In September 2000, world leaders came together at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and adopted the far-reaching Millennium Declaration. Heads of State and Government committed their countries to achieving eight specific development targets by 2015, collectively known as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs aim to: 1) end extreme poverty and hunger, 2) provide universal primary education, 3) achieve gender equality, 4) reduce child mortality, 5) improve maternal health, 6) combat HIV/AIDS, 7) ensure environmental sustainability and 8) develop a global partnership for development. Migration is not featured as a MDG and does not figure directly or indirectly in the various targets that are used to evaluate progress towards the MDGs. However, as stated by a leading academic, “it is virtually impossible to envisage progress towards achieving the existing MDGs without some kind of migration”¹, as it is an essential element of the globalization process and represents a livelihood option for many people.

Factoring migration into plans to achieve the MDGs is a matter of concern for both development and migration policy-making. On the one hand, it means better integrating migration concerns into development strategies; on the other hand, it requires improved understanding of how development policies will affect migration patterns. The 2009 UNDP Human Development Report entitled “Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development” states that migrants “reap gains in the form of higher incomes, better access to education and health and improved prospects for their children”. It also interprets migration as an expression of the free choice of people in pursuit of new opportunities. Human mobility can promote the transfer of skills, technology, capital and ideas. It can be a livelihood strategy to reduce poverty of both the migrant and family members staying behind, including in conflict-affected and post-conflict situations. Financial remittances, though private funds, may well be the most tangible and direct link between migration and development. They have become a key source of external funds, and constitute a significant share of the economies of some of the Least Developed Countries.

Social remittances – the skills, know-how, networks and other less tangible resources that migrants bring back to their families and communities – also have a direct impact on the prospects of individuals and their extended families and communities in achieving development targets. It is therefore important that the opportunities of migration are seen as one factor in the context of necessary local and national policies to achieve the MDGs, together with other relevant policies and assistance, including foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA).

In view of this year’s High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly (MDG Review Summit) that will take place between 20 and 22 September in New York, the *Migration and Development Series*, organized by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the MacArthur Foundation, are organizing a half day seminar re-examining the inter-linkages between migration and the MDGs.

### Seminar Objectives

This half-day seminar intends to inform participants about the inter-linkages between migration and the MDGs. In particular, the seminar will look at capacity-building in developing countries and the use of remittances – financial and social – to enhance opportunities associated with migration for the achievement of the various goals enshrined in the MDGs. It will also look at implications on the policy level.

### Methodology

The seminar will feature expert presentations on the issues at stake, such as the link between migration and the MDGs, remittances, and policy implications. An interactive discussion will follow.

### Target Audience

This seminar is designed for the members of Permanent Missions. UN staff and interested representatives of civil society and the private sector are also welcome to attend. Applicants are requested to regard their participation as a firm commitment.

### Registration and Contact

If you have questions about the event, please contact Ms. Valeska Hesse at valeska.hesse@unitar.org, Tel: (212) 963 9684/ 9196. To register please visit [http://www.unitar.org/ny/international-law-and-policy/migration-and-development-series](http://www.unitar.org/ny/international-law-and-policy/migration-and-development-series) or return the nomination fax to: (212) 963-9686/0995.