



93rd WORLD MIGRATION DAY MESSAGE – JANUARY 2007

"Migrants not a problem but a resource to build society" says Pope

The millions of the world's refugee and migrants should not be seen as just a problem but rather a great resource for the continuing progress of the human family, said Pope Benedict XVI on the occasion of the Catholic Church's 93rd World Migration Day Message, 17th January 2007. He noted that the "phenomena of human mobility is very widespread and diversified," citing UN figures estimating that there are almost 200m migrants who have left their country of origin for economic reasons, 9m of whom are refugees and millions of others who are internally displaced in their own country. The Pope called for balanced, managed migration policies to ensure proper "legislative, juridical and administrative protection for refugees and migrants and their families, as well as a nexus of pastoral and social support for them...in the field of migration, the human person must always be placed at the centre."

For more information, visit:

www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/migration/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20061018_world-migrants-day_en.html

NATIONAL NEWS

UK Migration (Immigration, Asylum and Emigration) Statistics 2005/6

Asylum applications (excluding dependents) fell by 24% to 25,710. From this figure, 8% were granted asylum; 12% Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave; and 12% were allowed leave after appeals i.e. a total 31% grants of stay. An estimated 44,700 (including dependents) were refused asylum (the higher figure denotes the addition of backlog cases).

Main nationalities were Iranian, Somali, Eritrean, Chinese and Afghan. **Initial decisions:** 7% granted refugee status; only 5,500 awaiting an initial decision by year end, which is the lowest for more than a decade. **Appeals:** 33,940 determined; 17% allowed; 77% dismissed; 6% withdrawn. **Asylum removals:** 15, 685 (including dependents)* **Migrant workers:** 1.5 million; the sudden rise is as a result workers coming from the new EU Member States following accession in 2004.** **Emigration figures:** 359,500 emigrated from the UK in 2004, mostly to Australia, Spain, US, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, France, Germany and Cyprus.

* Foreign Office Minister, Lord Triesman, has been appointed the PM's Special Envoy on Returns. He is expected to step-up efforts to deal with obstacles to the removal of those who are here illegally; more attention will be given to working with foreign countries and international partners.

** Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU in January 2007, but work restrictions are in force.

Source: Home Office Statistical Bulletin and the Labour Force Survey

Two landmark rulings reinforce refugee rights

The first case involved Zainab Fornah, a young woman from Sierra Leone, who, after abduction and repeated rape by rebel soldiers, fled to the UK for protection. She was threatened with female genital mutilation (FGM), if she returned home. The House of Lords, the UK's Supreme Court, accepted that women facing FGM were as deserving of protection under the Refugee Convention, as people facing persecution on political or religious grounds. This judgement brings the UK courts in line with courts in Canada, the US and some European countries; it has also boosted women's campaigns for greater recognition of 'gender specific' persecution.

In the second case involved the High Court held that if an asylum seeker had never had a genuine passport (because he never dared to apply for one or his government refused him one); he could not be found guilty of the offence of using a false passport to get to safety, which he then returned to the agent. Currently, hundreds of asylum seekers have fallen foul of the criminal offence of failure to produce a passport on arrival and have then been charged and imprisoned. The judgement, delivered by Lord Chief Justice, should result in compensation for many who have been wrongly convicted; it also restores the protection which refugees need to enable them to flee to safety.

Source: Frances Webber – Garden Court Chambers, Oct 2005



Detaining young asylum seekers is unlawful admits the Home Office

The Home Office has conceded that it operated an unlawful policy in relation to the detention of scores of young asylum seekers. The admission that the policy “*did not strike the right balance*” came in a High Court test case in which detained children who said that they were under 18 were seeking damages for loss of liberty. This test case involved four children, but more than 40 others are in the pipeline seeking damages. The final numbers however could be as high as 100, say human rights NGOs. None of the claimants can be identified by Court order; some are alleged to have suffered psychological damage after being held in detention for weeks with adults. The policy was reversed in November 2005.

