

**PROFESSOR H.A. DE S. GUNASEKERA
MEMORIAL ORATION 2014**



**18th September 2014
at
4.00pm**

**Senate Room
University of Peradeniya**

*Department of Economics & Statistics
And the
Professor. H. A. de S. Gunasekera Memorial Trust Fund*

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: MYTHS AND FACTS

**The Professor H.A. de S. Gunasekera
Memorial Oration 2014**

**University of Peradeniya
18 September 2014**

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18 September 2014

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Vice-Chancellor, Members of Professor Gunasekara's family, Members of the organizing committee, teachers, colleagues, and friends from my Peradeniya days, students, and distinguished members of the audience. I am happy to see many familiar faces in the audience. I am very sad to miss my close friend and esteemed colleague, Prof. Ranjith Amarasinghe who passed away recently.

It is indeed a great privilege and honour to be invited to deliver the Memorial Oration for Professor H.A. de. S. Gunasekera, my revered teacher, Guru, mentor and well-wisher. My profuse thanks go to the joint organisers - the Department of Economics and Statistics, University of Peradeniya, and the Prof. H.A. de S. Gunasekera Memorial Trust Fund – for this kind invitation.

Let me mention that I had heard of Professor Gunasekera even before I entered the University of Peradeniya, because of the unfortunate controversy surrounding his long overdue appointment to the Chair of Economics. I consider myself very fortunate to be directly taught by him as a student majoring in monetary economics, and later to work under his guidance as a junior staff member.

I recall a visit to his house in Augusta Hill in my second year to get my fifth standard govt. scholarship form urgently signed. I had to wait since the Professor had gone out. Then one of the little daughters – not sure which one – used to appear every two minutes or so, and kept asking me all sorts of questions. I still remember her last question 'Oya ape thaththata aasada'? (Do you like our father?) I immediately replied in the affirmative, and managed to escape further ordeal.

Taking off from there, let me state that it was much more than liking – profound respect, deep admiration and unbound loyalty to the great teacher that Prof. Gunasekera was, and the noble intellectual and professional traditions he represented. This is what brings me here all the way from abroad to deliver this lecture in honour of his memory.

Despite his stern appearance, he was a very kind person at heart. When I first joined as an assistant lecturer in 1968, I went for my first meeting to his office in the 'takaran' building - the so-called 'Second Arts Building', which I always thought was a disgrace to the renowned solid architecture of the Peradeniya campus, still not being in place. He asked me very kindly which school I came from, and whether I could deliver lectures in English medium – when I mentioned 'Weeraketiya Central School', he reassured me that the student numbers were very small, and I could go slow.

I can narrate another incident. When I was working as an assistant lecturer, I had to take a tutorial assignment for final year students in Prof. Gunasekera's class. He had set a topic with a quotation, and try as I might, I could not find the source. As a last resort, I mustered enough courage and approached him and told him frankly - "Sir, you have set this topic, but I myself have difficulty in understanding it". I was surprised how kindly he explained it all.

He was not only an academician, but was directly involved in practising his theories serving as the Chairperson of the People's Bank and more importantly later as the Secretary of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs from 1970-1977. We

were lucky to have him back as Professor at Peradeniya for a short spell before he joined the University of Colombo.

Professor Gunasekera was a great believer and true practitioner of the motto – “Plain living, High thinking”, which Mahatma Gandhi himself attributed to a Western philosopher.

His untimely death was a great shock to us all. It was a very sombre day in the Department of Economics, and I recall Professor Hewavitharana with tears in his eyes going through some old documents of Professor Gunasekera. He revealed that Prof. Gunasekera’s Ph.D. thesis examination committee of the London School of Economics had commented that his thesis was of such high quality that it deserved the higher degree of Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) rather than a simple Ph.D.! This is obvious from the monumental work published under the title “From Dependent Currency to Central Banking in Ceylon: An Analysis of Monetary Experience 1825-1957”, which the previous orators have also highly commended.

Now let me start with the theme of my lecture today.

The subject of my presentation is “International migration and development: Myths and facts”. To my knowledge the issue of migration was not one of the areas that Professor Gunasekera worked on, but as we all know, development issues were certainly very close to his heart.

1. International migration: features and trends

International migration has emerged as a priority issue on the global agenda in the past decade or more, partly triggered by the phenomenal increase in the volume of migrant remittances and its implications for the migration-development nexus. Principle 15 of the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration states that: “The contribution of labour migration to employment, economic growth, development and the alleviation of poverty should be recognized and maximized for the benefit of both origin and destination countries” (ILO, 2006: 29). The issue continues as a priority at the global level as reflected in the 2013 second UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (3-4 October) and the ongoing debates on its inclusion in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, successor to the Millennium Development Goals ending next year. As the ILO Director-General’s Report to the 2014 International Labour Conference on Fair Migration noted, migration is “a key feature of today’s world of work and one which raises complex policy challenges” (ILO, 2014a: 1).

Yet migration is as old as history, and by no means a new phenomenon. As Professor Nigel Harris remarked: “*For much of human history, movement – migration - has been the norm: an endless search for new hunting grounds, new pastures, new sources of goods to be traded, new means of work. The rise of the modern state changed all that*” (Harris 2002: 9). The UN Secretary-General’s Report to the first High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, 2006 stated: “*Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of the individual’s will to overcome adversity and to live a better life*”. (United Nations, 2006: 5).

Migration is however, one of the most misunderstood phenomena at global, regional and national levels with plenty of anti-migrant sentiments, stereotyping of migrant workers, and racist xenophobic attitudes, often fuelled by politicians and the media (ILO, 2014a; IOM, 2011). The 9/11 events and the related approach to migration as a security and “war on terror” issue have affected the image and perceptions of international migration quite adversely. Migrants are often accused of stealing jobs from national workers, posing threats to national security in destination countries, driving up crime rates and proving a big strain on public services.

The IOM World Migration Report 2011 states: “Few areas of public policy are subject to greater misrepresentation in public and political discourse, yet more influenced by public opinion, than international migration. ... Accurately informing relevant stakeholders and the wider public about migration may be the single most important policy tool in all societies faced with increasing diversity (IOM, 2011: xiii).

