



Migration and Development Series

Seminar on Migration and Ageing

Information Note

New York, 1 October 2007

BACKGROUND

In the twentieth century, the world has witnessed a revolution in longevity. As a result, older people make up for an increasing share of the world's population. It is estimated that, in the next 50 years, the number of older persons will nearly quadruple, growing from about 688 million to almost 2 billion people. While the population in most developing countries continues to grow, some developed countries and countries in transition are experiencing a population decline, mainly due to low fertility rates.

In view of these trends, the international community has stepped up its efforts to address the socio-economic challenges resulting from global ageing. In 2002, the United Nations Second World Assembly on Ageing adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. The Plan puts ageing onto the development agenda and is the first international agreement that recognizes the potential of older people to contribute to the development of their societies.

Ageing poses a serious challenge to the social security systems in many countries, especially where increasing costs have to be borne by an ever smaller proportion of the active population. In some industrialized countries, this imbalance has led to a growing recognition of the need for further immigration to make up for a shrinking workforce. Indeed, ageing, the question of access to social security and migration patterns are interlinked in various ways: Migrants in developed countries, who have reached retirement age, often face problems accessing pension and health care benefits. National social security systems are not designed to assure the transferability of those benefits across borders, if migrants decide to return home. In addition, retirees from developed countries are starting to migrate to regions where health care is more affordable.

This seminar will address these various interlinkages, and discuss emerging trends and policy responses from different world regions.

OBJECTIVES

- Highlight the impact of global ageing on international migration patterns and the challenges arising for national social security systems.
- Raise awareness of the situation of elderly migrants as regards access to health care and pension benefits.
- Discuss policy options for improving access to, and the transferability of social security schemes, as part of a comprehensive approach to migration management.

The Migration and Development Series is financially supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and UNFPA.



PARTICIPANTS

The seminar is designed for members of Permanent Missions responsible for the Second and Third Committees, and other matters where migration issues are of relevance. Representatives of UN and other international organizations, as well as civil society are welcome to attend. Registered participants are requested to regard their participation as a firm commitment.

DATE AND VENUE

The seminar will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Monday, 1 October 2007, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Conference room C.

REGISTRATION

If you wish to participate in this Seminar, please complete the attached nomination form and return it to the following address:

UNITAR c/o Ms. Sarah Rosengärtner
1 United Nations Plaza, Suite DC1-603
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Phone: (212) 963-3021 or 9196
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Registration deadline: 25 September 2007