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**Migrants and Sending States:
Reflections on the Relationship**

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CARIM

The Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) was created at the European University Institute (EUI, Florence), in February 2004 and co-financed by the European Commission, DG AidCo, currently under the Thematic programme for the cooperation with third countries in the areas of migration and asylum.

Within this framework, CARIM aims, in an academic perspective, to observe, analyse, and forecast migration in Southern & Eastern Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Countries (hereafter Region).

CARIM is composed of a coordinating unit established at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) of the European University Institute (EUI, Florence), and a network of scientific correspondents based in the 17 countries observed by CARIM: Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Palestine, Senegal, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

All are studied as origin, transit and immigration countries. External experts from the European Union and countries of the Region also contribute to CARIM activities.

CARIM carries out the following activities:

- Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan migration database;
- Research and publications;
- Meetings of academics and between experts and policy makers;
- Migration Summer School;
- Outreach.

The activities of CARIM cover three aspects of international migration in the Region: economic and demographic, legal, and socio-political.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: www.carim.org

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1. The major eras in sending state-emigrant

While scholarly attention has been late in coming to the subject, there is a long history of the institutional involvement of sending states in the lives of their citizens living abroad. While each sending country has its own unique experience, an examination of the post-World War II history of this involvement reveals some commonalities that allow for identifying three distinct eras. Understanding the characteristics of these three eras is important in order to identify the problems involved in and possible solutions for greater immigrant integration.

The earliest form—in some cases this began before the end of colonialism-- was active state involvement in the process of recruiting labor to go abroad, ranging from offices that screened people for skills and health, to programs that prepared those who were to head to Europe for the societies they would encounter. The terminology that was used at the time to refer to them, some variation on “workers abroad,” made clear how the state viewed them: not primarily in terms of their nationality or their humanity, but in terms of what they did, their economic role. At the time, the role of remittances was not a focus; instead these migrants were valued as “one less unemployed” at home. State concern in the early period did not generally include any sort of services or protection of the migrants.

With independence, a new set of institutions was established, with the model at least for the Maghreb states, that of the *Amicale des Algériens en Europe* (AAE). The new wave had a different function based on the purported security needs of the post-independence regimes. Born of the *Fédération de France du FLN*, following independence, the AAE served symbolically and practically to reconfirm the tie between the state and the emigrants. However, the central role was that of surveillance and control of the community. The AAE reportedly sent daily detailed reports to Algiers regarding developments in the community in France. Tunisia also established its *amicale* as an extension of the authoritarian state at home. Although theoretically independent of the consular networks, in practice they often had their headquarters inside the consulate and were in fact barely veiled cells of the PSD. Morocco was the last of these states to establish its own *amicale*, in 1974, but its function was similar: it participated in organizing national and religious celebrations, but it also came to play the role of intermediary between the Moroccan and a range of institutions back home. Membership in and cooperation with the *amicale* could guarantee assistance with everything from repatriation for burial to land purchases. Failure to do so could complicate matters; and political activism of a sort not blessed by the monarchy could mean harassment or passport confiscation upon return.

The third era begins roughly in the late 1980s and may be characterized as the era in which emigrants began to be recognized as human beings and citizens. While the security concerns of the sending states vis-à-vis their migrants did not end, they nonetheless began to use a different language and address different issues through the institutions they either established or restructured. The reasons behind the shift are easily identified. The gradual closing of the doors of immigration into most of Western Europe in the mid-1970s decreased immigrant mobility and ultimately led to policies of family reunification which transformed the emigrant communities from ones that were largely populated by unaccompanied men, to societies of (sometimes multi-generational) families. The challenges of addressing the changing composition, work horizons and residence expectations of these new formations triggered changes in how sending states began to treat their nationals abroad.

The adoption of new language, like “Tunisians resident abroad,” or “the Moroccan community abroad,” is indicative of at least some recognition on the part of the sending state that the emigrants had to be understood as more than simply individual workers. Part of what must have influenced this transformation involved influences from the host states as well. With enfranchisement a possibility, and with a second generation being born, increasing numbers of these emigrants had the opportunity to acquire citizenship from a European state. For others, growing numbers of European countries offered forms of political participation (such as voting or holding office at a local level) which gave even the non-citizens a greater stake in their host country. The sending state institutional changes that we see

during this period were likely the product of both growing international norms regarding the rights and protection of migrants as well as a kind of defensive action by the sending states to continue to lay claim to the economic and cultural loyalty of “their” nationals abroad.