Public perceptions are shaped by the media, personal experiences and political debates. Even before the current economic crisis, many myths had been circulating on migration. The current UK debate involving high level politicians portraying migrants even from the European Union as ‘welfare and benefit tourists’ and ‘taking away jobs from nationals’ challenges the free mobility regime principles attained over decades. In times of difficult economic conditions such as the continuing global economic and financial crisis, political discourse in many western countries has tended to reinforce negative attitudes to migration scapegoating migrants as the source of the problem (ILO, 2014a). According to a Transatlantic Trends Survey, perceptions of immigration as a problem or opportunity have changed little since 2008: In 2011, 52 per cent of Europeans and 53 per cent of Americans surveyed saw immigration as more of a problem than an opportunity, with the UK showing the highest pessimism (68 per cent) (GMF, 2011).

The objective of my lecture is to debunk some myths surrounding international migration and migrant workers on the basis of empirical research findings and highlight some important facts. I will be selective in choosing the popular myths and the facts, and in the last part I will pose some issues on the role of international migration in the context of Sri Lanka.

2. The myths

The UN Secretary–General in his address to the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and development on 3 October 2013 mentioned:

...we need to improve public perceptions of migrants. Migrants contribute greatly to host societies. As entrepreneurs, they create jobs. As scientists, they are engines of innovation. They are doctors, nurses and domestic workers and often the unheralded heart of many service industries. Yet far too often they are viewed negatively. Too many politicians seek electoral advantage by demonizing migrants. While we should not ignore the challenges that arise from migration, especially in the context of high unemployment, we should dispel dangerous myths. But information is not

enough. It takes leadership to reinforce positive messages about the benefits of migration (Moon, 2014).

Myth 1: There is mass migration from developing countries to high income countries, especially of refugees and asylum seekers.

This is certainly a myth. The fact is that international migrants are still a small fraction of the global population, and the bulk of them are those migrating for employment, not refugees or asylum seekers.

There exist no data on annual inflows and outflows of migrants at the global level since only a few countries monitor such flows. The available information relates to stocks of migrants (at a given point in time) which are estimated by the UN Population Division (UNPD) usually at five yearly intervals. The UNPD estimated the total number of international migrants (defined as persons outside their country of birth or citizenship) at 232 million in 2013 (United Nations, 2013). Table 1 shows the levels of global migrant stocks from 1965-2013. Starting from 77 million in 1965, the total number of international migrants has increased by about three times between 1960 and 2013. The big jump in migrant numbers from 1985 to 1990 is due to the breakup of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) which led to a situation of *'borders crossing people'* rather than *'people crossing borders'*.

Although the number of migrants increased, so did the world population. Therefore, the ratio of migrants to global population changed only marginally ranging from 2.2 to 3.2 per cent between 1960 to 2013. This shows that world's migrants account for only about three per cent of the global population – only a small proportion of people actually migrate. This is partly because migration involves many costs and sacrifices. It is often rightly pointed out that the 'poorest of the poor' cannot afford to migrate. In many cases, persons migrating are those with resources - skills, contacts and often with previous work experience except perhaps in forced migration situations. The limited number is also because of a wide array of immigration controls practised by most nation states. Unlike capital, goods and services, labour is not free to move despite intense globalization. Nation States have imposed numerous barriers to cross-border migration which limits mobility of people and labour. In other words, international mobility in the past six decades has been very limited, but the global debate seems to be focussing more on developed countries getting 'flooded' by 'too many immigrants' or international migration getting 'out of control'.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families recognize the right of every person to leave his/her home country and the right of every person to return to the home country except under exceptional circumstances. But there is no corresponding right of admission to a third country since no country has surrendered that right under any international treaty.¹ This is the principle of state

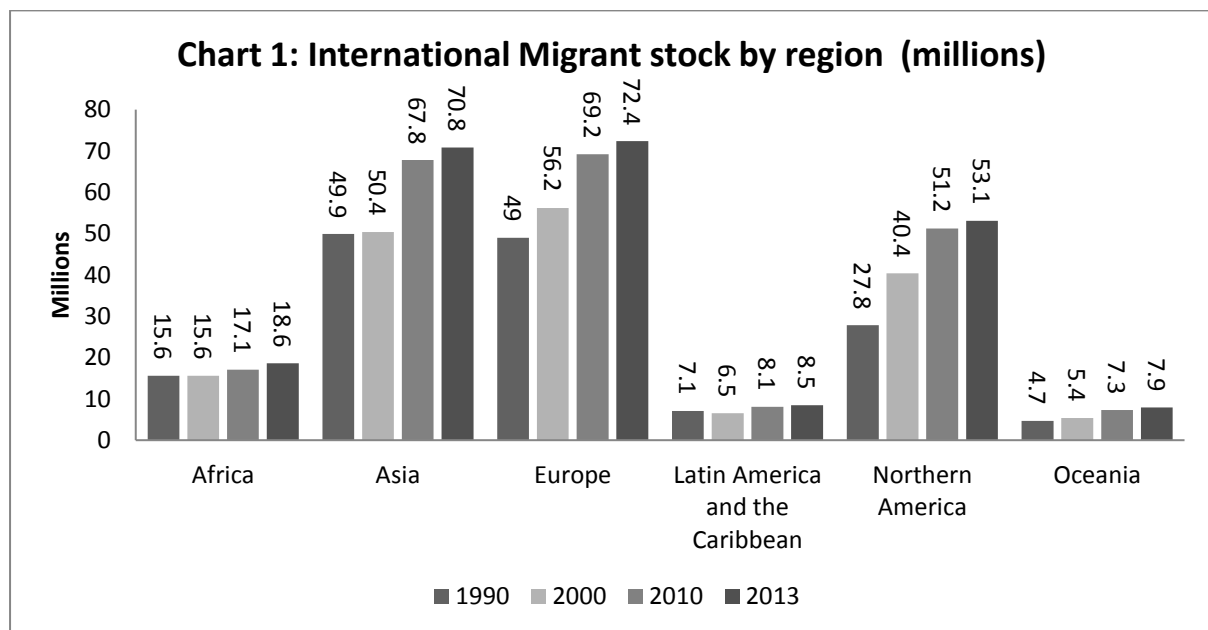
¹ An exception is the European Union (EU) free movement of workers regime, where EU citizens have an effective "right to enter" another EU Member State, and can only be refused entry on grounds of public security, public order, or public health.

sovereignty over its borders. Therefore States have the final say on who enters, who stays, who works, and who leaves. This has vastly reduced the scope of the above two human rights. It has also been said that “the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has somehow stopped halfway in its recognition of a right to move” (Pécoud & de Guchteneire, 2006). The tragedy of Lampedusa (an Italian island off the coast of Italy) in which more than 360 African migrants lost their lives is a stark reminder of the risks taken by migrants in the face of increasing barriers to migration (Rooney, 2013).

