and even cultural consequences of migration in both countries of origin and of destination. This can ultimately prove to be counter-productive, for public acceptance of migration will be a necessary precondition to avoid tensions as more migration will take place – and will be needed – in the next decades.

For all these reasons, it is important, as the UNSG Report mentions and as the expert seminar also stressed, to **expand knowledge** on the multidimensional positive aspects of migrations, rather than presenting it as a zero-sum game, and to **better communicate** them. While it has been mentioned above that integration is a two-way process, the prevailing implicit message today is that limiting migration increases security, which in turn creates the view that all migrants must be perceived as a threat. This further brings us to another key proposal of the expert seminar, which is **to better link migration/admission and integration policies**.

On the global governance of migration, we have seen that there is a reciprocal link between more policy coherence at home and more institutional coordination at the international level. At the domestic level, it was notably proposed to establish **a consultative body on migration** where governmental agencies, experts and civil society (the private sector, trade unions, migrant organisations) could come together to discuss challenges of migration. Increased coordination between different policy departments further implies taking into account migration when implementing other policies, including development cooperation strategies. Another proposal made was therefore to launch an **integrated case study** on migration and development in the relation between Belgium and the northern region of Morocco, from where most Moroccan migrants based in Belgium are originating.

At the international level, in order to increase the efficiency of the existing architecture, the Forum proposed by the UNSG Report is a venue to cooperate with a number of partner countries on increasing the benefits of migration for development. It can, first, serve as an opportunity for States to implement **better coordination among international organisations**. Second, this forum could also be used to put forward a number of **principles**, e.g. that migration should not be an alternative for development or act as a disincentive for the governments of sending countries to implement economic reforms, and that demographic pressures and gaps have to be addressed in a broader context, since migration can only be part of the answer.

This seminar showed how far we have progressed in terms of the rising awareness of this issue, of interdepartmental partnership, and of dialogue with civil society. Concerns were expressed during the seminar on how to **keep the momentum** after the High Level Dialogue of September 2006. Follow-up events might be therefore be organised.