



Augustinians International

The Delegation of the Order of St. Augustine to the United Nations
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Hello Augustinians and Friends! Happy New Year! I hope you enjoy this newsletter, filled with articles, events, and information pertaining to the latest happenings at the United Nations. My focus, of course, is on events that particularly impact the Order of St. Augustine and our communities throughout the world. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or corrections relating to anything that appears or should appear in this newsletter, email me at seibert.susanna@gmail.com.

IN THIS ISSUE:

MIGRATION 101
GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT
BENEDICT XVI ON MIGRATION

Governments at the GFMD

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) was first held in 2007 in Brussels, Belgium. Since then, the forum has met in cities around the world, most recently in Geneva, Switzerland, to examine various themes surrounding these two key issues.

The objectives of the GFMD include providing “a venue for policy-makers and high-level policy practitioners to informally discuss relevant policies and practical challenges and opportunities of the migration-development nexus, and engage with other stakeholders,” exchanging “good practices and experiences,” identifying “information, policy and institutional gaps,” establishing “partnerships and cooperation between countries, and between

countries and other stakeholders,” and structuring “the international priorities and agenda on migration and development.”

The theme of the GFMD 2011 was “Taking Action on Migration and Development—Coherence, Capacity, and Cooperation.” The bulk of the work and meetings of the forum took place throughout the year, focusing on three clusters of themes proposed by the 2011 Chair of the GFMD (Switzerland) in the concept paper for the GFMD. These thematic meetings were intended to lead more readily to practical application based on the work and conclusions of previous sessions of the GFMD. The cluster themes were “labor mobility and development,” “addressing irregular migration through coherent migration and development strategies,” and “tools for evidence-based migration and development policies.” Each cluster separated its theme into practical strategies for application by governments.

On December 1-2, 2011, representatives from 162 countries met in Geneva for the concluding debate. Federal Councilor Simonetta Sommaruga of the Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police opened the event with a keynote address, focusing on the question she said all representatives must ask themselves, “Is migration more beneficial or more costly to the development of our country?” Sommaruga spoke about basing migration policy on national interest, considering the challenges both our own nations and our partners face, and the need to take non-economic factors into account when relating migration and development. She also addressed the humanity of migrants and their families, exhorting listeners to keep human dignity “at the heart of our policies.”

Two working sessions were held in December to highlight the results of the earlier thematic meetings that took place around the world. The closing session

included reports from the Cluster Rapporteurs, Bangladesh, the United States, and France. At the end of the session, Ambassador Eduard Gnesa, the Swiss GFMD Chair, handed over the Chairmanship to the Republic of Mauritius, represented by Mr. Ali Mansoor, Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, for the GFMD 2012.

Documents from the GFMD 2011 session and other information can be found at <http://www.gfmd.org/en/documents-library/switzerland-2011.html>.

Dates to Know

January:

15-World Day of Migrants and Refugees

16-Martin Luther King Jr. Day

27-International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

February:

1–7-World Interfaith Harmony Week

4-World Cancer Day

Civil Society at the GFMD

The GFMD 2011 saw a record number of civil society applicants. 186 representatives were selected, representing 61 different nationalities; 73 of them were migrants themselves. Of the civil society organizations represented, 87 work at the global level, 102 at the regional level, 124 at the national level, and 88 at the local level. For the first time, an NGO, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), was selected to organize the civil society days for the GFMD. ICMC consulted over 200 civil society leaders around the world to prepare the activities.

The theme of the Civil Society Days was “Labour

Migration, Development Alternatives to Migration, and the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families.” Mr. William Gois, of Migrant Forum Asia as chair of the Civil Society Days of the GFMD 2011 made a statement on behalf of civil society representatives at the opening plenary of states, civil society, and observers on December 1. Mr. Gois said that because human mobility is inevitable, we have to ask, “What kind of change do we want—change we can manage or change we cannot?”

Civil society delegates discussed the effectiveness of government policies and the importance of collaboration between governments, inter-governmental organizations, and civil society. Gois also spoke about global governance of migration, the labor market and its relation to migration, and financing for development—all issues deliberated over during the civil society days. Gois also mentioned the human rights of migrants and the obligations of States to protect them, whether from individuals or government officials.

The “common space” session, for government and civil society representatives to talk about the challenges facing both sectors as they address the situation of migrants around the world, took place the first day of the concluding debates. Government and civil society participants, as well as expert panelists, aired concerns with issues such as demographic trends (e.g. ageing populations) and migration patterns, the practicality of regularization for governments, and the vulnerability of irregular migrants. Mr. Gois’ closing remarks summed up the outlook of civil society: “We will have to find more ways to interact with each other and come to respect each other’s mandates as governments and civil society...Our doors are always open for migrants, and our doors are always open for governments.”

MIGRATION 101: Terms

(Unless otherwise noted, definitions are from <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/key-migration-terms/lang/en>)

Decent work “involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that

affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.”

(<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm>)

Forced migration is a “migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes.”

An **irregular migrant** is “a person who, owing to unauthorized entry, breach of a condition of entry, or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The term “irregular” is preferable to “illegal” because the latter carries a criminal connotation and is seen as denying migrants’ humanity.”

Labor migration is the “movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.”

“At the international level, no universally accepted definition for “**migrant**” exists... The United Nations defines migrant as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate... common usage includes certain kinds of shorter-term migrants, such as seasonal farm-workers who travel for short periods to work planting or harvesting farm products.”

Migration is “the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes.”

Orderly migration constitutes “the movement of a person from his or her usual place of residence to a new place of residence, in keeping with the laws and regulations governing exit of the country of origin and travel, transit and entry into the destination or host country.”

