



EESTI VABARIIGI
ALALINE ESINDUS ÜRO JUURES

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**UN High Level Dialogue on
International Migration and Development**

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**Statement by
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Director General of the Citizenship and Migration Board**

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Madame President,
Honourable Delegates and Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Many timely and crucial aspects of migration and development have already been discussed by the eminent participants of our dialogue here in recent days. The European Union's general position was outlined in the Presidency statement. Therefore, and as a member of the EU, I will not repeat what has been said before me, but focus just on some main aspects that are of great importance to Estonia.

Madame President,

Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen defined development as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. That encompasses both social and economic arrangements

And that the development issues likewise should be recognised as important elements of migration policies.

Madame President,

Secretary General has stressed the importance of respecting the rights of migrants in order to fully realize the benefits of international migration. He also stressed the obligation to observe the laws and regulations of the host state. It is almost a truism that education plays a key role in one's development and significantly expands the individual's opportunities and capacity to live a happy life. Past Estonian president Lennart Meri has said that the lack of language skills creates lawlessness. Only by understanding the language we understand the laws and through that effectively our rights and obligations. Learning of local language and respect for local culture opens to an immigrant the window of opportunity to effectively operate in host society as a subject and not an object. It also allows to increase his/her competitiveness in labour market as well as to obtain new skills and other values for development. To effectively support that process, we need to continue with local introductory and integration programmes, keeping also in mind that integration is a two-way street where citizens of receiving nations must also be educated. Last but not least, for successful integration we all — sending and receiving states — must avoid using the migrants for domestic ideological purposes. We must not make these people into our domestic policy instruments.

Madame President,

With these ideas in mind, let me conclude by once again borrowing the words of an outstanding development economist Amartya Sen: "Freedoms are not only primary ends of development, but its principal means.... The organizing principle that places all the different bits and pieces into an integrated whole is the overarching concern with the process of enhancing human freedoms and the social commitment to help to bring that about". We truly hope that the dialogue on international migration and development will continue and play a significant global role in this respect.

Thank you for your attention!