



Chair's Summary of the Migration Experts Meeting
Montréal, October 22 - 25, 2002

Introduction

G8 Migration Experts convened in Montréal for their third meeting under the Canadian Presidency. Considerable action has been taken in meeting the commitments set out in the Transport Security agenda and in the migration action items in the Qualitative Assessment. Some projects were brought to conclusion; for others, progress to date was reviewed and new projects were proposed.

In her opening remarks, the Chair reviewed the outcomes of the Asylum and Migration Experts meetings in Vancouver and other G8 developments. The Chair highlighted the very active and full agenda the Migration Experts have engaged in this year. The collaboration and cooperation of all members has been instrumental in accomplishing the year's objectives. Continued high level engagement will be required to ensure that the Migration Experts continue their collaborative efforts at such a high level of interest and energy.

The following topics were discussed:

1. Biometrics

This item was discussed to meet commitments under the Cooperative G8 Action on Transport Security. A full day was devoted to the review and application of biometric technologies in travel documents and procedures. The Migration Experts benefited greatly from the participation and expertise of the Chair of the ICAO New Technologies Working Group (NTWG), Gary McDonald.

Migration Experts support the work of ICAO NTWG in developing international standards for biometrics in travel documents. The current position of the NTWG is that it endorses the use of facial recognition as the globally interoperable biometric for machine assisted identity confirmation with machine readable travel documents. Other biometric technologies under active review are fingerprints and iris scanning. Discussion centred on the balance between facilitation and security and how the application of biometric technologies may be an effective tool to enhance security in the identification process.

G8 Migration Experts agreed to a Statement of Principles regarding Biometrics highlighting the importance of three general concepts: universality, urgency and technical

reliability. This Statement is attached as the Annex to this report, to be used by the G8 in outreach efforts based on the conclusion that this work be shared as broadly as possible.

In addition, the USA offered to write a paper on guidelines for minimum common standards for biometrics in documents and procedures. The first draft will be circulated to Migration Experts in early December and will be shared at the same time with the ICAO NTWG. A full and complete discussion is expected at the first meeting under the French Presidency with a view to finalizing our recommendations on minimum standards for presentation at ICAO's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting in Spring 2003.

2. UN EDIFACT standard

Migration Experts heard about substantial progress on the development within the World Customs Organization (WCO) and IATA of a standard maximum set of data elements and their format for transmission. Experts are satisfied that the work underway in those fora will meet the timelines outlined in the Transport Security agenda for this commitment and will continue to monitor progress until final adoption in these organizations. Experts also agreed to promote the UN EDIFACT standard through other international organizations and fora. It was further agreed that if G8 states introduced API domestically it would be in a manner consistent with the standard. Where appropriate G8 members would assist other governments in introducing API systems in line with this standard.

3. Passport Issuance Security Standards

The United States presented a final draft of its paper entitled "Minimum Security Standards for the Handling and Issuance of Machine Readable (and other) Passports". The G8 initiated this paper for use in capacity building for document issuance procedures. It was agreed that these recommended standard practices be referred by the Canadian Chair of the Lyon/Roma groups to the appropriate ICAO contact for consideration with the view to refining the practices for the eventual adoption as a global standard.

4. Seafarer's Identity Documents

Migration Experts discussed the current exercise within the International Labour Organization (ILO) to enhance the standards for seafarer's identity documents. Experts agreed that the G8 should reinforce the need to apply the same standards to these documents as they advocate for passport issuance. Similarly, standards for the application process and supporting documentation should be equally rigorous. Experts also agreed to return to capitals to ensure that the work being done to enhance the security of seafarer's identification take into account migration control concerns as these documents are often used in lieu of a travel document and may confer admission privileges and exemptions.

5. Project on Fraudulent Document Production

The French delegation reported on developments in this project to date. Considerable information has been collected and is being analyzed. This analysis will be provided to the Chair as soon as possible for distribution within the G8. Migration Experts agreed that the development of an operational project should be the next step. France indicated that in the near future an ILO would be identified for assignment to this location and will advise the chair of this individual's name and contact information. The Chair will then provide this information to member states in order that liaison officers currently in the location can make contact. It was agreed that the best means to advance this project would be for the liaison officers in the location to draw up an operational plan. Further progress on this project will be discussed at the next Migration Experts meeting.

6. ICAO Annex 9

The US delegation reviewed input received from member states to their paper previously circulated concerning "ICAO Annex 9" (return of improperly documented passengers).

Several delegations emphasized the importance of following procedures established in ICAO Annex 9 relating to the seizure of fraudulent documents. Further discussion concerned the use of the letter attached to Annex 9 in the return of improperly documented passengers. Member States reviewed their current practices in this respect and agreed that greater coherence among the eight in application of Annex 9 would be beneficial. It was further agreed that the G8 should encourage the appropriate body in ICAO to advance work on the broader implementation and acceptance of the practices recommended in Annex 9, in particular standardization of removal practices.

7. Links between Organized Human Smuggling and Terrorism

Migration Experts agreed that the importance of this issue warrants continued reporting and discussion in this forum. Member states reported on recent events and anticipated research and developments. In particular the UK will endeavour to share further information on research in that country when available.

