

SPEECH BY Mr ATHANASSIOS NAKOS,  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
& CHAIRMAN  
OF THE THIRD GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT,  
AT THE 2<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE GFMD,  
MANILA / 30 OCTOBER 2008

*Your Excellency Mr. Vice-President of the Republic of the Philippines,  
Mr. Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations,  
Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a great honour for me to be here today at the closing session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Forum on Migration and Development, as future Chair-in-Office of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum.

I would like, first of all, to congratulate the Philippine's Chair, and particularly Undersecretary Mr. Esteban Conejos, for the excellent and result-oriented organisation of this 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Forum on Migration and Development. We will take back home a valuable trove of new ideas and best practices presented by all of you.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation for the warm hospitality that the Philippines Chair has extended to all of us.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to express my gratitude to His Excellency the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Ban Ki Moon for his commitment to the Global Forum. His acceptance of our invitation to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Forum on Migration and Development, to be held in Athens in November 2009, proves his Excellency's strong commitment to this Forum.

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

In recent years, migration has evolved rapidly due to important changes on the political, economic and social scene. Regional conflicts, climate change, globalisation and, more recently, the global financial crisis that we are currently witnessing have had a great impact on migration and will no doubt continue to do so in the future. As a result, we can only confirm that, in migration, there is an increasing interdependence of all countries, whether countries of origin, of transit or of destination. Interdependence is the key issue that we need to take into account in conceiving, adopting and implementing our migration policies at all levels.

Due to these global developments, my country is called upon to respond to a new challenge. Migration, in Greece, cannot any more be considered as a temporary phenomenon. Our own policy is constantly reviewed and adopted to the evolving situation. Migration, in our internal policy, is now deemed to be a tool for growth. In that sense, our migration policy aims at an orderly migration, with due respect to the rights of individuals, the migrants themselves and their integration in our society.

Our common aim is to maximize the benefits from international migration and minimize its negative impact. We should work so that migration becomes a choice instead of a necessity.

As future Chair of the Global Forum, we would like to focus our efforts on the fact that international migration cannot be a substitute to development. International migration needs to be an integral part of the development agenda, as well as part of national, regional and international development strategies.

Our objectives, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFMD, are:

- to offer appropriate conditions for a fruitful, open and frank dialogue on these issues.
- to share our best practices, to create a source of inspiration for our governments in conceiving and implementing migration policies. Regional and international stakeholders, maybe at a differentiated degree, have also

a very important role to play in promoting, coordinating and implementing these.

Regarding regional processes and stakeholders, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Heads of State and Government of the European Union Member States have adopted, a few days ago, the *European Pact on Immigration and Asylum*. By adopting this text of political guidelines at the highest level, the European Union and its Member States expressed their *“commitment to conduct a fair, effective and consistent policy for dealing with the challenges and opportunities which migration represents... This common policy must be founded on proper management of migratory flows, in the interests not only of the host countries but also of the countries of origin and of the migrants themselves”*.

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Greece is very actively preparing the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFMD. A Greek Task Force has already been set up and the Greek Chair will closely work with international advisors so as to ensure that divergent views on concepts and ideas to be discussed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum are duly taken into account. We will carefully study the outcomes of the previous Fora under the Belgian and the Philippines' Chairs. We aim at going further in depth on issues that need to be addressed as a follow-up of previous discussions. We aim at ensuring the thematic continuity of the Forum, but also at tackling new issues that constitute today's challenges in the migration and development field.

It is in this light that we are proposing the overarching theme of the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFMD to be “INTEGRATING MIGRATION POLICIES IN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL AND ESPECIALLY COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN”.

We expect from all of you an active participation. We expect from all countries to present their experiences, their best practices but also the difficulties they encounter in conceiving or implementing their policies.

As to the Civil Society Day, we have entrusted its organisation to the ALEXANDER S. ONASSIS PUBLIC BENEFIT FOUNDATION. The Foundation has already assumed its duties two days ago, when the Ayala Foundation handed over to them the Chair.

Greece, as future Chair, will work to ensure the continuity and institutional memory of the Forum. We feel that the Support Unit proposed by the Philippines Chair can be a useful tool in this respect. We consider that our objective of continuity can better be served by a small and flexible unit with the main objective to assist each Chair according to its specific needs.

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a pleasure for me to invite you to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Forum on Migration and Development which will be held in Athens on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2009. We do count on your full involvement and support, financial as well, in order to foster the co-ownership of our Dialogue. We also count on your active participation in the preparatory work, with your ideas and views and with a constructive criticism as well.

I will repeat again and again that our aim is to create a real platform of new ideas and best practices, a real source of inspiration for governments and other stakeholders. Your active participation is the key for the success of our Interstate Dialogue.

*Thank you.*