Unaccompanied refugee children under 18 who enter the UK are entitled to local authority care; the Home Office recognises that because of their vulnerability, they should not be kept in detention centres with adults while their claims are being processed. But High Court challenges were brought over the way immigration officers and social services assessed age-disputed cases – such claimants were treated as adults, ordered to be detained and their asylum claims “fast-tracked”. In a written declaration put to the High Court, Home Office lawyers stated that the “*Secretary of State has concluded that the approach to detention in disputed cases, prior to a change in policy on 30 November, 2005, did not strike the right balance between, on the one hand, the interest of firm and fair immigration control and, on the other hand, the importance of avoiding the detention of unaccompanied children, save in exceptional cases and limited circumstances.*”

Source: *Guardian* 29.01.07

Meanwhile, the campaign calling for the end to the detention of children in immigration detention centres, ‘No Place for a Child’, led by Save the Children, Refugee Council and Bail for Immigration Detainees, with the support of the Churches, has gained enormous support. 137 MPs signed a parliamentary motion backing the campaign with more than 13,500 members of the public in support of the campaign’s objective that there should be alternatives to the arbitrary detention of families and

children. Each year more than 2000 children and babies are detained and the figures are increasing annually.

For more information, visit: www.noplaceforachild.org

New Borders Bill – 5th legislation in eight years

The UK Borders Bill, the 5th piece of immigration legislation in 8 years, was published 26 January 2007. It will equip the new Border and Immigration Agency with a wide range of new powers to “*deter, detect and deport those breaking the rules and ensure that foreign nationals legally in the UK play their part in upholding the rules.*” The key measures in the Bill are:

- Arrest those suspected of fraudulently acquiring asylum status and investigate their crimes with powers of entry, search and seizure
- Detain people suspected of committing crimes at ports of entry
- Access data from HM Revenue and Customs to track down illegal immigrants
- Arrest people-smugglers and traffickers even if their crimes are committed outside the UK
- Oblige foreign nationals legally living in the UK to apply and carry a biometric immigration ID or face fines up to £1000
- Automatic deportation for all foreign nationals if they are convicted of serious crimes such as terrorism, drugs offences or crimes against children; they will not have a right of appeal from within the UK

The Bill receives its Commons Second Reading on 5 February 2007. The Bill is part of the on-going reform of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate ordered by the Home Secretary, John Reid. The reform will ultimately see the split of the Directorate from the Home Office as a more independent Border and Immigration Agency.

For more information, visit:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200607/uk_borders.htm



Asylum Seekers – barred from working and locked into destitution

This winter thousands of asylum seekers are suffering, forced to survive without any money – relying on food handouts or eating in soup kitchens set up by churches or charities, sleeping rough or depending on the charity of friends to sleep on floors – all this misery as a result of direct government policy. The government appears to be deliberately forcing asylum seekers into destitution in order to drive asylum numbers down or “persuade them to leave” the UK. Here are some of the measures directly affecting asylum seekers:

- Section 55 – the policy that deprives asylum seekers from support if they do not apply for asylum immediately on arrival. This policy caused suffering to thousands of asylum seekers, many of whom later went on to have the asylum claims accepted. Legal action has stopped the government from enforcing the section, but it has not been removed from legislation.
- Section 9 – the policy that allows the government to take away all benefits from asylum seekers and their families (and possibly take their children into care) if they do not cooperate with IND efforts to remove them from the UK.
- Section 4 – that allows refused asylum seekers a basic level of “hard case” support (hostel bed/board with vouchers of £35 for needs) if they, in return, sign contracts agreeing to do community work, whilst waiting to be returned to their country of origin.

Research from Amnesty International UK and Refugee Action shows how the government’s withdrawal of support from refused asylum seekers is creating a new and growing army of destitute human beings. The National Audit Office estimates that at least 150,000 people now living in destitution in the UK.