8. Intelligence-led Interdiction Exercise

The United Kingdom presented a comprehensive report on the intelligence-led exercise which was conducted in all G8 States in September. The UK expressed appreciation for the high degree of cooperation and participation in this exercise. This exercise produced both specific and strategic outcomes and benefits. Specific information concerning the abuse of Nigerian passports as well as issuance procedures was learned and shared. Other

objectives such as establishing communication links, common formats for sharing information and practical means of conducting such exercises were also achieved.

Member States determined that this exercise was extremely valuable and demonstrated the capacity and interest amongst the Eight to engage in such operational activities in future. It was further agreed that similar future exercises should take place amongst the eight, in whole or in part, and the outcomes and information be shared.

The UK offered to conduct an analysis of year-end data on document abuse to determine possible common interests. Member States are to provide this information by early February so that results can be discussed at the next meeting of the G8 Migration Experts.

9. Departure and Transit Lounge Access

The US reviewed input to their paper concerning reciprocal access to departure and transit lounges. Delegations which had not yet provided comments or those wishing to provide further comments were asked to do so no later than November 15. The US undertook to circulate a revised paper early in January 2003. Further discussion of this issue will take at the first meeting under the French Presidency. At that time more consideration will be given to a potential pilot project.

Several delegations sought clarification of some points in the paper, particularly with regard to the role of officers who may assist in the examination of documents of transit passengers. The US affirmed that the role would be advisory only.

The Experts agreed to recognize and endorse related work being done in IATA/CAWG and agreed that cooperation in this matter both within and beyond the G8, including in other fora, would be beneficial.

10. Best Practices for Document and Passenger Screening

Agreement was reached on the final text. Experts agreed that the Chair could now share this document with the appropriate venue in IATA as well as with the UNHCR.

11. Other Business

In a round table format, States reported upon recent events, developments in legislation and practices, and trends in irregular migration.

The US delegation reported on developments in the Judicial Cooperation subgroup with respect to the issue of ensuring that refugee determination systems are not abused by terrorists. It was agreed that should the Judicial Cooperation subgroup call for a joint

meeting with migration and asylum experts that all delegations would ensure that such experts were present. The Judicial Cooperation subgroup should provide an agenda and expected outcomes for such a meeting.

Workplan

At the Vancouver Plenary, Heads of Delegation directed Migration Experts to develop a workplan for the medium term.

Discussion included both long term strategic plans as well as specific projects. With respect to the former, the group has agreed that information sharing and privacy issues will be studied to enhance our coordination and cooperation capabilities. Specific projects were proposed including:

- Examination of the draft UN Convention on Corruption from the migration control perspective;
- Continue to support and advance ratification and implementation both domestically and in partner countries of the UN Transnational Organized Crime Convention (TOC) and its supplementary Protocols;
- Capacity building under the terms of the UN TOC Protocols against human smuggling and trafficking;
- Recommended practices concerning external passport fraud;
- Developing a framework for sharing information on issued lost and stolen passports;
- A pilot project relating to transit and departure lounge access;
- Sharing information on the border management model developed in Canada-US Border Vision;
- Joint meetings with other subgroups;
- Examination of methodologies and best practices in maritime interdiction;
- Future operational exercises.

The above does not represent an exhaustive listing of either thematic or operational work. It was recommended that partner agencies within member states' governments also be consulted with respect to potential future projects. The Chair remains open to further suggestions.



Statement of Principles by G8 Migration Experts regarding Biometrics

G8 Migration Experts met in Montréal with the Chair of the New Technologies Working Group (NTWG) of ICAO. We reviewed options for new and ongoing cooperative efforts to facilitate international travel and security and globally interoperable biometric standards. We took note of the state of discussions in ICAO on new technologies in travel documents and reviewed the use of biometric technologies in travel documents and procedures as one of many important initiatives necessary to increase the security of the international community.

New biometric technologies offer great promise if implemented with careful scientific testing, appropriate attention to diverse circumstances of implementation and great care to protect the privacy rights of individuals. We need, for example, to protect the security of the enrollment process and to guard against misuse of biometric and related data. We are mindful of the diverse cultural norms and legal traditions of the G8 and the rest of the world that may bear on the appropriate and effective implementation of biometrics. We have become convinced that, when appropriately implemented, biometric authentication can actually enhance individual privacy (by protecting against identity fraud, for example), can facilitate travel, and can increase security.

We identified three principles to guide the establishment of a global standard for the biometric authentication of international travelers.

1. **Universality** – A full and complete common interoperable technical standard to be recommended to all nations of the world as the basis for interoperable biometric authentication of machine readable travel documents is needed.
2. **Urgency** – We commend the implementation of biometric technology as an enhanced tool to confirm identity. Delay in the implementation of functional globally interoperable systems increases unnecessarily risks to our populations.
3. **Technical Reliability** – Real world implementation of biometric authentication of international travelers will require a secure, dependable, quickly executed technical process with manageably low error rates.

We encourage the acceptance of these guiding principles and the active scientific and diplomatic participation of the member states in the NTWG of ICAO and other international venues to establish and promulgate these common standards. We strongly support G8 Member States active participation in the ICAO Technical Advisory Group on Machine Readable Travel Documents and at the NTWG.