PREPARATORY MEETING AHEAD OF THE 2013 UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

In the framework of preparation to the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (HLD), on the eve of the meeting of the CIS Council of Heads of Migration Agencies, IOM, CIS Ex Com and FMS of Russia organized a CIS preparatory meeting between the heads of migration services of the 10 countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) entitled “Labour Migration as a Factor of Development in the CIS”. The meeting took place on 5th of June in FMS Centre in Vatutinki with representatives of federal executive bodies, international organizations, scientists and experts were also invited to participate in the meeting. IOM Director General, Head of IPC and DMM as well as Regional Director from Vienna participated in both events.

Migration as a global phenomenon is becoming an important factor of economic, social, political and cultural development of all the countries in the world. Therefore the priority is given to the development of cooperation between the leading international organizations and world communities. Russia’s main priorities in the field of migration are strengthening international cooperation and interaction with the CIS countries, in particular within integration processes.

In the course of the meeting the participants reviewed the main opportunities in the CIS region and studied the issues of effective migration management based on the principles and mechanisms of organized recruitment of migrant...
workers. At the end of the meeting the States adopted a joint statement expressing their commitment toward managing labour migration in the CIS region. The statement will be forwarded to the UN General Assembly HLD.

During the events, bilateral meetings took place between Director General Swing and Head of the FMS of Russia, Mr. Romodanovsky as well as Regional Director, IOM HQ officials and Deputy Head of FMS, as well as other Council meeting participants.

In good tradition of CIS Council meetings hosted by FMS in Vatutinki, IOM Director General Swing was invited by Mr. Romodanovsky to jointly plant a tree as a sign of warm relationship between IOM and FMS

LABOUR MIGRATION

**Working Group on the social, medical and legal support to labour migrants continues its work in Russia**

The most recent meeting of the Working Group on Social, Medical and Legal support to migrant workers, refugees and their family members from the CIS, took place on 3 June in the office of the International Alliance for Labour Migration (IALM). This group was created three years ago, by activists and practitioners working in the area of labour migration. The main issues discussed during the meeting concerned the development of a social networking project for migrants called Tutjdut and new medical insurance programs for migrants and their family members.

The participants were given an update on the development of an internet project called “Social Network for Migrants Tutjdut which was created by, and now being perfected by specialists from the Foundation for Community Development “We’re Together”. The internet project has a unique possibility to provide an open space for communication between labour migrants, employers and service providers.

The medical insurance company “Master Garant” presented a new voluntary medical insurance product for migrants. Master Garant is one of the few companies which started to develop medical insurance products for migrant women. During the discussion, such a product was presented. This new insurance programme for migrant women offers the possibility of medical support during 8-36 weeks of pregnancy, as well as undergoing full medical check-up before the childbirth and referral for the delivery. Master Garant already has a network of medical establishments which provide services for migrant women.

**May I ask and how are you doing? IOM Moscow provides support to the publication of Uzbek-Russian pocket phrasebook for labour migrants**

In July, a Russian newspaper Uzbegim published an Uzbek-Russian pocket phrasebook as an insert, with a total volume of 10 000 copies. The phrasebook targets labour migrants who arrive from Uzbekistan and have poor knowledge of Russian. Apart from the frequently used words and phrases, this pocketbook contains useful information on Russia, its culture and history.

In addition to the main sections on everyday communications, the phrasebook contains sections devoted to the basics of migration and labour legislation. Thus, in a simple form, the phrasebook explains the main rules of staying and working in Russia. For example, the following phrases are translated into the Uzbek language: “the period of temporary stay can be prolonged if you obtain a work permit or patent. To do this, you should apply to the Federal Migration Service of Russia”. Also, the phrasebook lists all main documents which will be needed in order to apply for a work permit, as well as other
important information. Thus, a reader can find the contacts of the Embassy, information on public transportation, Russia’s history, etc.

This phrasebook has been published with the financial support of Mobulak, IOM Moscow, and International Federation of the Red Cross. The phrasebook will be distributed free of charge through the subscriber lists of Uzbegim as well as in the offices of IOM and IFRC.

**COMBATTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**Training in St. Petersburg on identifying victims of human trafficking.**

A training “Specifics of identifying victims of human trafficking and principles of their referral for provision of further assistance” was developed by the specialists of the International Organization for Migration in Moscow, in cooperation with the St. Petersburg Center for International Cooperation of the Red Cross, which is an IOM partner in the CT programme. The training was held on 16 May in the premises of St. Petersburg Red Cross.

The aim of the training was to provide governmental practitioners with essential knowledge and specific practical advice on specific characteristics of victims of human trafficking (VoTs), identification techniques and referral procedures to specialized institutions for adequate assistance.

The training was designed in compliance with the IOM “Guide for Law Enforcement officials, judges, and representatives of non-governmental and international organizations, generalizing advanced experience in the sphere of combat of human trafficking”. (The guide was developed in the course of the EU/IOM project “Establishment of a network and a system of training for law-enforcement bodies, non-governmental and international organizations”.)

This training has brought together representatives of the Main Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the RF in St. Petersburg; the Main Investigative Department of the Main Department of the Ministry of Interior in St. Petersburg and Leningrad region; representative of the Committee on the Issues of Law, Order and Security; representatives of the Department of the Federal Migration Service in St. Petersburg; Chief Labour Inspector on Legal Issues of the State Labour Inspection in St. Petersburg; and the state social institution “Regional Center ‘Family’”.

The participants discussed the following topics: analysis of the phenomenon of human trafficking, statistics of criminal cases in the sphere of human trafficking for the period 2009-2011; key trafficking indicators and criteria of identification of trafficking victims: screening interview procedure, aspects of victimology, the social and psychological portrait of a victim; risk assessment; determination of the victim’s primary needs; general assessment of social status of a victim; cooperation of various organizations within the victims’ referral mechanism; risk assessment and risk management during provision of assistance to victims.

The participants also completed a practical exercise on victims’ identification and discussed examples of real cases. An educational documentary (made by IOM Kiev) on the principles of conducting of an interview with a victim was demonstrated and discussed by the participants.

**MIGRATION HEALTH**

During the period from May to August 2013 the Migration Health Division (MHD) continued health assistance to mobile populations. 2636 medical exams and 10 medical escorts have been performed. IOM Moscow specialists engaged in core health assessment activities participated in several Public Health events.

Investing in the future assistance of migrant beneficiaries and building partnerships in the Health sector, the IOM medical team performed two scheduled visits to St. Petersburg for participation in the conference “Women and HIV” initiated by the Department of Health, and to Romania on 09-13 July for visiting Emergency Transit Center Timisoara and IOM Bucharest.

During the reporting period more than 40 migrant beneficiaries under IOM care underwent comprehensive radiology and laboratory testing with our medical partner - Central TB Research Institute of Russian Academy of Medical Science (Moscow).

IOM Moscow was invited to take part in a conference “Women and HIV” initiated by the Russian Ministry of Health in St Petersburg (28 – 31 May) where IOM made a presentation on “Migration and Women’s Health” for a group of state healthcare institutions and NGOs operating in the North Western region of Russia. Dr. Sergeev, Public Health Specialist represented IOM Moscow and delivered

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the presentation. The conference was used as an extended platform for sharing practical experiences, addressing various health situations in the context of regional migration and promoting the principles of migrants’ health. The presentation and subsequent discussions highlighted IOM’s experience and raised the visibility of IOM health programmes among NGOs and the donor community in the region. The event was an opportunity for strengthening professional connections with partners in health.

An MHD representative took part in the Board Plenum of the Russian Psychiatric Society which highlighted achievements and challenges of modern TB microbiology diagnostics and issues related to TB prevention and control. The objective of this participation was to strengthen our professional connections with TB partners, to benefit from experience sharing on MDR-TB treatment under rapid lab methods’ monitoring in selected Russian regions. Other subjects discussed at the conference were organization and management of TB diagnostics in Moscow, technology of culture and genetic testing used in the Ural TB Research Institute, current trends in TB diagnostics over the world, and report definitions in connection with implementation of rapid TB diagnostic methods, etc.