For more information, visit: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk or www.church-poverty.org.uk/campaigns/livingghosts/

Government wants

New Migration Advisory Committee

On 29 November 2006, Home Secretary John Reid announced plans to set up a new independent migration advisory committee to provide “the most

up-to-date information on labour market trends, skills shortages and the wider impact of migration, helping to ensure that migration into the UK is balanced alongside the needs of the economy and society”. The Home Office has not decided on the exact mandate and powers of the Committee; consultations are on-going. The initiative was welcomed by both the Confederation of British Industry and the Trade Union Congress. The Committee is expected to begin operations in April 2007.

New Asylum and Immigration Service Watchdog

The government announced on 19 December 2006 the formation of a new Asylum and Immigration Inspectorate in an attempt to restore public confidence in the immigration and asylum system. Liam Byrne, the Immigration Minister, said that the Inspectorate would be responsible for monitoring the overall effectiveness of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in the Home Office, the quality of its decisions, the use of its enforcement powers and the treatment of individuals.

For more information, visit: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

Accession 8 Migrant Workers: official figures top 600,000

According to recent Government figures, the total number of workers from the new EU Member States from Eastern and Central Europe, who have registered to work in the UK from May 2004 to September 2006 topped 510,000. However, if the self-employed are included the total could be as high as 600,000. These figures do not include those migrants who have not registered to work, either because they are unaware that they should register to work, or they simply ignore the rule. Those who have left the country are also not included in the figures.

For more information, visit: www.homeless.org.uk and www.tuc.org.uk



Government to sign

European Anti-Trafficking Convention

The Bishops' Conference has once again called on the Government to sign and ratify the European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. In March 2006, the Catholic Bishops issued a statement calling on the government to sign and ratify the European Convention. The most recent call, 19 January 2007, followed the announcement that the Conservative Party was in favour of signing the Anti-Trafficking Convention. Meanwhile on 22 January 2007 the Prime Minister announced the intention of the UK Government to sign the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Up until now, the UK has refused to sign the Convention because of the so-called '*liberal provisions*' on automatic reflection period (30 days) for all victims of trafficking and options of temporary residence permits for those who may be in danger if they return to their country and/or if it is necessary to assist with criminal proceedings.

It is expected that the UK will sign the Convention at the end of March 2007, in conjunction with the bicentenary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. A recent study of five local authorities by ECPAT, called '*Missing Out*', revealed that 48 of the 80 children identified as trafficked have disappeared while in the care of social services. The authors of the study warn that this may be only "*the tip of the iceberg*" and that there are likely to be hundreds of trafficked children who have escaped the radar of the social services. Social Service teams in 26 out of the 33 London boroughs have voiced concern about the issue.

For more information on trafficking, visit www.antislavery.org or the Office for Refugee Policy at www.catholic-ew.org.uk/international To read the '*Missing Out*' study, visit: www.ecpat.org.uk/press_02.html

REGIONAL NEWS – European Union

Germany's EU Presidency priorities

Germany has assumed the Presidency of the EU for the next six months (January-June 2007). Germany has set the following as its migration policy priorities:

- Fighting illegal migration and controlling migration flows; reform of the common visa law by means of a "visa code"; strengthening the Visa Information System[VIS] and the *Schengen Acquis*; strengthening the new EU Border Agency
- Improve the return of illegally present third-country-nationals; evaluate the European Commission's negotiations on Re-admission Agreements reached so far with third countries; assess and continue with the practice of Member States' joint-return flights; encourage the greater involvement of FRONTEX [the EU new Border Agency – see below for details]
- Support the European Commission's evaluation of the first phase of harmonisation of EU refugee and asylum policies [Hague] and initiate discussion for the second phase of harmonisation, with proposals to be presented in a Green Paper later this year
- Encourage discussion on the development of a EU strategy on legal migration vis-à-vis circular migration as an instrument of migration-development policy (European Commission proposals expected in September 2007)
- Protect the external borders by way of strengthening FRONTEX, the EU Border Management Agency to prevent illegal migration and human trafficking and smuggling

