



ICMPD

International Centre for
Migration Policy Development

Statement of the Director General of ICMPD, Mr. Gottfried Zuercher

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Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished Audience,
Mr. Chairman,

I want to thank you for the organization of this event that reflects the growing importance of international migration for an increasing number of states around the world. As so many issues surrounding international migration have been taken up in this forum already, I will limit my remarks to three points:

First, our experience has shown that the value of an informal, flexible dialogue on international migration lies primarily in the promotion of a mutual understanding of issues of common concern. Such issues arise predominantly in a regional context, where Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) can serve to identify concrete problems and common interests and can help to design coordinated policy responses.

To give you a concrete example of a well-functioning Regional Dialogue on Migration, I would like to mention the Budapest Process, which is a consultative forum of more than 50 participating States (including Australia, Canada and USA, as observers) and 10 international organisations. This intergovernmental process *has* been started already 15 years ago in 1991, which makes it one of the oldest Regional Consultative Processes in the world. My own organisation, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, based in Vienna, functions as the Secretariat of the Budapest Process since 1994. The Budapest Process provides a forum for exchange of experience and information among interested states to promote comprehensive systems for orderly

migration in the wider European region. This long-standing record, as well as the recent extension of the Process to the Central Asian and Southern Mediterranean Region testifies to the continuing value of this forum to the participating states.

Second, let me say a word on the importance of capacity building. Efficient and accountable institutions for the management of migration are vital not only for the implementation of sustainable migration policies as such, but also for the holding of any meaningful and mutually beneficial migration dialogue. Thus, the promotion of good governance, capacity building and training is often a precondition for a structured migration dialogue and should have a high priority on the development agenda.

Third, based on this experience, we conclude that the optimal level of migration dialogues should correspond to the principle of subsidiarity — that is, policy coordination should be made at the lowest level possible and at the highest level necessary. This means that an inter-state dialogue on international migration can and should take place either at the bi-lateral, regional or global level, according to the issues and interests involved.

In this way, even a meaningful dialogue on migration may not prevent new crises from arising, but it can certainly help to manage such crises when they arise.

Thank you.