

## Conference Topic

No. 3 Social, Political and Cultural Implications of Emerging Hemispheric Relations.

### **Migration and the Caribbean: A Critical Analysis**

#### Abstract

Migration may be defined as the movement of people and capital from one location to another and may be local, regional and international. It may also be voluntary or involuntary. In the Caribbean region (and for the purpose of this paper with specific reference to the 15 member CARICOM region) migration has long been associated with both people and capital. The process involves the transfer of money, goods and services, information and ideas and inevitably various cultural aspects of different islands which are being incorporated and synthesized in what can be called “A Caribbean culture’.

Some of the major factors that influence the process of migration in the Caribbean include:

- a) the processes of trade liberalization and globalization
- b) movements for regional integration
- c) the environment/ecological vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDs) and
- d) efforts to met sustainable human development goals and eradicate poverty.

According to the World Migration Report 2000, a high level of intra-regional movement of labour heightened in the 1990s, which had resulted in the transformation of many of the countries in the region into receiving societies. So intense were some of these transformations that in Antigua and Barbuda, for example, Sunday Mass was said in Spanish, radio stations read the news in Spanish and Spanish troops paraded during the island annual carnival celebration. It was also noted though that attached to the contribution of migrations was the cost that was reflected in the increase in demand for social services and infrastructure, as well as social tensions.

Undoubtedly then governments are being forced to formulate policy as it pertains to migrants and migration and to examine and understand the effects of migration on society. This need has become even more urgent in light of the formation of the CSME which allows for free movement of people of certain categories and which is progressing very rapidly especially in the islands like Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados.

In this paper the authors propose to examine the issues of migration in the Caribbean under the following themes:

- a) Migration trends and patterns in the Caribbean
- b) Migration and its impact on development – addressing the issues of return Migration, remittances and the CSME
- c) Intraregional migration and its impact on social development policy and equity – education, health, safety nets, crime and equity.
- d) Migrant legislation and practice in the CSME
- e) Country Case Study – Trinidad & Tobago
- f) Recommendations for future research and policy initiatives.

It is the view of the authors that the issues involved with migration need to be critically analyzed since among other things it is bound to have an impact on any country's economic and social growth.