For more information on the EU Presidency priorities, visit: www.eu2007.de/en/The_Council_Presidency/Priorities_Programmes/

EU Border Agency (FRONTEX) needs a boost: Commissioner Frattini*

European Commission Vice-President and Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security, Franco Frattini, urged member states to offer more political, financial and material help to FRONTEX. He said that it would be impossible to prevent the arrival of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa when warmer weather starts in April. Several Member States were not sufficiently committed to FRONTEX's success. "*We want boats, helicopters, and planes in order to be ready for spring and no later than that*", he said during the Informal JHA Council in Dresden, 14-16 January, chaired by Dr Wolfgang Schauble, the German Federal Minister of the Interior.

Source: Agence Europe 16-17 January 2007

*Mr F Frattini is scheduled to speak in London, 23 February – see below for details



“Secret” Treaty of Prum to be extended

The majority of EU Member States are prepared to back the German Presidency’s proposal on extending the Treaty of Prum, sometimes known as the “Schengen III”, to the whole of the EU, a matter raised at the informal JHA in Dresden 15 January 2007. The Treaty was signed in Prum, Germany, on 27 May 2005 by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Spain, to increase cross-border police co-operation in support of criminal investigation. This includes data sharing of DNA analysis, digital fingerprinting and vehicle registration records and joint-police patrols. The German Presidency is keen to introduce the Prum Treaty into EU law. The Treaty has been ratified by three of the signatories, while several other Member States have expressed an interest in signing the Treaty.

Four Member States have entered reservations about the Treaty, mostly for reasons of cost. The UK maintains that it would prefer some provisions of the Treaty kept within the Third Pillar i.e. reinforce national sovereignty and veto powers in decision making procedures. According to the House of Lords EU Committee (4th report session 2005/6, para. 15 and 16) *“intergovernmental meetings of this type, which lacked the basic democratic requirement of accountability and transparency, have in the past led to the Schengen Agreement and the Schengen Convention. Neither EU citizens, nor their representatives, nor indeed those Member States who were not originally part of the Schengen group, had any say on these policies of fundamental importance. They were presented with a fait accompli. A more recent example is the Prum”*.

Source: Stewatch, January 2007.

For the Lords Report, visit:

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/lords_eu_select_committee.cfm

Rising death toll at the EU border

In recent times, the focus of African migration to the EU has been intense. As the legal requirement for entry to the EU tightens, more and more barriers are erected and as opportunities for a decent livelihood shrink in sub-Saharan Africa, its people have little choice but to make this journey to Europe. According to the International Organisation for

Migration (IOM) and the UN Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, over 27,000 migrants, the new “boat people”, have turned up in 2006, on the Spanish Canary Islands off the West African coast. Thousands of others either try to enter Italy via Lampedusa (25,000 in 2005) or cross the Gulf of Aden to Yemen, Saudi Arabia and beyond (20,000 in 2005). While the rescued migrants are considered to be “lucky” to have stepped onto the shores of Europe, many are not so lucky to be intercepted at sea by coast-guards and they perish with their desperate dreams. The Somali community in Sana’a, the capital of Yemen, has warned of more deaths as increasing numbers of Somali migrants make the dangerous journey to Yemen to escape the civil war at home. The warning followed the discovery of 140 bodies floating in the Gulf of Aden. In the Canary Islands, more than 500 bodies have been found in 2006, according to Spanish coast guards.

