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CHAIRPERSON OF THE STATE COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION AND  
EMPLOYMENT OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, AT PART II OF THE  
17th MEETING OF THE OSCE ECONOMIC AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Athens, 18 to 20 May 2009

**“Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and  
environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the  
OSCE region”**

Madam Chairperson,  
Distinguished Forum participants,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, allow me on behalf of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to thank the OSCE for organizing this comprehensive multi-stage forum, for its dynamic co-operation and for the assistance it constantly provides the Kyrgyz Government in tackling the issue of migration. I should also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Greece for the excellent way this forum has been organized and for its hospitality.

In today's world, the way in which migration has developed radically changed the priorities both of the countries of origin and of the countries of destination in our region. States have begun to take migration into account in their domestic and foreign policy, which are guided by the state of the economy and the desire to maintain stability and security.

The Kyrgyz Republic, like all post-Soviet and Central Asian States, is actively involved in the globalization of migration. Kyrgyzstan's geographical location between the East and the West means that the territory is not only a country of origin and destination but also one of transit. Like other countries, our Republic has to confront modern-day challenges such as unbridled migration of labour abroad, illegal migration, the return of populations to their historical homeland, smuggling and trafficking in human beings. The proliferation of extremist religious movements trying to destabilize the already difficult situation both in Kyrgyzstan and in the region as a whole has become a particular concern of late.

Kyrgyz citizens are active participants in the international labour market. Pressing problems in connection with the uncontrolled population movement outside the Republic for the purpose of employment and earning money are:

- Protection of the rights of migrant workers;

- Social security, insurance and health care for migrant workers;
- Establishment of acceptable working conditions for migrants abroad and assistance for the families of migrants left behind at home;
- Creation of conditions for the investment of funds transferred by migrant workers;
- Reintegration of migrant workers.

Migration management has been made a priority policy by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic because migration processes affect not only the country's socio-economic development but also stability and security in the country and the region. Thus, beginning in the 1990s:

1. National laws on migration were harmonized, State programmes implemented and an institutional migration management mechanism established and improved. At this point, I should like to mention the invaluable support by international organizations and communities, including the OSCE, in the implementation of the State migration policy of the Kyrgyz Republic and in providing comprehensive assistance in the search for ideal solutions and mechanisms for regulating migration processes.
2. Bilateral co-operation with our principal migration partners – the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan – is being actively developed: a system for civilized access to the international labour market has been created, border control strengthened and particular attention paid to protecting the rights and freedoms of Kyrgyz citizens working abroad and also to increasing potential migrants' awareness of the relevant laws and improving their vocational training.
3. However, it is impossible for the host governments to deal with all these current challenges in the area of migration on their own without collaboration at a regional level. Kyrgyzstan makes an active contribution to the joint efforts to resolve a number of migration-related problems in such organizations as:
  - The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS);
  - The Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC);
  - The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

The aforementioned organizations bring together States that are to varying degrees countries of origin, transit or destination. For that reason, they have specialized migration bodies to deal with the problems of international labour migration and combat illegal migration. In their policies migration partners take into account the fact that labour migration not only results in a rise in the number of illegal aliens in the host country but first and foremost meets a demand within the labour market, filling vacancies in the service sector and performing labour-intensive and dangerous jobs. In the country of origin labour migration stabilizes the labour market, provides income for families, helps to introduce new technologies and promote cultural exchanges, and intensifies the country's involvement in global developments.

Within the CIS and EURASEC migration agencies, Kyrgyzstan plays an active part in the drafting of strategic documents and the implementation of practical measures to resolve labour migration issues (this includes a co-ordinated migration policy, the setting up of inter-State migration databases, co-operation between migration and border services and other government agencies, and social security for migrant workers). One of the main achievements of the CIS in terms of regional co-operation was the signing in 2008 of the Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which is designed to improve their welfare, expedite their integration and protect the rights not only of the migrants but also of their families.

Efforts to combat and prevent illegal migration and trafficking in human beings are also being pooled within the CSTO to form a collective system for countering illegal migration from third countries. The migration-related activities of this organization include joint events and operations, information exchange and collaboration with other organizations involved in combating illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

4. With a view to dealing with uncontrolled labour migration abroad, systematic efforts are being made to create a system for the civilized placement of Kyrgyz citizens in jobs abroad, and government bodies and private employment agencies are working together to that end.

5. Kyrgyzstan is also fostering regional co-operation by expanding its range of international treaties. For example, it has signed a number of labour migration treaties with Russian and Kazakhstan. Since it has recognized the need to combat illegal migration internationally, Kyrgyzstan has signed and ratified two readmission agreements with Switzerland and Turkey.

Through regional co-operation in the area of migration, it is possible to work together to swiftly adopt the best solutions and respond immediately to the challenges of the modern world. Kyrgyzstan therefore welcomes any platforms, forums or institutions that enable it to find an acceptable balance between the interests of the States and those of migrants. We believe that the main goal is to obtain the maximum benefit from migration processes for citizens, society and the State.

Given that migration has become an integral part of human development and that migration has an impact on the socio-economic and sometimes also on the political situation and on stability and security, we are working today to radically reform migration management, pursue a migration policy co-ordinated with other countries and engage in constructive dialogue at all levels.

In conclusion, allow me to voice the firm belief in the indisputable utility of this dialogue organized by the OSCE, results of which will make a worthy contribution to the development of a national migration policy. Indeed, citizens migrating from our countries form the basis for the high degree of confidence, mutual assistance and multilateral development of our countries and concerted efforts by governments on migration are ultimately aimed at ensuring mutual understanding and well-being.

Thank you for your attention.