



## **Background to the Global Commission on International Migration**

The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) was formally constituted on 9 December 2003 and is delivering its Report on 5 October 2005 to the Secretary General of the United Nations in New York. The origins of the Commission are to be found in the Report of the Secretary General to the 2002 General Assembly entitled “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change“(A/57/387) which identified migration as a priority for the international community.

The Secretary-General subsequently established an internal Migration Working Group which presented a confidential report to him and the UN Senior Management Group in Spring 2003. The report highlighted various migration aspects, such as the human security of migrants, labour migration and its consequences, migration and development, asylum, migrant integration, the state of international co-operation, *et alia*, and formulated three specific recommendations: i) to close the normative and policy gaps in the regimes for migrants; ii) to fill the institutional gaps in the international system; and iii) to create a Global Commission on International Migration.

In July 2003 the Secretary-General met with representatives of Brazil, Morocco, the Philippines, Sweden and Switzerland in Geneva to discuss the establishment of the Commission. Switzerland and Sweden, in conjunction with Brazil, Morocco and the Philippines, developed the Commission’s draft mandate and invited other governments to participate in the process. An open-ended Core Group of States<sup>1</sup> reviewed the mandate and lent support to the establishment of the Commission.

The GCIM is composed of 19 independent eminent persons chosen for their experience and knowledge of the field. The Co-chairs of the Commission are Jan O. Karlsson, former Minister for Migration and Development in Sweden and Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, former Managing Director of the World Bank from South Africa. The Executive Director of the Commission Secretariat located in Geneva is Dr Rolf K. Jenny from Switzerland.

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<sup>1</sup> The Core Group is composed of: Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Holy See and the EC/EU. The Core Group is chaired by Switzerland and Sweden.

## **The Mandate**

To provide a framework for a coherent, comprehensive and global response to the issue of international migration, by:

**1. Placing International Migration on the Global Agenda** by promoting a comprehensive debate among governments, international organisations, academia, civil society, private sector, media and other actors on all aspects of migration and issues related to migration

**2. Analysing Gaps in Current Policy Approaches to Migration and Examining Inter-linkages with Other Issue-Areas** by focusing on various approaches and perspectives of governments and other stakeholders in different regions, and by addressing the relationship of migration with other global issues that impact on and cause migration

**3. Presenting Recommendations to the United Nations Secretary-General and other Stakeholders** on how to strengthen national, regional and global governance of international migration

## **Activity and Approach**

In promoting a comprehensive debate on international migration, the Commission has sought to develop a broader understanding of international migration by 1) reviewing government and other migration expertise, policy approaches and best practices in all regions; 2) conducting research and exploring migration inter-linkages with such areas as development, trade, human security, demography, forced displacement, migrant remittances, international co-operation, private sector involvement, role of the media, and national and international security; 3) collecting and disseminating migration-related information (via the media, the Commission's web-site, and other informational tools); and 4) by maintaining an overall focus on how to strengthen international governance of migration.

Under its work-intensive agenda and outreach approach, the Commission has actively consulted with governments, international bodies, academia and other stakeholders. The open-ended Core Group of States acted as a reference point for on-going consultations, and the Secretary-General and his office as well as other concerned international institutions (including those of the so-called 'Geneva Migration Group') were also consulted at regular intervals.

To test its own findings and identify areas of emerging consensus for consideration by the international community, the Commission organized five broad-based regional hearings (Asia, Mediterranean & Middle East, Europe, Africa and the Americas) with governments, NGO's, regional organizations and experts, media, corporate sector, trade unions and other stakeholders. The Commission has met eight times between January 2004 and mid-summer 2005. In addition, a number of thematic seminars have been held with non-governmental organizations, migrant associations, the private sector, trade unions, the media and other stakeholders.