For more information from the Platform for International Co-operation on Undocumented Migrants, visit: www.picum.org

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Worldwide Refugees and Migrants’ Statistics

Refugees: Total 8m, fell by over 1m in 2005; does not include the 4.3m Palestinians refugees in Jordan, Syria, West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon

Main countries of origin: Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, DR Congo, Liberia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Vietnam

Main host countries: Pakistan, Iran, Germany

Internally Displaced People: 24m displaced within their own country

Migrants worldwide: 191m; 48.6% are women

Main countries of migrant destination: USA, Russia, Germany, the UAE

Main countries of origin: China, Philippines, India

Illegal migrants: 30m enter the global workforce every year

Migrant remittances: estimated at \$188bn, but this is likely to be higher as not all remittances are recorded; it is also said that this money is greater than the amount developing countries receive in aid. However, the latest World Bank report suggests that



remittances for 2006 are expected to reach \$199 billion, and if one takes worldwide flows, including those to high-income countries, the figure will reach \$268 billion.

Source: www.unhcr.ch / www.ilo.org / www.iom.int

Aid to refugees is faltering warns the Holy See

Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the Holy See's permanent observer to the UN Office in Geneva, criticised the international community for failing to meet the needs of migrants and refugees for "solidarity and protection". He made these remarks when addressing the Executive Committee of the UNCHR in October 2006. He pointed to the "recent flow of vulnerable Iraqi refugees throughout the Middle East, who cannot return because of continued conflict, but who are treated as stateless with no rights in the country of temporary residence". He continued, "If the international community would add to its refugee aid budget a small proportion of the increase in arms expenses – from 1996 to 2006 military expenditure increase by 34% to \$1,118b in current dollars – that would be a major response to the pain of uprooted humanity".

Source: Zenith News 06.10.06

Tearfund: Global warming is creating more environmental refugees

Global warming will trigger millions of environmental refugees unless urgent action is taken now, said a new report by Christian charity and development agency Tearfund. The report 'Feeling the Heat', released in October 2006, cites examples where the environmental exodus has already begun: in Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria and the Gobi desert in China where people, in the midst of crop failures, are fleeing their homes for towns. "There are already 25m environmental refugees and millions more thirsty and ill people living in high risk areas of the world and this figure is likely to rise by the end of the century". It makes sense politically, economically and morally, for governments to act with urgency now. The link has to be made between climate change and migration, argued Tearfund.

For more information visit www.tearfund.org/campaigning / www.cafod.org.uk and www.christianaid.org.uk

Iraq is haemorrhaging says UNHCR

One in eight Iraqis is displaced either internally or as refugees outside. According to official figures for November 2006, the number of Iraqis in Egypt was at least 100,000, with up to 40,000 in Lebanon, 700,000 in Jordan, 600,000 in Syria and 54,000 in Iran. "Iraq is haemorrhaging," said Andrew Harper the UNHCR co-ordinator for Iraq. Unofficial figures put the number of displaced even higher. "It is a critical situation, we are talking about 1.5m to 2m displaced within Iraq and at least 4m outside," said Kasaram Mufarah, the executive co-ordinator of 300 NGO aid agencies working for Iraqi refugees.

Another grim statistic is that if the current level of violence continues by the end of this year the number of displaced will rise to 2.7m – exceeding the number of people displaced in Darfur, Sudan. It has also been reported that Jordan has started imposing restrictions on the number of Iraqis entering the country. Human rights NGOs working for refugees say that the US and UK's response to the refugee crisis has been dire. The UK, for example, granted only five Iraqis refugee status, out of 1,800 who applied for asylum. In September 2006, the UK deported 27 Iraqis and another batch is due to be sent back soon, despite warnings from the UNHCR and Human Rights NGOs that deportees will face persecution and violence. The UK argues that there are safe havens in the Kurdish areas of Iraq where refugees could be sent back.