In keeping with the (sometimes brutal) authoritarianism of the sending state regimes, the institutions established during the second era appear to have been successful primarily in politically intimidating large numbers of emigrants. As a result, they led the average emigrant to try to keep his/her distance from them. People were involved with them only if they had no other choice, or if they basically accepted the patron-client relationship that was implicit. They almost certainly made more difficult the task of the new wave of institutions of the third era. The experiences suggest that treating the issues of migrant collectivities as primarily in security terms is a prescription for marginalization and alienation—whether from the sending state or the host state.

2. Cultural and economic policies during the third era

The economic loyalty of these migrants became increasingly important as various sending states faced deteriorating economic conditions or crises. A migrant was no longer just one less unemployed national, s/he was the source of critical hard currency, which helped to shore up state finances, and which enabled poor and middle class families to build homes, acquire modern appliances, send children to school, improve the quality of nutrition, etc. Sending states reached these economic conclusions at varying times, but all gradually put in place facilities to try ensure continuingly high levels of remittances. In some cases this involved simply instituting favorable currency conversion and transfer rates or the right to open bank accounts in hard currency at preferential rates. In the case of Morocco, branches of the Banque Populaire were opened on embassy and consular grounds, to encourage migrants to use home country, rather than host country, financial institutions. Some put in place special institutions to inform potential migrant investors of opportunities back home, or to cut through otherwise highly bureaucratic and burdensome practices associated with trying to invest or open businesses. Special tax breaks on equipment have also been put in place.

The sending states appear to have concluded that the extension of the migrants’ European residence horizon, as well as the growing indicators of integration abroad (family reunification, raising families, the possibility of buying property, and even acquiring citizenship) threatened the long-standing remittances ties. The thinking in the late 1990s and early 2000s was that the sense of attachment to the original sending country would diminish as the third and perhaps fourth generations of these families were born. If the monies were to continue to flow to the sending state, that state would have to develop more reasons for why, for example, a French citizen of Algerian origin, or a Dutch citizen of Moroccan origin would continue to have an interest in sending money to his/her parents’ or grandparents’ countries of birth.

Morocco and Tunisia also devoted special efforts to making the summer “pilgrimage home” less stressful. In cooperation with national airlines, national shipping or transport companies, they worked to expand and improve services, from increasing the number of flights to providing bottles of water to migrant families waiting to board ferries or clear customs.

However, there were clearly limits to the economic and logistical services the countries could offer. Hence, in parallel, state institutions also worked to develop cultural services which were also certainly intended to reinforce the migrants’ sense of attachment to the sending country while laying the basis of such loyalty among the next generation. Here one finds a range of experiments (depending upon the arrangements made between the sending country and host state) in the field of language classes, religious instruction as well as the more traditional sponsorship of celebrations of national holidays. In addition, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia have organized special camps, tours or language programs specifically for the children of migrants who return “home” during the summer vacation. In these settings, young people not only learn more about their parents’ home country, but also have the opportunity to develop community through the friendships they make during these experiences.

While these economic policies and institutions of the third era finally recognized the migrant and his or her family as human beings, with at least some basic citizenship rights, there continued to be a problem of policy formation. These initiatives were conceived of and implemented in a top-down fashion. Rather than first carefully studying and listening to members of the migrant communities themselves, state officials and employees determined what was needed and proceeded to the implementation stage. As a result, although many policies may have been well-intentioned, they have often fallen short of or missed completely the most pressing needs of the emigrants and their families.

3. The importance of sending state political institutions.

While the various economic and culturally oriented programs and policies mentioned above have been the highest profile among sending state initiatives toward their nationals abroad, some key political institutions should also be carefully considered in the context of a set of discussions concerned with the degree to which sending state and host state goals may be either complementary or contradictory.

One particularly important and growing phenomenon around the world is that of the participation of emigrants in elections in the sending state. Such processes raise all kinds of potentially thorny questions of dual citizenship as well as logistics. Supporters of extending the franchise outside the national territory base their argument on the normative grounds that the emigrants' citizenship entitles them to participate in elections. Opponents insist that while residency has generally not been sufficient for the rights to political participation, it has long been regarded as a necessary condition.

Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia have all had experiences with expatriate voting. Indeed, Algeria, which accorded its nationals the right to vote from abroad in 1976, was the third non-democracy in the world to institute such a policy. Morocco actually created 5 parliamentary seats to represent expatriates before the 1984 elections. They were subsequently cancelled, but Moroccans abroad have continued to lobby for the reinstatement of their right to vote. In Lebanon there has been a broad-based move in civil society to change the law to allow for expatriate voting, and voices have been raised in Egypt and Jordan as well to permit their expatriates to participate in elections..

Allowing for actual voting from abroad (as opposed to emigrants' having the right to vote by mail or return home to cast a ballot) raises a host of questions for the receiving state. Does the state want to encourage this kind of deep political affiliation with another country? Where will polling be held? (In the case of Algerian elections held in France the Algerian cultural centers were used, but French security was provided.) What provisions are made for campaigning? Certainly TV, radio and the internet reach most potential voters, but what about actual campaign appearances in the host country by sending country candidates? And particularly when sending country "communal" issues may divide the migrant community (Turk and Kurd in Germany; Kabyle and Arab in Algeria), what implications may a campaign and voting have for the question of integration?

While the Algerian presidential elections in 1995 attracted great interest abroad, participation levels in subsequent elections have been far lower. Nevertheless, since the phenomenon is growing—as of May 2007 115 countries and territories around the world had some kind of provisions for voting abroad—this is certainly an issue that will increase in importance and the issues it raises will be central to sending state-host state relations.

4. The impact of current events

If experiences elsewhere in the world are any guide, the recent revolts/revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt (and Libya as I write) are almost certain to introduce changes into the relationship between post-Mubarak, post-Ben Ali and post-Qaddafi regimes and their respective communities abroad.

In the case of Tunisia, while we have seen some initial illegal exodus of migrants, we have also seen the return from Europe of large numbers of exiles, hoping to make a contribution to rebuilding

the republic. Depending upon how the regime change plays out in Libya the same may well be true there, as an estimated 2 million Libyans live abroad, many in Europe. Programs to mobilize the business and technical expertise of expatriates/emigrants to assist the sending country, even if only for short term assignments have been attempted by a number of countries in the past. (The UNDP Tokten program was designed precisely to draw on such human resources for the developing world.) Such programs could become far more robust in the context of less authoritarian sending state settings, and European host/receiving countries could be particularly helpful in facilitating such exchanges.

One should also expect, if more participatory political systems emerge, that the new regimes would be more sensitive to the needs of their emigrant communities by taking a bottom-up, rather than a traditional top-down approach to addressing their concerns. With greater freedom of honest expression a likely possibility, the emigrant communities may feel more willing to cooperate with and participate in sending state government programs. If they feel more empowered to actually speak their minds, they could provide invaluable information about their situations to enable state officials to adopt appropriate policies and programs. Finally, the new regimes are likely to feel a greater degree of responsibility toward all their people, resident and emigrant, and hence be even stronger advocates for their rights on a number of fronts, both at home and abroad.

5. Impact of Source State Policies on Host State Integration

Trying to discern the impact of the policies of sending states on the process of integration in receiving states depends in part upon the definition of integration on the European end. For example, does integration mean complete or overwhelming relinquishment of any sense of attachment to the sending state? If so, then such policies are obviously problematic. However, if integration means successfully building a professional and family life in which the (once) immigrant family can take pride in its origins, while also valuing its new or adopted country, then there are indeed examples of gradual change in sending state discourse in just that direction. Tunisia was perhaps the first state to accept formally that many of its emigrants were not likely to return, and hence rather than shaming Tunisians abroad into rejecting any form of integration in Europe, it began to celebrate and indeed encourage it. A Tunisian settled and content in Europe was reconstructed an asset to both societies. The state therefore strongly urged Tunisians to set an example, to be ambassadors of a sort abroad by living as law-abiding and productive members of European societies. Morocco has also moved from the days when Hassan II visited France and urged his subjects there to “remain Moroccan.” It, too, seems to have come to the pragmatic realization that most of these migrants and their descendants will never return to Morocco to live, but that a successful life in Europe does not have to contradict maintaining a positive (economic, political, cultural) attachment to the kingdom.

Hence, in both these cases, the state has understood that there is an advantage in providing the members of these communities with programs and services which enable them to interact with the home country as easily as possible, without what were often earlier attempts to shame them for the degree to which they were becoming increasingly settled and at ease in Europe. As more sending states come to these conclusions, and as long as anti-immigrant parties in Europe do not undermine them, it would seem that the battle for integration is one in which the institutions of both sending and receiving states may have an increasing degree of common ground.