



**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Andreas D. Mavroyiannis,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cyprus,**

**at the High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development New
York 14-15 September 2006**

Madam President,

let me begin by congratulating you for convening this meeting. The time could not have been more appropriate for the start of a frank and open exchange of views and ideas on such an important international issue that affects the lives and welfare of us all, as individuals and as states.

We would, also, like to extend our gratitude to the Secretary General Kofi Annan for drawing high-political focus on the many linkages between development and migration. The MDGs is a realistic target that needs political involvement at its highest level.

Cyprus aligns itself with the joint statement presented by Finland, on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make, however, the following additional comments.

Migration is a global phenomenon as old as man itself. In a quest to find better lives and improve their standards of living, people are moving across borders. As we live in an era of increased human mobility due to technological advances, marked by diversity and multiculturalism, any prevailing negative perceptions in the past, must not be inhibiting factors in dealing with this normal fact of human civilization. Migration should not be seen in principle as a threat or a destabilizing factor to the economies of the recipient countries. Of course it is a phenomenon that needs to be regulated. But, if supported by the right policies, it can be a blessing for development in both the recipient countries and countries of origin.

Migration and development are closely interlinked. Through international cooperation and coordination of our policies we can maximize the beneficial effects of international migration to development and minimize the negative ones. We need, however, to build capacity in both countries of origin and destination in order to formulate coherent migration policies, in an integrated and a holistic way. Cooperation in this area is essential, not only between governments, but also with non-government actors, such as the civil society, the private sector and international organizations.

The challenges of the development aspect of migration are numerous and their successful address is not an easy task. Both, host countries and countries of origin, must deal with issues such as brain drain, protection of migrants' rights, minority integration, religion, citizenship, xenophobia, human smuggling and trafficking and national security. Human rights and protection of migrants, especially of women and children should be promoted and incorporated in government Policies. New patterns, such as selective migration are welcomed and may be desirable but they should not be implemented in a discriminatory manner in regards to gender, age and family status. Measures must be taken against illegal migration, human trafficking and smuggling ensuring at the same time that the migrants, who in search for a better life for them and their families become victims of smugglers and traffickers, are offered help, protection and assistance.

Madam President,

Cyprus had historically been a country of emigration, exporting migrants to richer countries. During the second part of the 20th