For more information, visit: www.unhcr.org

Hope in South Sudan but Darfur refugee crisis festers

The UNHCR is said to be battling the elements, logistical obstacles and security threats to help hundreds of thousands of refugees uprooted by the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region. These are the people who fled the fighting that erupted in Sudan's Darfur region in 2003, and by late 2004 some 240,000 Sudanese had fled across the border to neighbouring Chad and a further 1.6 million were displaced within Darfur, where marauding militias reportedly killed, raped and forced hundred and thousands from their homes. The UNHCR mounted a major operation in 2004, to move the vast majority of refugees to camps at a safer distance from the



volatile border. The first camp was opened in January 2004 and by September ten camps were built. The search however for new camps continues. Across the border in strife-torn Darfur itself, despite ongoing security problems, the UNHCR's monitoring team visits internally displaced people in settlements, particularly in West Darfur and near the Chad border. In Southern Sudan however the number of Sudanese refugees who have been voluntarily returned home under tripartite agreements carried out by IOM and the UNHCR have reached 100,000 and a further 100,000 are expected to return by end 2007. All returnees are assisted by the UNHCR for shelter, the World Food Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organisation for cultivation.

For more information, visit: www.unhcr.org

Sri Lanka: Tamils flee Batticaloa

Following further escalation in violence in the eastern district of Batticaloa between the Sri Lankan army and the Tamil rebel movement, the LTTE, more than 7,000 people fled the area. The fighting was concentrated on the Vaharai coastal strip, north of Batticaloa. UNHCR described the situation as one of people "starving and exhausted". UNHCR estimates that as many as 4000 individuals were killed in the fighting and the number of displaced people in the Vaharai area to almost 30,000. Access to Vaharai has been limited since October 2006 with only one convoy able to deliver relief in late November 2006. UNHCR estimates that about 465,000 people are displaced by conflict in Sri Lanka, including 204,000 people forced to flee by violence since April 2006. There is fear that the increased level of violence may stoke a full-scale renewal of the civil-war that has claimed more than 65,000 lives over two decades.

For more information, visit: www.unhcr.org

CAMPAIGNS / RESOURCES / BRIEFINGS

Independent Asylum Commission (IAC) launched

The IAC is a civil society initiative, conducting an independent nationwide review of the UK asylum system. The Commission will gather information by

holding public hearings, taking evidence and conducting original research. The aim is to prepare the ground for a comprehensive, authoritative and independent review of the UK asylum system and suggest recommendations to inform political parties in advance of the next general election.

The Commission is co-chaired by Sir John Waite, a former judge of the High Court (until recently Chair of UNICEF, UK) and Ifath Nawaz, Chair of the Association of Muslim lawyers. The Commission held its first of seven regional hearings in Birmingham, focusing on the government's asylum determination procedures and its impact on refugees in the West Midlands area. Sir John Waite said that the evidence so far had raised "real concerns" about Britain's asylum system.

For more information, contact Roxanne Abdulali on 020 7375 1658 or Roxanne.abdulali@cof.org.uk

For media enquiries, contact Jonathan Cox on 07919 484066 or jonathan.cox@cof.org.uk

Faith Groups join International Coalition Against Migrant Detention

Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and Muslim faith groups were among religious organisations supporting the formation of an international coalition challenging the global detention of migrants and refugees. The Coalition was launched in the Vatican in 2006 with a round-table, addressed by Cardinal Martino (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace), Alan Naccheche (President of the Jewish Bnai Brith Organisation), and Mario Scialoja (President of the Italian Muslim League). The session was chaired by Rev Lluís Magrina SJ, the International Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service.

The Steering Committee includes Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Jesuit Refugee Service, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and the World Council of Churches. Representatives from 100 human rights groups from 36 countries worldwide attended. All agreed to focus on the inhuman way that migrants and refugees are treated and to campaign for alternatives to detention.

For more information, visit: www.idcoalition.org



British and Irish Association for Mission Studies (*Reflecting Christian Witness Globally*) is holding its 10th biennial residential conference, commemorating the abolition of the slave trade on the themes of 'Global Migration: What missiological perspectives?' and 'Strangers in our midst: Mission and Migration', 2-5 July 2007 at the Henry Martin Centre, Westminster College, Cambridge CB3 0AA.

