

Chairman's Statement for the 2016 International Forum on Immigration Inspection

The 2016 International Forum on Immigration Inspection, hosted by the Ministry of Public Security of P.R.C., was held from 14th to 15th June 2016 in Guangzhou, P.R.C. The forum was co-hosted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Immigration Department of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of P.R.C. The main theme for the forum was *Making Joint Efforts to Build a Safe and Orderly Immigration Clearance Environment, Working Together to Facilitate Efficient and Convenient International Exchange*. Mr. LI Chunsheng, Vice Governor of the Guangdong Province of P.R.C., and Mr. William Lacy Swing, Director General of IOM, attended the opening ceremony. 114 delegates from 30 countries, regions and 4 international organizations attended the forum.

Delegates noted that the Immigration Service Standards, discussed and adopted at the 2014 International Forum on Immigration Inspection, had been widely implemented by participating countries and regions in their respective immigration inspection fields. These countries and regions benefited significantly from their active promotion and implementation of the Standards. Delegates expressed renewed support for the Standards.

Delegates engaged in in-depth discussions on such thematic issues as the management for immigration service, combating irregular migration, prevention of cross-border movement of terrorists, application of bio-metrics

technology, and automatic/electronic self-service immigration clearance systems. These interactive discussions produced consensus on the following 3 points:

First, all delegates expressed deep appreciation for China's sustained efforts to promote cooperation and build a platform for international immigration inspection. China has hosted three consecutive sessions of this international conference. It was recognized that the International Forum on Immigration Inspection has been evolving as an important platform for communication and cooperation among immigration inspection authorities around the world, notably for sharing best practices as well as enhancing mutual trust and understanding. Delegates believed that it was essential to continue to build such a mechanism for consultation and exchange and supported China's continuing endeavors in this direction. Delegates looked forward to the 2018 International Forum on Immigration Inspection to be hosted by China once again.

Second, delegates viewed with utmost seriousness and concern the threat of terrorism. It was pointed out that countries the world over are confronted with the challenge of taking firm actions against terrorists who attempt to use fraudulent or counterfeit documents to cross borders. The common view was shared that combating irregular migration was a critical significance in the fight against terrorism. Progress in that direction could be achieved by building capacity to identify fraudulent documents, further enhancing communication and cooperation with one another, establishing broad-based information sharing mechanisms, promptly disseminating the newest versions

of their travel documents, exchanging cutting-edge technology and sharing expertise on document examination, sharing information about seized fraudulent documents and, in general terms, working together to build a safe and orderly immigration clearance environment.

Third, delegates acknowledged that the trend towards widespread adoption of electronic travel documents had provided a solid foundation for self-service immigration clearance. Self-service immigration clearance has played an active role in maintaining cross-border security, improving efficiency and alleviating pressure at border checkpoints. It is also an effective means to reconcile tensions between the increasing number of passengers and relatively limited human resources. Self-service immigration clearance will shape the future of international immigration inspection. A number of countries and regions have achieved rapid development in this area. The relevant countries are willing to improve and increase the sharing of information and experience in this field.