Increasing migratory movements are between South and South

A related myth is that migrations across borders consist of movements from developing or lower income countries (South) to high income countries (North). However, the reality is different with more or less equal shares of migrants in South-South and South-North. In 2013, 82.3 million international migrants who were born in the South were in South countries (36 per cent) while 81.9 million migrants (35 per cent) of international migrants were born in the South and living in the North. North to North movements represented 23 per cent of international migrants, while only six per cent had moved from the North to the South (UN Population Division, 2013). Chart 1 shows trends in the distribution on international migrants by region, and Table 2 shows the numbers.

There are some problems with this UN definition of South and North which omits some OECD countries and also treats all European countries including ex-USSR low income countries as North. The World Bank income level classification and the UNDP Human Development Index have been used as alternatives (Bakewell, 2009; ILO, 2014b; UNDP, 2009). Bakewell found that the share of South-South migration to be much higher based on these criteria ranging from 40 to 45 per cent of the global total (Bakewell, 2009).



Another related myth is that most international migrants are asylum seekers and refugees.

This is false. It is a myth created by the Western media and politicians who prefer to play the 'immigrant card' for vote catching. Actual data show that about 92 per cent of the 232 global migrants are those migrating for employment and their families.

The mixed character of recent population movements across borders has been recognized, which consists of both voluntary migration in search of work, and forced migration of asylum seekers and refugees fleeing from persecution situations (Van Hear, 2012).²

The estimate of 232 million total international migrants includes migrants for employment and their families as well as asylum seekers and refugees and their families. Yet the total number of international forced migrants (refugees and asylum seekers) is fairly small compared to migrant workers and their families. The total number of refugees has decreased from 12 million in 2000 to 8.7 million in 2005, and has picked up again to reach 11.7 million in 2013 (Table 3) plus another five million of Palestinian refugees registered under United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

Contrary to public perceptions and media hype, the main refugee burden is borne by less developed countries which host 86 per cent of total global refugees – even a decade ago they hosted 70 per cent of world's refugees. The Least Developed Countries were providing asylum to 2.8 million refugees end of 2014. ((UNHCR, 2014). Iran and Pakistan have been generously hosting millions of Afghan refugees for more than three decades.

Asylum seekers have ranged below one million for most years since 2000, and reached 1.1 million in 2013 (Table 3).

Even if we assume 20 million to be the maximum number of refugees and asylum seekers currently, migrant workers and their families would form the balance – roughly about 212 million or 92 per cent of global migrants. International migration is therefore, primarily a decent work³ and labour market issue – not an issue about refugees or asylum seekers - who form only less than 10 per cent of the global migrants. While refugee numbers are getting reduced, the disturbing feature is the steady rise in the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at 24 million in 2013 are now more than double the number of refugees (Table 3). This reflects increasing barriers to migration across borders which forces refugees to stay within their borders (Fargues, 2014)

² Please see Table 3 for definitions of refugees and asylum seekers.

³ Decent work has been defined by the ILO and endorsed by the international community as being productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; offers better prospects for personal development and encourages social integration; gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all. It focusses on quality of work as against quantity. International labour standards are the yardstick against which quality is assessed. More information can be found at: <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>

Myth 2: Rising irregular migration is a major policy challenge for destination countries, which needs to be countered by tighter border controls.

This is a myth for two reasons. First, the numbers of migrants in irregular status have been exaggerated and blown out of proportion, and second, border controls have generally proved to be ineffective in most countries.

Popularly described as ‘illegal’ or ‘undocumented’ or ‘clandestine’ migrants, these are persons who have no authorization to enter, stay or work in destination countries. The number of migrants in irregular status in the European Union (EU) is far less than assumed. In contrast to the European Commission’s estimate of between 4.5 and 8 million foreign nationals residing in its territory without a right to legal residence in 2005, an EU-commissioned research project (Clandestino) arrived at a much lower estimate of between 2.8 and 6 million for the same year (Clandestino, 2009a). This is only about 0.6 to 1.2 per cent of the total EU population of about 500 million. The share of immigrants in irregular status in the total population is 3.6 per cent in the case of the USA, but less than two per cent in most other OECD countries (OECD, 2007).

In this sense, irregular migration is the ‘bugbear of immigration policies’ in major destination countries, particularly in member states of the European Union (Wickramasekara 2008). The image that destination countries project of themselves as ‘victims’ of irregular migration sounds hollow because it is the direct result of their restrictive immigration policies. When the front door is closed as in the USA, Mexican migrants have to come through the backdoor given the large demand for their labour. There is tacit tolerance of the presence of migrant workers in irregular status on the part of many governments during economic booms, and to sustain large informal sectors in their economies, while officially seen to be ‘combating’ or ‘fighting’ irregular migration. As Madame Ramphele, Co-Chair of the Global commission on International Migration pointed out: “[T]he world’s more prosperous states bear a significant degree of responsibility for the forces which have prompted and sustained the movement of irregular migrants from one country and continent to another” (Ramphele, 2004).

In the process, there is an unfortunate tendency to criminalize irregular migration. François Crépeau, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human rights of Migrants, made this very clear: “irregular entry or stay should never be considered criminal offences: they are not per se crimes against persons, property or national security. It is important to emphasize that irregular migrants are not criminals per se and should not be treated as such” (Crépeau 2012: 5).

Chart 2: UK Home Office Van campaign



While the boat movements travelling to Europe from Africa or to Australia from Asia are eye catching, the main form of irregular migration is from those who enter legally and then violate conditions of entry or overstay (Clandestino, 2009b). It is also the case that migrants and asylum seekers are more likely to resort to entering a country irregularly when there are no legal alternatives, relying on traffickers and smugglers and using risky routes.

