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General Assembly President urges end to migration myths



General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser

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The [President of the General Assembly](#) today urged the world to dispel entrenched myths about immigration and focus on migrants' contributions to economic development in countries of origin, transit and destination.

“Fear of the ‘other’ has long plagued discussions around migration,” Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser told a meeting on Migration and Communication organized by the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)), Inter-Press Service and the Finland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Helsinki.

“Since the onset of the world financial and economic crisis, migrants have increasingly become the target of racism and xenophobia,” said Mr. Al-Nasser, calling for a “re-balancing of the

message” on immigration to ensure full respect of the rights of migrants in accordance with international human rights law and other relevant instruments.

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“Strengthening dialogue and information flows around migration requires greater coordination and cooperation at the global, regional and bilateral levels,” Mr. Al-Nasser told the meeting, whose theme was ‘Re-balancing Information Flows, and Dialogue.’

“Migration is a global phenomenon that requires a global approach. If the full benefits of migration are to be leveraged, we need to work together, sharing information and best practices. Whether in government or in the media, we have a shared responsibility,” he said.

He pointed out that new migration destinations are emerging in Asia, Africa and South America, in response to the labour demands created by an increasingly interdependent global economy.

The largest shares of migrants to total population are no longer found in Europe or North America, but in the Arab States in the Gulf. In those countries, international migrants make up more than half of the working age population, he noted.

While abroad, most international migrants transfer remittances which contribute to the well-being of families and communities of origin. Last year, some \$325 billion was remitted to developing countries from their citizens working abroad, a figure that outpaced official development assistance.

“Migrant workers also make important contributions to economic growth in countries of destination. As entrepreneurs, migrants establish businesses and create jobs in the countries that host them. And in the face of ageing populations, the role of migration cannot be overlooked,” Mr. Al-Nasser added.

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