For details, call 01223 741088 or visit www.biams.org.uk

The Internationalisation of EU Asylum Policy (OXFAM publication)

European policy makers have already introduced measures to limit and deter asylum seekers, but now asylum policy is being moved overseas. This study traces the fast moving internationalisation of EU asylum policy against the very principles of refugee protection to which the EU has publicly affirmed. Besides policy analysis, this book also presents an agenda for action to ensure that the internationalisation of asylum policy pays full regard to the rights and protection of individuals.

To order a copy, write to: BEBC Distribution, PO Box 1496, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH12 3YD or call 01202 712933 or email oxfam@bebc.co.uk

University of Oxford – Refugee Studies Centre – Hilary Term 2007

The Hilary Term has seminars as well as workshops and courses in politics and forced migration.

For more information, visit: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants – Training programme: now available on the JCWI website.

Follow the link to download information on courses starting from Feb. – Sept. 2007
www.jcwi.org.uk/training/trainingservices.html

European Slave Trade: Character, Causes, Challenges: organised by Ireland's Centre for Reconciliation Studies, Institute for International Integration Studies and Ireland en Route, 3-5 July 2007. The conference seeks to contribute to the exploration, analysis and actions to combat the modern forms of slavery in contemporary Europe.

For more information, visit: www.europeanslavery.com/

Immigrants: Your country needs them by Philippe Legrain

Politicians and people who know, keep telling us day in and day out that migration is good for the economy. But tabloid UK's front pages rage against the ruinous impact of migration on housing, jobs, crimes and terrorism. If migrants are a burden how come the economy is booming? If they are stealing jobs how come unemployment is so low? These are the big questions Philippe Legrain tackles head on in this energetic book.

To order a copy (£11.99 with free UK p&p), call Guardian Book Service on 0870 836 0875.

Human Trafficking: The Action Plan – A Panel Discussion, 7 March 2007, 6.30pm at the Graduate Centre, London Metropolitan University. A panel of experts have been brought together by the Women's Library, London Metropolitan University and the John Grieve Centre for Community Policing, to explore the government's Action Plan to tackle human trafficking. The panel will concentrate on sexual exploitation, the protection of human rights, support for victims and actions to reduce demand. The session will be chaired by Martha Kearney, the *Newsnight* presenter and will include Vernon Coaker, Home Office Minister responsible for Trafficking, and Detective Chief Superintendent Nick Kinsella, Director of the newly formed Human Trafficking Centre in Sheffield. The session is free but places are limited.

For more information phone the University's Women's Library 020 7320 2222.

Future of EU Migration and Integration Policies
A lecture by Franco Frattini, Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner responsible for Justice Freedom and Security. 23 February 2007, 11am-12pm, Hong Kong Theatre, Clement House, London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE.

For details, call 020 7955 6043 or email events@lse.ac.uk



ICMC launches DIY book on migrant workers

The International Catholic Migration Commission established to protect the rights and needs of migrants worldwide has just published a book sometimes described as a do-it-yourself kit entitled “*Strengthening the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families with International Human Rights Treaties.*” This book examines the latest of the seven core UN Human Rights Treaties: the Migrant Workers Convention, which is the first international treaty that gathers in one place all the universal rights that apply specifically to migrant workers. In force since 2003, the Convention has been ratified by 34 countries to date and more countries are expected to sign/ratify in 2007. The UK has so far refused to sign, let alone ratify the Convention.

Copies of the book are available on request email: secretariate.ch@icmc.net. Visit www.december18.net for more information.

Ten ways to protect migrant workers - PICUM

This report from the Platform for International Co-operation on Undocumented Migrants relates the ten ways in which States, especially in the developed parts of the world can provide for the rights and welfare migrants. It also presents a wide range of good practices/examples of the many ways in which NGOs, Trade Unions, and other actors can uphold the rights of undocumented migrants.

Visit www.picum.org for more information and the report.

This Churches' Refugee Network Newsletter was prepared by:

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