Development and Migration

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PURPOSE : to put forward a set of concrete policy orientations that will help maximise the benefits of migration for the development of migrants' countries of origin.

CONTENT : the Commission believes that the links between migration and development offer a significant potential for furthering development goals, without constituting a substitute to enhanced Official Development Assistance (ODA) and improved policies that remain as necessary as ever to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) within the agreed timeframe.

This document builds on the December 2002 Communication, which continues to set the framework for integrating migration issues into the EU's external relations and development policies. As underlined in that Communication and confirmed by the Council Conclusions of May 2003, the integration of migration aspects should respect the overall coherence of EU external policies and actions, and be consistent with the objectives and priorities of the Joint Council/Commission Statement on EC development policy.

Neither does this Communication cover the full spectrum of the 2002 Communication. It focuses on a number of specific topics that are associated primarily with South-North migration, and in particular on possible actions that could be carried out at EU level, in partnership with developing countries of origin.

More specifically, in this communication on migration and development, the Commission aims to link migration and development cooperation with a view to contributing to poverty alleviation in these countries. It sets out a set of policy orientations that will help maximise the benefits of migration for the development of migrants' countries of origin. Migrants and diaspora members can make an important contribution to their countries of origin through remittances and their skills and expertise – whether by returning permanently, investing or by sharing their expertise with their compatriots back home. The communication proposes concrete orientations for enhancing this contribution. At the same time, it also looks at how to limit the negative effects of brain drain, i.e. the exodus of skilled professionals from the developing world. With this Communication, the Commission hopes to make a first contribution to the global debate on the links between migration and development, in particular in view of the 2006 High Level Dialogue within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly. The policy presented in this Communication, elaborated and implemented in close partnership with source and transit countries and tailored to their needs, will contribute to enhancing the coherence of the external dimension of the EU' s immigration policy with development policy.

Reflecting the main issues in the global debate on migration and development, and in line with the Council Conclusions of May 2003, the Commission has identified concrete orientations for improving the impact of migration on development, with a focus on south-north migration. For each of these areas, an annex provides a brief presentation of the issues at stake and details of the initiatives the Commission is planning or considering and/or contains recommendations to Member States in the latter's areas of responsibility.