

**JOINT STATEMENT
EXECUTIVE HEADS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE (ILO)
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM),
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR) and
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)**

**ON THE OCCASION OF
THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
PROTECTION OF MIGRANTS RIGHTS
1 JULY 2003**

We welcome the entry into force of the **1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (the Convention)**.

Entry into force of this Convention offers an opportunity to commit towards increasing cooperation and joint activity to protect the human rights and dignity of migrants worldwide.

We are convinced that the rule of law and promotion of democracy and human rights are the necessary foundations for sound, viable and sustainable migration policies. The norms contained in this Convention offer a sound footing for national legislation and practice throughout the world.

This instrument is one of the seven fundamental United Nations international human rights treaties. Similar to these treaties, which lay out rights of, respectively, victims of racial discrimination, women, children, and victims of torture, the Convention recognizes that certain basic human rights –defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights— apply to all migrant workers and their family members, regardless of status. It delineates rights applying to both migrants in a regular and irregular situation, setting minimum standards of protection with regard to civil, economic, political, social and labour rights, recognizing that migrant workers are human beings with roles and responsibilities beyond the labour and economic context. Based on earlier ILO Conventions, it extends the legal framework for international migration, treatment of migrants, and prevention of exploitation and irregular migration. It covers the entire migration process: preparation, recruitment, departure and transit; stay in States of employment; and return to and resettlement in original homelands.

The Convention provides a substantial agenda for inter-State consultation and cooperation on regulating international migration in areas of exchange of information, providing information to migrants, orderly return and reintegration, as well as in preventing irregular migration and trafficking. At the same time, the Convention explicitly safeguards the right of States to determine who may enter, remain, and/or work in their territories.

Our offices have already worked together in promoting awareness and wider ratification of this Convention, including through the Steering Committee for the Global Campaign for

Ratification of the Convention. ILO, IOM, OHCHR and UNESCO have, explicitly or implicitly, constitutional and constituent mandates to uphold the dignity and rights of migrant workers, and to ensure that migration benefits host and home societies as well as migrants themselves. Our respective offices already cooperate in activities such as research, capacity building, combating trafficking of migrants and preventing discrimination.

We take this opportunity to express our commitment to work towards increased collaboration and joint activities in the field of migration and human rights, in areas such as generating data and research on migration, on providing technical cooperation and capacity building for government officials and other actors, in addressing abuses of migrants in situations of trafficking and forced labour, in preventing discrimination and xenophobia against migrants. We commit our offices to continue efforts –in concert with member governments and constituent partners-- to identify and implement policy measures and practices towards more orderly and humane management of international migration worldwide, seeking to uphold at all times the human rights and dignity of migrants.

Finally, we confirm our intention, subject to our respective applicable rules and procedures, to cooperate closely with the treaty body being set up under this Convention to monitor its implementation and to further its application in both law and practice.

Signed,

Juan Somavia,
Director General,
International Labour Office

Brunson McKinley
Director General,
International Organization for Migration

Bertrand Ramcharan
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Acting)

Koïchiro Matsuura
Director General
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Geneva and Paris, 1 July 2003