

**Inter-State and Intra-Regional Co-
Operation on Migration Management
UN Conference Center
Addis Ababa
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**Opening remarks by
H.E. Mr Dino Sinigallia, Ambassador,
Head of the European Commission Delegation to Ethiopia**

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a real honour for me to be part of this important meeting on migration management in the regional perspective.

I would first of all like to thank both IOM and IGAD for the kind invitation which has been extended to us.

As you know, during the past few years, the European Union and its African partners have made major progress in building a consolidated policy agenda on migration and development.

We have tried to integrate migration issues in development policies – and we have tried to integrate development issues in migration policies.

Our challenge now is to try and make migration work for development.

In doing this, we are trying to reconcile different interests:

Benefits for ACP countries – such as reduced domestic labour market pressure as a result of outward migration.

But also benefits in form of remittances sent home by migrants abroad, and possibly of 'brain gain' of migrants taking home their skills and knowledge obtained elsewhere.

And then benefits for the European Union where inward migration is one of the responses to shortages on our labour markets, both for high and low-skilled labour.

coming years we would like to replicate these centres to other countries in the region.

Similarly, we need to support action to reduce the negative effects of migration on developing countries, such as the "brain drain". For example, the European Commission has been very active in the area of human resources for health in Africa. And the Commission is currently preparing a Communication on how to enhance Policy Coherence for Development, including in the area of migration.

Compared to some years ago, I believe that we have achieved a lot in terms of dialogue, partnership and joint action. But the most fundamental change to which we have contributed is the change of focus and discourse. Migration is no longer perceived as something negative, but something good.

Well-managed migration contributes to development, to employment, to mobility and to growth, both in Europe and in Africa. It is in this spirit that our dialogue should continue.

Let me finally thank you once again for giving us the opportunity to participate in this high-level event and let me take the opportunity to wish you very fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.

As I said, a lot of progress has been made, notably in our relations with Africa.

The EU-Africa Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, adopted at the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December 2007 is the latest milestone in this context.

This Partnership is part of the wider Joint EU-Africa Strategy. It reflects an agreed understanding and commitment to address migration and mobility issues in the framework of labour market disparities, both within and between the two continents.

In many African countries we have integrated migration related topics in our regular political dialogue with the host government. And, by the way, we have started this process here in Ethiopia, too, following the visit of an EU migration mission at the end of last year.

The major objective of such a regular and meaningful dialogue for both sides is to understand each others wishes and preoccupations better, and to take joint action.

One example of concrete action is the setting up of a network of regional observatories in Africa. These observatories will promote the collection, processing and dissemination of information on migration movements in Africa and between Africa and other continents.

This information will help us to better adjust our migration policies in Africa. We are expecting the first observatories to be operational by mid-next year.

Another important initiative supports the transfer of remittances from the diaspora. We acknowledge remittances is private money, but there is much we can do to help define policies which link the migrant communities to their countries of origin and to the reform of the banking and financial sectors. To this effect we are now working with the World Bank and the African Union to set up an African Remittances Institute.

Looking at the facilitation of legal migration the challenge is to better match supply and demand. For example, this is one of the aims of the project the European Commission is developing ~~together with the Malian government~~ to establish a Migration Information and Management Centre.

The Centre will provide concrete information to potential migrants on legal migration opportunities, but also on the risks of illegal migration. In the