Ironically, studies have shown that stricter border controls prevent short-term and circular migration whereby migrants return home regularly before returning to host countries and force them to stay put in destination countries for longer due to the difficulty and expense of re-entry (IRIN, 2013). Related to the above is the intensification of border controls – land, sea and air to prevent irregular migration. According to Professor Wayne Cornelius of San Diego University (California), the main consequences of 10 years of tighter US border control have been: redistribution of irregular entries, increased cost of irregular entry, more permanent settlement in U.S, higher mortality among irregular entrants, and increase in anti-immigrant vigilante activity (Cornelius 2005). Professor Stephen Castles also remarked: “Building walls (between the USA and Mexico) and increasing naval patrols (between the EU and Africa) increases the death rate and the smugglers’ profits, but does not solve the problem” (Castles 2006: 760).

A recent report on US immigration found that the US government spends more on its immigration enforcement agencies than on all its other principal criminal federal law enforcement agencies combined. The more important finding is that: “... Border Patrol staffing, technology, and infrastructure have reached historic highs, while levels of apprehensions have fallen to historic lows” (Meissner et. al., 2013: 9).

Myth 3: Migrants steal jobs from natives

This is not true. There is overwhelming research and empirical evidence that migrants do not displace local workers. Migrants mainly fill labour shortages for high tech skills or so-called 3D (Dirty, Dangrous and Demeaning) jobs shunned by locals. Skilled immigrants and migrant enterprises create jobs for locals. Low skilled immigrants enable the occupational mobility of low skilled workers. All migrants are consumers of local goods and services boosting demand for local products and thereby local growth and employment.

The employment impact of immigration on native workers has continued to be the subject of debate in both United States and Europe. The issue is whether the employment of foreign workers leads to displacement of native workers. One would normally expect a displacement effect of native workers if immigrants are substitutes for native workers. The skill profile of migrants and native born workers would determine this: if the skill mix is different, then migrants will be complementing rather than competing with native workers.

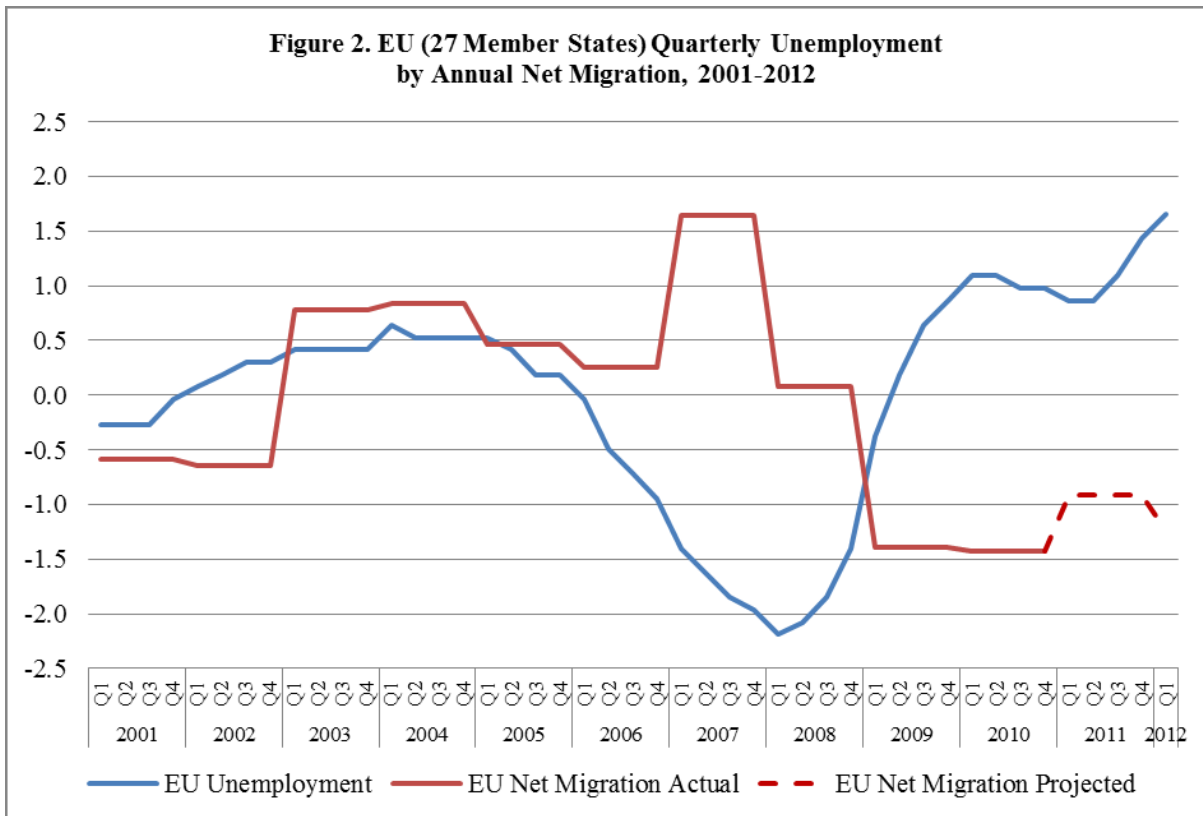
JK Galbraith refers to the displacement idea as “...a classical error in economic calculation -- one that economists have rightly sought to combat, with slight success, for nearly a century. That is the belief that the available employment is a fixed quantity, and immigrants simply replace those who have already arrived. The economy does, of course, grow with the labour force and ... with increasing returns.” (Galbraith, 1979: 107)

The empirical evidence from several EU countries shows that in most cases immigrants are complements to the natives in the labour market, and thus have no negative effects on job prospects and wages of native workers (Münz, 2006)(Münz, et al., 2006). Many studies on Europe and the United States surveying the literature on the employment impact of migration on native employment have pointed to small negative employment effects (Kerr & Kerr, 2011).

Chart 3 on trends in unemployment and net migration to the European Union hardly shows any correlation between the two. According to Fargues (2014), the negative attitudes toward migrants were strongly correlated with unemployment. The 2014 Transatlantic survey also concluded: “Overall, the findings confirmed that perceptions about immigration’s impact on labor markets were highly sensitive to respondents’ own employment status, financial situation, and worries about national labor markets (GMF, 2014: 25).

