



*Permanent Mission of Italy
to the United Nations*



ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Permanent Mission of
Canada to the United Nations



Mission permanente du
Canada auprès des Nations Unies



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

PRESS RELEASE

Benefits of Migration to be Showcased by Leading Experts

New York, September 26th 2009 – Leading migration experts from around the world will gather in New York next week to showcase successful examples of integration programs and recommend migration policies aimed at promoting tolerance and understanding in multicultural societies.

The Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) joined forces with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to organize a High-Level Roundtable, co-sponsored by the Italian and Canadian Permanent Missions to the United Nations. This event, entitled “The Inter-ethnic City: Management and Policies for a Better Integration of Migrants”, will be held on **Monday, September 28th 2009 from 9am – 1pm in Conference Room 8 at the United Nations Headquarters.**

In an increasingly diverse world, where migration is all too often perceived as a threat to national identities and social cohesion, it is crucial to underline the positive impact migration generates in host countries, in terms of workforce, creation of wealth, global poverty reduction, innovation and creativity. According to President Sampaio, the UN Secretary-General’s High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations, “Cultural diversity can spark innovation, stimulate creativity and boost the economy. But we cannot take it for granted. We need policies and common action aimed at the successful integration of migrant populations. In this regard, municipal and local governments play a crucial role in promoting sustainable urban development based on cultural diversity, as a key factor to prevent conflicts and contribute to security and peace.”

This Roundtable will examine good practices and processes for better integration at the level of cities as experienced by local administrators, policymakers and other stakeholders. The event will highlight practical policies and facilitate networking of representatives of municipalities and other relevant institutions. One of the key outcomes of the event will be recommendations that will shape the development of an online Clearinghouse by the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the International Organization for Migration on successful integration and migration policies. IOM’s Director-General William Lacy Swing calls for “unprecedented cooperation among all actors to reap the benefits of successful migrant integration including strengthened social cohesion and enhanced cross-cultural relations that promote international peace and security.”

The event will focus on the urban level and will tackle what Fondazione della Rocca called “the crisis of the city”. Italian Under-Secretary of State Scotti said that “The city is at the forefront of globalization, reproducing its effects. It is a place of increasing challenges: insecurity and crime; poverty; separation among communities at the social level, which is too often translated also in a physical separation, thus creating separate spaces within the same urban context. But at the same time the city is also the place for increasing economic opportunities, enhanced communication, cultural vivacity, scientific advances” The challenge of the event will be to bring together a mix of different experiences and backgrounds and propose practical solutions to those challenges and to realize those opportunities.

The Roundtable will be opened by Mr Enzo Scotti and Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director General of IOM. President Jorge Sampaio, the High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations, will deliver a video message. Leading experts and policy-makers from around the world will also take part in the event, and closing remarks will be given by Mr. Keith Christie, Assistant Deputy Minister for Global Issues, Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Mr Marc Scheuer, Director of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Ahead of the event, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs stated: "In a time when our countries and peoples are becoming globally interdependent, the promotion of cross-cultural, ethnic and religious understanding and cooperation is increasingly vital. We see this event as part of our broader efforts to enhance mutual understanding, combat discrimination, and promote respect among all cultures and faiths."

Note to Editors

A webcast of the event will be available on: <http://www.un.org/webcast>

Speakers will be available for interviews following the event

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About the IOM

Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

With 125 member states, a further 18 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants. IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

About the UN Alliance of Civilizations

The Alliance of Civilizations seeks to reduce tensions across cultural divides that threaten to inflame existing political conflicts or trigger new ones. Working with its global network of government partners, the Alliance promotes policies and initiatives aimed at improving relations between diverse cultural groups. It also works at grassroots level, promoting innovative projects in education, youth, media and migration in order to build trust, reconciliation and mutual respect among diverse communities. For more information, please visit www.unaoc.org