

Examen d'accréditation d'interprètes de langue française 2021 – Anglais (SERIE 1)

Anglais / discours 3

Réunion : #GlobalChallenges debate

Date : Novembre 2017

Durée : 10:24

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Difficulté : niveau 3

Introduction : Intervention de la Représentante spéciale du Secrétaire général sur les migrations internationales. Il sera question du Pacte mondial pour des migrations sûres, ordonnées et régulières.

Éléments à fournir (vocabulaire) : aucun

Let me just maybe share with you a few observations that I can extract from the process so far. From Pilipino women migrant workers in Gulf countries to regularization exercises in Morocco, there are a multiplicity of both problems and solutions that are easily obscured when a purely Western-centric point of view dominates the analysis. Even within the West, emphasis moves from preoccupations with what are called sometimes “flows” of migrants into Europe to “stocks” of irregular migrants, for instance in the United States.

And I pause here to comment on the use of language through which we perpetuate very unhelpful stereotypes, if not worse. And in this field, it's quite shocking to see how the use of language, in a very invidious way, has sometimes really poisoned the public debate. Just this

expression “stock” and “flow” which is, I understand, it’s a technical expression used by population experts and I really do believe that this one is purely innocent. But I can’t help be aware that it analogizes migrants to merchandise or stocks, livestock actually. There are many other expressions that I believe are less innocent but very deliberately invidious and they do actually aim and sometimes succeed at poisoning public opinion.

“Illegal” rather than “irregular” migrant I think now has really been pushed back but was the dominant expression used until quite recently. Expressions such as “hordes”, “waves”, “swarms” rather than simply “large numbers”, “contract workers” rather than “migrant workers”, which very conveniently obscures the vulnerabilities that come from being a foreigner. So this is just a side issue but I think, in this field, we need to be very alive of the public discourse being at times entirely hijacked by this kind of vocabulary.

So, approaching the Global Compact as a truly global issue will be one of its many challenges but also one of its key opportunities. The challenge will be to be relevant to all, without drowning in detailed specificities. And the opportunity will be to rise above the exaggerated importance of issues that are time and place sensitive and to put in place a framework that will serve all, all of us well, now and in the future.

So a second observation on my part is how the approach to migration through the Global Compact so far has re-centered the conversation, importantly so, around development issues rather than around almost exclusively security concerns, where it occupied - I believe - a somewhat exaggerated space, at least in many corners of Western public opinion, certainly until recently and maybe still to date. So, development is now I think the proper anchor for moving forward on this issue.

And finally, before I return to some of these development-related considerations and in line with my previous comments about the choice of vocabulary, I believe that the last year or so has contributed to the beginning, the beginning of a change of narrative. In this field, as in many others, reality is much, much better than perception. And I think this reality has to take hold if we are going to succeed, in the Global Compact, in changing the narrative or at least having a more balanced narrative is going to be very much a part of the exercise. And this reality I think is gaining ground.

Outside informed circles such as this one, knowledge about the impact of remittances, for instance, is often very limited. And yet when I, like I'm sure many of you, have opportunity to discuss this issue with political decision makers for instance, I found that some are not particularly well informed about the importance of many aspects of migrations, particularly this one.

For instance, did they know that 420 billion dollars in remittances, that migrants made to developing countries in 2016, represented some 15% of their earnings and about 3 times the total amount of Official Development Aid? Often, they didn't know that. Well, then surely, they knew that remittances often amount to more than 20% of GDP in some countries? Really? they said. Had they considered that... what this impact would be if we could actually reduce the cost of transfer of these remittances from the current average of about 7.5% to 3%, as we've already committed to do? No idea. And they often had no idea that we actually know how we could do that, that is reduce the cost of transfer of money. And that, actually, there's a lot that they could do themselves, as political decision makers: increase competition amongst money transfer providers and reduce the oversight requirements which, as part of money laundering and financing of terrorism preoccupations, have actually taken the banks out of a business that is too cumbersome to be lucrative.

This is something that political decision makers, you would have thought, should be right on top of. And did they know, while we are at it, that if we could improve financial awareness on the parts of the recipients of these individually modest sums of money, the impact on developing countries would be even greater? If they didn't know everything I've mentioned up to now, there is a good chance they didn't know that part either. But I believe that this is now starting to be good news because this reality amongst others brings the conversation about migration to a much, much better place. And the more we talk about this issue, this reality, the more I think we have a chance of getting policy choices to be made not on the basis of mythology and perception

but reality. And in making sound policy, the foundations have to be facts, not myths, not stereotype, not perception but reality.

So, let me turn briefly to the subject of development more broadly. The relationship between migration and development is at once obvious and deceptive. We have an immensely useful starting point, I believe, as migration is not only explicitly recognized as part of the sustainable development goals, the big United Nations development agenda, but it is actually recognized as a tool to achieve maybe, from my point of view, the most surprisingly universally accepted development objective that is to reduce inequalities within and between countries, that is SDG number 10.

So here is the link between migration and development. We will facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration as a way of reducing inequalities within and between countries. That's the framework and that much is already very clearly stated. What is not always so clearly stated but is often implied in many policy discussions about migration is that development is good because it will reduce migration. So you might ask, well which one is it? I would suggest the following: improved inclusive development may in time change the configuration of migratory patterns.

As people are lifted out of poverty, their life choices will improve, including their choice whether to migrate, either to improve their skills or to seek greater economic opportunities abroad. Their

departure then opens work opportunities for others in their country of origin thereby accelerating, alongside with increased financial and other often intangible transfers of benefits, the whole development potential. And as long as their migration takes place in a well-regulated environment, it also benefits countries of destination, thereby contributing to their own development. I should point out that in developed countries, development is usually called prosperity.

Further development progress therefore offers more opportunities at home and may, may, in time, reduce the impetus to leave. It may also serve as an incentive to return for the many who will by then have lived and worked abroad and who may see opportunities to transfer their skills back home. Thank you.