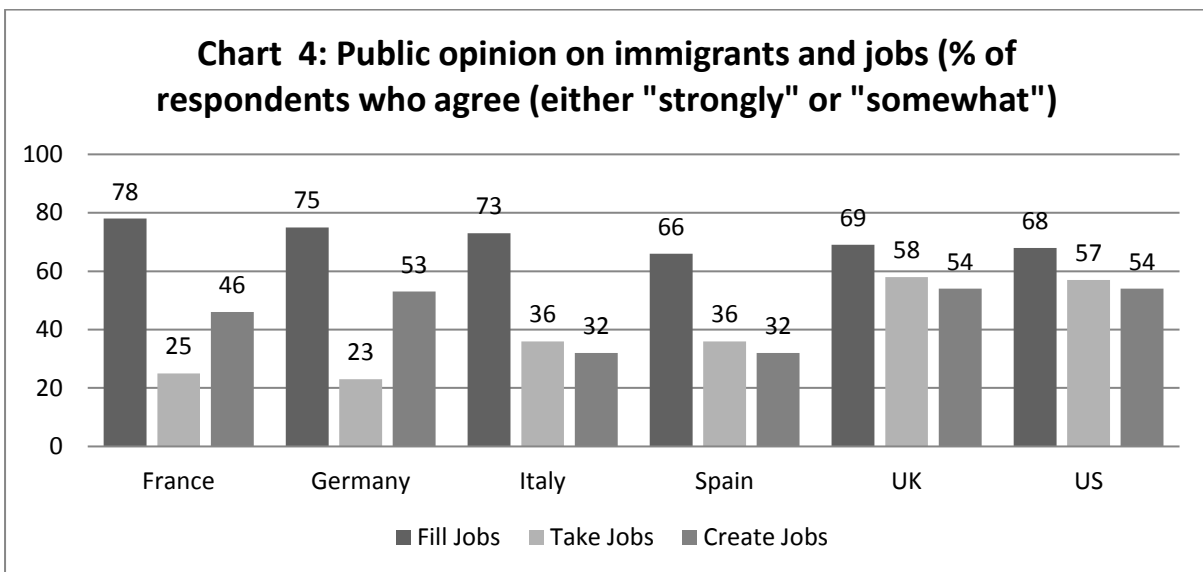
The lack of a relationship between unemployment and immigration is due to two factors: migrants tend to go to places with better employment prospects, and governments also restrict immigration during periods of local unemployment. Thus Fargues rightly concludes that “using migration as a scapegoat for unemployment is largely unfounded”. (Fargues, 2014: 6).

Chart 3: Unemployment and net migration in the European Union (EU 27), 2001-12



Reproduced from (Fargues, 2014) quoting Source: Eurostat, McCormick (2012a)

The Transatlantic survey 2011 showed that most people in the UK and US viewed migrants as taking jobs while they also agreed that migrants create or fill available jobs (Chart 4).



Source: based on data provided in Constant (2011).

Constant (2011) generalizes from the findings as follows:

Immigration's positive effects far outweigh any negative impact. Migrants choose locations with available jobs and fill labor shortages. Whether high- or low-skilled, migrants rarely substitute directly for native workers. Instead, migrants often complement native workers or accept jobs that natives don't want or can't do. They create new jobs by increasing production, engaging in self-employment, and easing upward job mobility for native workers. The presence of immigrants increases demand and can spur new businesses to open, creating more jobs for immigrant and native populations (Constant, 2014: 4).

Myth 4: Migrants are free riders on welfare systems of destination countries.

Not true. Migrants often contribute more to public coffers than drawing on it. Most migrants come looking for work, pay taxes and contribute to social security and send remittances back to families. Many of them are younger, and contribute to social security in an ageing Europe. Temporary migrants normally do not qualify for long-term social security benefits despite their contributions. Undocumented migrants rarely access public services for fear of detection and eventual deportation, and they never get back what they pay as taxes and social security.

The issue is the fear that immigrants may become a burden on the destination country by consuming more in public services and welfare payments than they contribute through taxes and social security contributions. The mass media made a big issue that mature EU countries may become 'welfare magnets' with the imminent accession of eight new member states to the EU in 2004. The UK and Ireland, among others, took measures to limit the welfare benefits to new immigrants. An ILO study concluded following review of evidence that common fears that migrants would be a drain on the public purse were unfounded (ILO, 2010).

Douglas Massey (Massey, 2005) reviewed the issue whether the United States was a "welfare magnet" for undocumented migrants, but found little evidence. He also cited the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace conclusion that "there is no reputable evidence that prospective immigrants are drawn to the U.S. because of its public assistance program" (Massey, 2005: 13).

The recent UK debate about the new accession countries of Bulgaria and Romania tended to project the image that the UK was acting as a 'welfare magnet' to all migrants from EU and non-EU sources, with Mr. Cameron, the UK Prime Minister referring to the "*magnetic pull of Britain's benefit system*".⁴ The UK has now limited benefits to new migrants including those from the EU.

The empirical evidence however, does not support this view. A recent major review of the fiscal contribution of immigration in the UK concluded: "The net fiscal balance of overall immigration to the UK between 2001 and 2011 amounts therefore to a positive net contribution of about 25 billion GBP, over a period over which the UK has run an overall budget deficit (Dustmann & Frattini, 2013: 27). They added that recent immigrants (since the early 2000s) have made substantial net contributions

⁴ <http://rt.com/uk/176344-eu-benefits-migrants-cuts/>

to its public finances rather than being a drain on the UK's fiscal system (Dustmann & Frattini, 2013).

Many migrant workers including those in irregular status pay into social security systems at destinations, but rarely receive any corresponding benefits. There are further constraints on acquired rights of social security and their portability. Immigrants have to satisfy long residence requirements to qualify for social security benefits, and would lose them if they return to home countries. Temporary migrant workers are particularly affected because of the short duration of their stays. In the Gulf countries they cannot contribute to social security even on a voluntary basis. The situation of migrants in irregular status is more revealing of this popular fallacy. In the USA during 1990–98, more than US\$20 billion was being held in suspended status in the social security system given the lack of documented status of many immigrant workers (ILO 2010). These subsidise the US Social Security system because workers in irregular status cannot claim them (Porter, 2005)

At this point, let me quote from Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his address to the European Parliament in 2004:

“The vast majority of migrants are industrious, courageous, and determined. They don't want a free ride. They want a fair opportunity. They are not criminals or terrorists. They are law-abiding. They don't want to live apart. They want to integrate, while retaining their identity” (Annan, 2004).

