



## **GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**ADDRESS BY SIR JOHN R. KAPUTIN**  
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN  
AND PACIFIC (ACP) GROUP OF STATES

**PLENARY SESSION IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS MAJESTY KING ALBERT II**

**SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**

**Your Majesty, King Albert II,  
Your Excellency the Prime Minister of Belgium,  
Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations,  
Your Excellency the President of the European Commission,  
Your Excellency the Chairperson of the Commission of the African  
Union,  
Professor Ernesto Zedillo,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great honour and privilege, on behalf of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, to participate in the proceedings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, and to address this august assembly during its plenary session.

I would like to compliment the Belgian authorities for the excellent organization and warm welcome extended to participants. The ACP Group of States, with its Secretariat based in this beautiful city of Brussels, has over a period of many years established a special relationship with its host country, Belgium. In this regard, I would like to assure our hosts that the ACP Group is committed to fully contribute to the success of the Global Forum, and indeed has all the intention to take its rightful place in the global debate on migration.

The Global Forum comes at an opportune time, and indeed builds on work of the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which took place in New York during the period 14 – 15 September 2006. The ACP Group of States, the largest organised entity for developing countries with a membership of 79 countries covering the African continent, Caribbean and Pacific regions, and with an estimated population of over 730 million, has as one of its core objectives the alleviation of poverty. This objective, coupled with the promotion of sustainable development, is also at the heart of our Cotonou Partnership with the European Union, which interlocks 105 countries and represents the most advanced and innovative North-South formalised development cooperation arrangement.

**Your Majesty,**

Today, we are gathered here at a time when the global community faces numerous challenges, together with related effects and transformations at continental, regional and country levels. In a global partnership centred on human dignity and mutual respect, issues of Asylum, Migration and Mobility are central to the development of our countries, and indeed are cross-cutting issues to almost all the Millennium Development Goals. A global and multi-disciplinary approach to

migration and development is the only way forward to ensure that the positive and developmental elements stemming from migration can be further enhanced, and utilised for the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development of our States and Regions.

Migration will continue to play a dominant role in the development process of ACP States. There are many challenges, among which we need to address the following:

- ensure that people are able to freely and safely exercise their right to move legally between places;
- fight against the phenomenon of illegal immigration;
- engage actively in political dialogue on population mobility;
- ensure the mobility of students and human resources to enhance capacity building for sustainable development in our States;
- identify solutions to the negative impact of brain drain; and
- enhance intra-ACP cooperation on issues related to migration and mobility.

**Your Majesty,**

In addressing the afore-mentioned challenges, the ACP Group is confident that migration can influence sustainable development in a positive manner. The ACP Group of States is considering these issues in a coordinated manner within its institutional framework. In this regard, our Heads of State and Government have consistently underlined the need to follow closely the migration and development nexus in the formulation of development policies, programmes and projects. The ACP Group is also putting into place the necessary means to support capacities in ACP States and Regions for the management of migration flows. To this end, an ACP Migration Facility is being established that will finance capacity building in ACP States and Regions to deal specifically with South-South Migration, migration flows to Western countries, and create a Migration Observatory that will assist the Group to, inter alia, collect and analyse data on migratory flows.

**Your Majesty,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

All these activities manifest the commitment of the ACP Group in addressing the critical issue of migration in relation to sustainable development, and by implication addressing the MDGs. We are

convinced that our close collaboration with global partners will result in policies and programmes that are in the interest of all parties involved, and most importantly, our peoples. Therefore, we should all endeavor to develop policies and programmes that are focused on the well-being of our peoples. This is why the focus of the global debate on migration and development is so important – ***to address the challenges in a new, innovative and, overall, positive way.***

In conclusion, I wish you successful deliberations at this Global Forum. I thank you for your attention.