Dr Vasilieva I.A., PhD, ScD, Head of the CTRI phthisiology department was introduced as a newly appointed Chief TB Specialist of the Ministry of Health.

25 of July MHD participated in the TB Partners meeting in the WHO premises. Representatives of international organizations working in Moscow gathered together for an exchange of information on their activities and general discussion about approaches of programs development.

IOM MOSCOW U.S. CULTURAL ORIENTATION

USCO training was provided for 3 groups of Sudanese refugees from the Darfur region. All of the refugees had to flee their home villages in Sudan to avoid persecution by attacking Janjaweed militia. At first they fled to Libya where they found shelter and peace for some short time and when the armed conflict broke out in the country of first asylum, they then had to flee for safety once again to Egypt. The refugees were finally transferred to the Emergency Transit Center (ETC) in Timisoara from Saloum refugee camp in Egypt. Most of the participants were between thirty - forty year-old males. Almost all of them had limited education and had spent most of their lives on farms cultivating cotton and rice or herding cattle. Literacy levels were correspondingly low, based on their limited educational background.

Working with these groups was both very challenging and interesting for the CO facilitator. At the very beginning of the session the participants unanimously articulated that their main focus in the U.S. would be fast employment and education. The refugees had left their families behind in Sudan and all of them were sure that in order to re-unite with their loved ones they would first have to stand firmly on their feet and be self-sufficient in their new and adopted country.

The participants, who had gone through a long chain of hardships, wanted to find out as much as possible about the conditions of life in the U.S for newcomers. They were also seeking advice on how to get professional skills which would be attractive in urban areas, since the only work they had done in the past was in agricultural settings.

A lot of discussion during the sessions was dedicated to education in the U.S., especially related to the cost of it. Other participants’ concerns were related to their current low level of literacy coupled with their mature age and they wondered whether that could be an obstacle to getting further education. This sparked a discussion which led to the idea of career laddering and also to the concept of education as a lifelong process.

A lot of questions touched upon driver’s courses and obtaining a driver’s license in the U.S. Some of the participants admitted that one of their longest standing dreams was to own a car. The facilitator took this chance to discuss with the group the pros and cons of car ownership in the U.S.

The U.S. healthcare system was also one of the central topics of interest during the sessions. The high cost of dental care and other medical services was a major concern. The concept of health insurance which was
completely new to the participants at first, raised a lot of anxiety, but as a result of the discussion the attitude of the participants towards health insurance began to change slowly and the refugees became more accepting of this concept.

All the participants took a very active part in the sessions. It was obvious that the refugees came to have more realistic expectations of their life in the U.S. At the end of the sessions the participants came up with a formula of success in the U.S., which represented an equation of “Opportunity + English + Hard Work = Success”. Even the management of the Emergency Transit Center noted that it was the first group of refugees who volunteered to mow the lawns in the camp and help the ETC personnel.

At the end of the third day people expressed their gratitude to the facilitator for the information provided.

MOSCOW MIGRANTS’ PROCESSING AND MOVEMENT

IOM Moscow works with the Russian government, the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and various UNHCR offices and U.S. Embassies across Europe and the ex-USSR to implement a program of voluntary resettlement to the United States for migrants and refugees. The biggest beneficiary groups are religious minorities from the ex-USSR who are joining immediate relatives already in the United States; third-country refugees referred for resettlement by the United Nations (Afghan refugees in Central Asia, Afghan and African refugees in Russia and Ukraine) and African boat people stranded in Malta.

Comprehensive statistics for 01 May through 31 August 2013 are as follows:

Applications received and processed: 373 cases / 705 individuals
Presented to DHS for status determination: 613 cases / 1460 individuals
Departures to the U.S.: 181 cases / 298 individuals

In total, IOM staff traveled to process cases, interview applicants, prepare files for interviews, assist U.S. government officials and provide Cultural Orientation in: Kyiv; Lvov; Odessa (Ukraine), Minsk (Belarus), Chisinau (Moldova), Tbilisi (Georgia), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Humenne (Slovakia), Timisoara (Romania) and Malta.”