3. The Facts

Let me now deal with what I believe to be are important facts on migration which deserve wider attention. Again I shall be highly selective here.

Fact 1: Promotion of low skilled migration holds the best potential for development gains from international migration.

There is growing consensus among researchers, and international organizations that the major impact on poverty reduction can be achieved by providing more opportunities to low skilled persons from developing countries. Despite rhetoric at global conferences and dialogue, the policies pursued by countries in the North are mainly aimed at restricting migration of low skilled workers while attracting skilled people.

The UN Secretary-General's Report for High Level Dialogue 2006 pointed out: “*Low-skilled migration has the largest potential to reduce the depth and severity of poverty in communities of origin (United Nations, 2006: 13).*” The OECD development Centre research also has come to a similar conclusion.

Low-skilled migrants typically contribute more to poverty reduction in their countries of origin than higher-skilled professionals, because they tend to originate from lower-income families and communities and their departure opens opportunities for other low-skilled workers to replace them; they also remit more per person, especially because they tend to come from poorer communities and often leave their families behind (Katseli & Xenogiani, 2006).

There is considerable demand for low skilled workers in developed countries despite the denial and barriers to their movement. As mentioned earlier, with rising living standards in developed countries, native workers move away from so-called 3D jobs such as in agriculture, construction, catering and home care, among others. Migrant workers are needed to fill those gaps. The changing demographic profile of major developed countries including the EU in the form of population decline and, the increasing ageing of the workforce imply a need for attracting migrant workers if the same standards of living and social security standards are to be maintained (ILO, 2010). The ageing workforce is creating a large demand for care and personal services. According to Fargues (2014), low-skilled migration allows for the employment of natives in occupations requiring higher skills, and saving some national industries from collapse due to the acute shortage of native workers. Female migrant domestic workers raise the labour force participation of natives when by taking over child care and household duties. The viability of the Italian dairy industry is cited as a good example based on supply of low skilled workers from India (Fargues 2014). The Global Commission on International Migration recommended the term 'essential workers' to include both skilled and low skilled workers.

A World Bank case study of migration in Malaysia, a middle-income country, also revealed the positive impact of migration of low skilled persons for the host country and the migrants. both for the migrants and the host country. Over the period 1990 – 2010, Ozden noted that immigration largely consisting of low skilled workers stimulated the creation of higher-skilled jobs and improved wages for native workers in sectors and areas that attracted immigrants (Ozden, 2013).

Skeldon highlighted the essential complementarity between low skilled and high skilled activities:

However, skilled migration systems are not independent of unskilled systems. Skilled migrants create unskilled jobs. Skilled IT engineers require packers, transporters and shippers of the hardware and software they create. Bankers and other financial experts require office cleaners, restaurateurs and valets (Skeldon, 2007).

There are however, numerous barriers to the international movement of low and semi-skilled labour who can make the biggest impact on development and poverty alleviation in home countries. For example, the UNDP Human Development Report 2009 found that in a sample of countries analyzed, 38 per cent of developing and 50 per cent of developed countries were closed to the permanent migration of low-skilled workers (UNDP, 2009).

Nigel Harris (2002) emphatically pointed out the results of this policy of restricted immigration.

In the relationships between the developed North and the developing South, the biggest failure has not been the decline in aid programmes, which are trivial in the sum of things, or the failure to open markets quickly enough, or transfer technology, but in consistently denying the right to work to the willing and eager workers of the developing countries. In doing this, the developed countries have reduced the prosperity both of their own people and the Third World.

According to Pritchett:

The primary policy pursued by every rich country is to prevent unskilled labor from moving into their countries. And because unskilled labor is the primary asset of the poor world, it is hard to even imagine a policy more directly inimical to a poverty reduction agenda or to “pro-poor growth” than one limiting the demand for unskilled labor (and inducing labor-saving innovations) (Pritchett 2006: 1).

He argues for adding wider access for low skilled labour to rich countries to the development themes of fairer trade, better aid and debt relief (Pritchett 2006).

The UNDP Human Development Report 2009 noted: “In general, and especially for low-skilled people, the barriers restrict people’s choices and reduce the gains from moving” (UNDP 2009: 48).

Fact 2: There is widespread abuse and exploitation of migrant workers in both origin and particularly in destination countries, which erode development benefits of migration.

While people migrate primarily to improve their welfare and that of their families, there is a vicious cycle of abuse and exploitation in both origin and destination countries which can seriously undermine development benefits of migration.

Gains from migration and protection of migrant rights are indeed inseparable. Migrant workers can make their best contribution to economic and social development in host and source countries when they enjoy decent working conditions, and when their fundamental human and labour rights are respected.

Juan Somavia – former ILO Director-General (ILO, Undated)

Migrant workers often face rights violations in both origin and destination countries. Recruitment malpractices in the form of false and misleading information, excessive recruitment fees, and fraud are common in origin countries. At destinations, migrant workers are often at the mercy of employers and labour brokers. Many migrant workers, especially those engaged in hazardous and dangerous occupations, do not have access to minimum occupational safety and health provisions. For migrant domestic workers, the risk of exploitation might be greater because of isolation and informal/irregular status. There is widespread discrimination and xenophobia of migrants including the second generation in many advanced countries (ILO, 2004a, 2010). Female migrant domestic workers, migrants in irregular status and trafficked persons are among the most vulnerable (ILO, 2010, 2014a; Wickramasekara, 2005)

The United Nations Task Team for the Post-2015 Development Agenda highlighted in its report: “... too many migrants continue to work and live in insecure, precarious and dangerous conditions, often marginalized and subject to discrimination and without access to social and health care services, while disruptions to family life can have significant social consequences, particularly in the country of origin” (UN System Task Team, 2012: 15).