A **refugee** is “a person who, “owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the

Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol).”

A **temporary migrant worker** is a “skilled, semi-skilled or untrained worker who remains in the destination country for definite periods as determined in a work contract with an individual worker or a service contract concluded with an enterprise.”

Migration and the New Evangelization

In September 2011, Pope Benedict XVI released his theme for the 2012 World Day of Migrants and Refugees: “Migration and the New Evangelization.” What follows are excerpts from his remarks on the occasion. The full text can be found at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/migration/index_en.htm

“Proclaiming Jesus Christ the one Saviour of the world “constitutes the essential mission of the Church. It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14). Indeed, today we feel the urgent need to give a fresh impetus and new approaches to the work of evangelization in a world in which the breaking down of frontiers and the new processes of globalization are bringing individuals and peoples even closer...

“*Migration and the New Evangelization*” is the theme I have chosen this year for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, and it arises from the aforesaid situation. The present time, in fact, calls upon the Church to embark on a new evangelization also in the vast and complex phenomenon of human mobility. This calls for an intensification of her missionary activity both in the regions where the Gospel is proclaimed for the first time and in countries with a Christian tradition.

...Internal or international migration, in fact, as an opening in search of better living conditions or to flee from the threat of persecution, war, violence, hunger or natural disasters, has led to an unprecedented mingling of individuals and peoples, with new problems not only from the human standpoint but also from ethical, religious and spiritual ones. The current and obvious consequences of secularization, the emergence of new sectarian movements, widespread insensitivity to the Christian faith and a marked tendency to fragmentation are obstacles to focusing on a unifying reference that would encourage the formation of “one family of brothers and sisters in societies that are becoming ever

more multiethnic and intercultural, where also people of various religions are urged to take part in dialogue, so that a serene and fruitful coexistence with respect for legitimate differences may be found”, as I wrote in my message last year for this World Youth Day.

...Here the Church is faced with the challenge of helping migrants keep their faith firm even when they are deprived of the cultural support that existed in their country of origin, and of identifying new pastoral approaches, as well as methods and expressions, for an ever vital reception of the Word of God. In some cases this is an opportunity to proclaim that, in Jesus Christ, humanity has been enabled to participate in the mystery of God and in his life of love. Humanity is also opened to a horizon of hope and peace, also through respectful dialogue and a tangible testimony of solidarity.

...Pastoral workers – priests, religious and lay people – play a crucial role in the demanding itinerary of the new evangelization in the context of migration...I invite them to seek ways of fraternal sharing and respectful proclamation, overcoming opposition and nationalism. For their part, the Churches of origin, of transit and those that welcome the migration flows should find ways to increase their cooperation for the benefit both of those who depart and those who arrive, and, in any case, of those who, on their journey, stand in need of encountering the merciful face of Christ in the welcome given to one’s neighbour. To achieve a fruitful pastoral service of communion, it may be useful to update the traditional structures of care for migrants and refugees, by setting beside them models that respond better to the new situations in which different peoples and cultures interact with one another...

The press and the other media have an important role in making known, correctly, objectively and honestly, the situation of those who have been forced to leave their homeland and their loved ones and want to start building a new life.

Christian communities are to pay special attention to migrant workers and their families by accompanying them with prayer, solidarity and Christian charity, by enhancing what is reciprocally enriching, as well as by fostering new political, economic and social planning that promotes respect for the dignity of every human person, the safeguarding of the family, access to dignified housing, to work and to welfare...

...Christian communities are to be especially sensitive to the many young men and women who, precisely because of their youth, need reference points in addition to cultural growth, and have in their hearts a profound thirst for truth and the desire to encounter God. Universities of Christian inspiration are to be, in a special way, places of witness and of the spread of the new evangelization, seriously committed to contributing to social, cultural and human progress in the academic milieu. They are also to promote intercultural dialogue and enhance the contribution that international students can give. If these students meet authentic Gospel witnesses and examples of Christian life, it will encourage them to become agents of the new evangelization.”

MIGRATION 101: Documents and Organizations

The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) was established by the Holy See in 1951. ICMC is an international commission of Catholic bishops’ conferences and Episcopal assemblies working with migrants and refugees in more than 40 countries. ICMC “serves and protects uprooted people: refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants regardless of faith, race, ethnicity or nationality.” (www.icmc.net)

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is an inter-governmental organization established in 1951 with 146 member states, 13 observer states, and offices in over 100 countries. IOM works to “ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.” IOM’s four areas of focus are “migration and development; facilitating migration; regulating migration; forced migration.” (www.iom.int)

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990, 45 States Parties) recognizes “the importance and extent of the migration phenomenon” and that “the rights of migrant workers and members of their families have not been sufficiently recognized everywhere and therefore require appropriate international protection.” It affirms that migrant workers and their families have the same

human rights as persons living and working in their state of origin, and that states (of origin, transit and destination) should respect and protect these rights. (<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cmw.htm>)

The **Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families** (CMW) is a body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the international convention. The committee reviews regular reports submitted by States Parties to the convention, and can consider individual complaints under certain circumstances.

The **Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime** (2000, 116 States Parties) affirms the “need to provide migrants with humane treatment and full protection of their rights,” and notes “the smuggling of migrants can endanger the lives or security of the migrants involved.” The document concerns “the significant increase in the activities of organized criminal groups in smuggling of migrants and other related criminal activities set forth in this Protocol, which bring great harm to the States concerned.” (<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/organizedcrime.htm>)

See also:

- Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
- Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees
- Declaration on the Human Rights of Individuals Who are not Nationals of the Country in which They Live