

CSW 57—March 2013

Parallel event hosted by the NGO Committee on Migration

“Eliminating Violence in the Context of Migration: The Responsibilities of All Stakeholders”

13 March 2013, 12:30-2:00pm / UN Church Center, 10th Floor

Summary

- H.E. Ambassador Yanerit Morgan Sotomayor (Deputy Permanent Representative, The Permanent Mission of Mexico to the UN) gave a presentation, which included these remarks:
 - Mexico passed an immigration law in 2011 that changed its legal approach to migration: the law prescribes respect for migrants regardless of status (based on an international human-rights frame).
 - Mexico passed a punishment-of-traffickers law in July 2012 to address—in a new, more rigorous way—trafficking in persons.
 - Mexico has been working hard in the preparations for the High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on Migration and Development (set for October 2013).
 - In its preparations for HLD, the 2nd Committee could not come to agreement in:
 - a negotiated outcome (to stress the importance of migration issues at the UN)
 - NGO participation

- Dr. Jean D’Cunha (Global Policy Advisor for Employment, and Migration, UN Women) gave a presentation, which included these remarks:
 - Women migrants are a large, important population. Proof of this can be seen in the facts that:
 - women are half of international migrants
 - domestic workers are 83% women
 - “Women’s labor migration is becoming a long-term enduring structural feature worldwide.”
 - women have and face different migration experiences than men
 - women are the majority of victims of debt bondage and trafficking
 - Things needed going forward include:
 - seeing the promotion of the rights of women and girl migrants as a measure of good governance
 - sustained, sustainable development in countries of origin, so people can choose to migrate *or not*
 - better formulated and better implemented legal labor migration schemes
 - using the media effectively, and spreading tolerance and appreciation of migrants
 - more participation of women migrants workers in policy formulation and implementation

- Julie Dinnerstein (Co-Director of the Immigration Intervention Project, Sanctuary for Families) gave a presentation, which included these remarks:
 - Interestingly, the U.S. foundational legal philosophy is at odds with the key ideas and uses of international treaties. The U.S. legal philosophy says, “government

- will not interfere with your pursuit of happiness,” which is utterly different from “the guarantee of wellbeing” that characterizes international protection work.
- U.S. law does not provide “protection” to migrants, except, basically, in the case of victims of certain kinds of harm, including gendered harm and trafficking.
 - Another emerging area where the U.S. is showing more likeness to international standards is in unaccompanied child migrants, in the sense that these children are no longer put in the immigrant detention system.
 - A common thread for U.S. law in this area is the responsibility on the migrant to come forward in her or his case. And there is no right to counsel for migrants.
- Valerie Foulkes (Consultant, Save the Children) gave a presentation, which included these remarks:
 - Violence against girls on the move is something that we work against, and deal a lot with, in Save the Children.
 - Violence against girls on the move includes huge risks at and in border crossings. Girls on the move commonly suffer sexual abuse and are kept silent by a web of disempowering circumstances.
 - Girls on the move who suffer sexual abuse are liable to be double victims, because many (more than a third, in one study) were migrants in the first place to escape abuse in their home (country).
 - Nations’ laws and programs have to be aware of the full range of girl movement, and not just target one side of the problem. (Trafficking is not the only occasion for girls’ movement.)
 - Twenty-five minutes were allowed for reaction by the attendees (questions, comments, and ensuing discussion). That time included these remarks:
 - The key to successful prosecution of traffickers is:
 - 1. Don’t punish the trafficked (neither for their migration status nor for their prostitution acts, etc.)
 - 2. Intergovernmental cooperation
 - There is a need to delink national immigration enforcement from the local addressing of crimes. One among many reasons for this is that an undocumented migrant charged with a local crime entails, sometimes, sending that person back to their home country/situation, where either:
 - they left for a reason (threat, abuse, hardship, etc.)
 - or, were ensnared in a trafficking situation
 - Labor recruitment of would-be migrants is *so* ripe for exploitation. It is simply better and safer when a government deals directly with migrants—those who will of course come under its jurisdictions and immigration policies.