Many of these core labour rights are violated by employers in destination countries. Female domestic migrant workers experience near-slavery conditions confined to private homes, forced to work long hours and having to surrender passports. Let us remind ourselves of the words of Kumari Indunil, age 23, a former Sri Lankan domestic worker in Kuwait as quoted by a Human Rights Watch study on Sri Lankan domestic workers in 2007:

‘Even if I went to bed at 3:30 a.m., I had to get up by 5:30 a.m... I had continuous work until 1:00 a.m., sometimes 3:00 a.m.... Once I told the employer, “I am a human like you and I need an hour to rest.” She told me, “You have come to work; you are like my shoes, and you have to work tirelessly.” (HRW 2007: 61)

The World Development Report 2013 added:

.. temporary migrant workers under sponsorship contracts in the Middle East are the subjects of the most conspicuous forms of forced labor and trafficking in the world (World Bank, 2012: 65).

The International Trade Union confederation remarked that: “Behind the gleaming cities of Doha (Qatar) and Dubai (UAE),” are “stories of migrant workers with few rights and inhuman living conditions”(ITUC, 2011: 11).

A major issue of governance is the high migration costs experienced by migrant workers as highlighted in a number of recent contributions (ILO, 2014a; United Nations, 2013; Wickramasekara, 2014; World Bank, 2014). At the same time, it is important to highlight low and stagnating wages of migrant workers which have hardly changed for low skilled workers in Gulf countries, Malaysia or Singapore in the past two decades or so. Non-payment and deferred payment of wages are most common complaints by migrant workers (Wickramasekara, 2014).

Fact 3: Migration cannot address structural problems of development and inequality in poor countries.

Development now focuses on freedom, choices and capabilities of people. It is crucially dependent on realization of human rights of all persons including migrants. International migration cannot by itself address structural problems of lack of development. The long-run solutions to lack of development, poverty and inequality have to be sought within the countries themselves.

This echoes a conclusion of the 1994 Cairo World Conference on Population and Development that: “*The long term manageability of international migration hinges on making the option to remain in one's country a viable one for all people*” (United Nations, 1995: 67). It thus urged Governments of countries of origin and of countries of destination to promote such options.

The ILO Plan of Action contained in the Resolution for a fair deal concerning migrant workers in a global economy made a case for the creation of decent job

opportunities at home to reduce migration pressures (ILO, 2004b). The Global Commission on International Migration also argued for creating a situation in which *people migrate out of choice, rather than necessity*.

The Global Migration Group highlighted: “Development is more than an economic parameter and encompasses human rights. Development goes beyond economic growth to embrace notions linked to human development, which focuses on the individual, his/her family and community, and seeks to expand individual capabilities and choices through health, education, a decent standard of living and political freedom”(GMG, 2008: 206).

In some countries such as the Philippines, there is concern that migration and remittances have made policy planners complacent in tackling fundamental development problems in the home country.

In this context there have been various calls for mainstreaming of migration into development agendas by international forums and some international organizations to reinforce the development benefits (GFMD, 2012; GMG, 2010; JMDI., undated; OSCE, ILO, & IOM, 2007; United Nations, 2013). The main message conveyed by the mainstreaming discourse is that of promoting policy coherence and coordination in migration matters at all levels at the national level. While few would question this, blind application of mainstreaming of migration without taking into account country specific situations is unlikely to lead to expected results (Wickramasekara, 2013). The mainstreaming recommendation is mainly made for countries of origin, but for a real impact, it cannot succeed without corresponding support and obligations of countries of destination.

What is important to highlight is that migration alone cannot be considered a long term development strategy. In the Philippines, the main migration legislation - the Republic Act No. 8042: Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 - in its Section 2 (c) states:

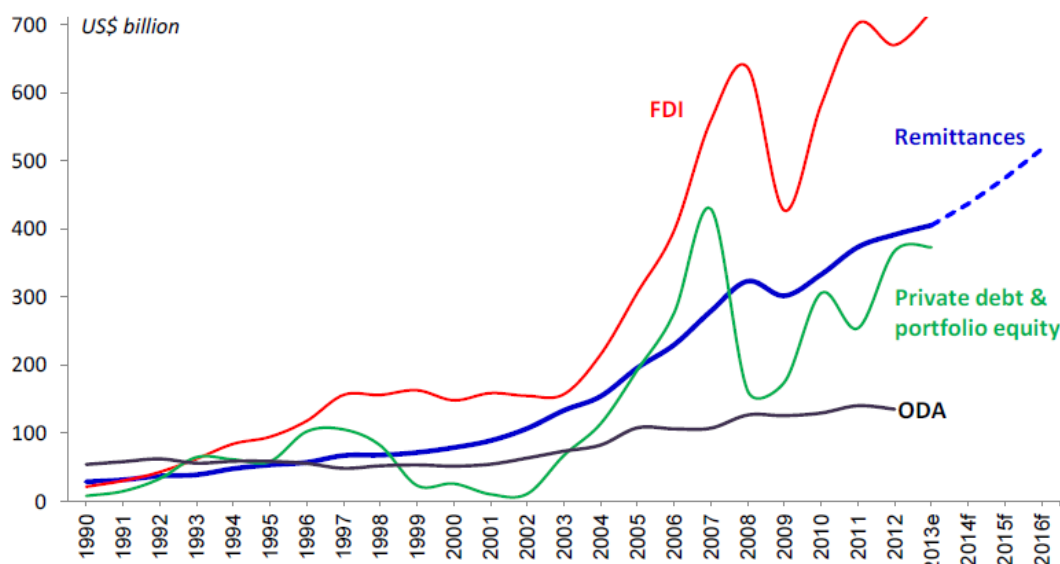
While recognizing the significant contribution of Filipino migrant workers to the national economy through their foreign exchange remittances, the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. The existence of the overseas employment program rests solely on the assurance that the dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Filipino citizens shall not, at any time, be compromised or violated. The State, therefore, shall continuously create local employment opportunities and promote the equitable distribution of wealth and the benefits of development.

Yet the Philippines has continued to promote overseas employment all along in the context of modest achievements in development.

Migrant remittances to developing countries now at USD 406 billion in 2013 dwarf foreign aid by about three times overall, and therefore, could have a significant impact on poverty reduction in origin countries (World Bank, 2014). But they are personal funds, and not development finance as made out by the World Bank and others, and by no means a substitute for foreign aid or foreign direct investment. Remittances represent the ‘blood, sweat and tears’ of millions of poor migrant workers whether from Asia, Africa or Latin America.

Chart 5: Migrant remittances, Foreign Direct Investment and Overseas Development Assistance

Figure 1: Remittances flows are large, and growing



Sources: World Development Indicators and World Bank Development Prospects Group

But remittances alone cannot guarantee development. As a common sense argument, one can look at the growth record of the Philippines which has been receiving from US\$ 7 – 20 billion annually since the 1990s but has failed to take off. As Ghosh pointed out: “Clearly, undue reliance on remittances as an engine of development entails some potential risks, such as postponement of essential economic reform, enhancing remittance dependency, vulnerability of the home country economy to sudden external shocks, and distortion in economic priorities” (Ghosh, 2006).

Castles addresses this squarely:

Strategies of “remittance-led development” seem simplistic and naïve. Migration alone cannot remove structural constraints to economic growth, social change and greater democracy. There is a need for broadly-based long-term approaches that links the potential benefits of migration with more general strategies to reduce inequality and to improve economic infrastructure, social welfare, and political governance (Stephen Castles, 2007: 281).

The same considerations apply to efforts to promote ‘diaspora-led developments’. Research has shown that there is a major gap between diaspora promise and delivery (Wickramasekara, 2009a). High levels of discrimination, the lack of adequate integration of migrant communities, and poor qualification recognition in destination countries seriously impinge on their potential contributions. Widespread discrimination in the labour market against migrant workers often affects the second

and even third, generations who are usually citizens in countries of destination as a series of ILO studies have shown (ILO 2010).

Similarly the recent emphasis on temporary and circular migration programmes as a 'triple win' to all three parties – countries of Origin and destination as well as migrant workers - does not seem to a development-friendly or sustainable solution (Wickramasekara, 2011).

Fact 4: International normative standards provide a solid foundation for national, regional and global governance of migration, and protection of migrant workers.

Good governance of migration and protection of migrant rights using a rights based approach are essential to maximize development benefits from migration for all parties – source countries, destination countries and migrant workers themselves.

There exists a solid normative foundation on rights of migrant workers built up by the international community over the years. A wide array of international instruments defines the human and labour rights applicable to migrant workers. The United Nations Universal human rights are applicable to all human beings irrespective of nationality and migration status. Moreover, the core labour rights – fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) enshrined in the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work – are applicable to all workers including migrant workers, without distinction of nationality, and regardless of migration status.

The ILO Conventions on migrant workers – Migration for Employment (Revised) No. 97 (1949) and the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention No. 143 (1975) – spell out the labour rights of migrant workers. The 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW) has expanded on these rights. These three instruments together define a comprehensive charter of migrant rights and provide a legal basis for national policy and practice on migrant workers, and serve as tools to encourage States to establish or improve national legislation in harmony with international standards. All international labour standards apply to migrant workers in the workplace irrespective of status unless otherwise stated, especially the Conventions on Private Employment Agencies, 1997 (No. 181) and Domestic Workers, 2011 (No. 189). The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration is a comprehensive synthesis and tool kit to help countries in designing and improving labour migration policies in line with these principles and guidelines.

There are enough standards – there is no need to develop new ones. What is needed is the ratification of relevant Conventions, or adherence to the principles in these instruments even if not ratified, and enforcement of compliance with their provisions through legislative reform and establishing mechanisms for enforcement and access to justice.

The Report of the UN Secretary General for the 2013 UN High level Dialogue proposed an eight point agenda for action for making migration work in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

**Box 1: Making migration work:
an eight-point agenda for action**

1. Protect the human rights of all migrants
2. Reduce the costs of labour migration
3. Eliminate migrant exploitation, including human trafficking
4. Address the plight of stranded migrants
5. Improve public perceptions of migrants
6. Integrate migration into the development agenda
7. Strengthen the migration evidence base
8. Enhance migration partnerships and cooperation

UN Secretary-General's Report for UN High Level Dialogue On
International Migration and Development (United Nations, 2013a).

4. Sri Lanka and the role of labour migration

Sri Lanka shares several common features with other South Asian origin countries: predominantly temporary migration, migrant skill profile dominated by semi-skilled and low-skilled workers, Middle East countries as the main destination, and feminization of migration. These features also result in a number of challenges with related problems of vulnerability, protection, low remuneration and resulting low remittances. I have discussed the Sri Lankan migration situation in another paper (Wickramasekara, 2009b) and therefore, I shall raise only a few points

Sri Lanka has a mature migration administration system developed since the 1980s. It is regarded as a model in Asia second only to that of the Philippines. It ratified the International convention on migrant workers in 1996. Given the large share of domestic workers, it is also in Sri Lanka's interest to ratify the new ILO Convention on Domestic Workers, (Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers) 2011 (No. 189). Philippines is the only country in Asia to ratify it up to now. Sri Lanka is also unique in having elaborated a National Labour Migration Policy (MFEPW, 2008) as well as a National Human Resources and Employment Policy (Secretariat for Senior Ministers, 2012).

- Does migration data collected in the country enable one to assess the contribution of migration to the economy?

To my knowledge, the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) registration records do not collect information on the pre-migration occupations of migrant workers which is essential to understanding the employment and labour market impact – whether people migrating are those already employed, unemployed or outside the labour force. We also need to know net migration each year adjusting outflows (emigration) for return flows every year to assess the extent of net migration. The method of estimating the migrant stock abroad also is not clear although the figure is often used to show a high contribution of migration to employment. The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment no longer publishes them. Another issue of interest is the extent of re-migration which reflects circular

migration. Some returning workers may be re-hired, but the available data does not enable us to estimate these numbers unlike in the Philippines where they provide information on re-hires.

- How can achieve a virtuous balance between “Promotion of overseas migration” and “Protection of migrant workers, especially while overseas”?

Sri Lanka is not then only country in the Asian region to face this dilemma. Philippines and most other South Asian countries also promote overseas employment which strains their capacity to protect workers outside. Does the shift to a strategy of ‘Safe, Skilled Migration’ in Sri Lanka help in the process? A Sunday Times feature echoes some of these issues: “Despite all the efforts of state agencies governing foreign employment, dozens of women and men face problems overseas including sexual and physical abuse, non-payment of dues, illegal contracts, long working hours and poor working conditions” (Business Times, 2014). But it is an obvious understatement to say that only dozens are affected.

- What is the long term vision of Sri Lanka in relation to overseas migration- say in the next 5, 10 or 15 years?

Does it want to continue as a ‘labour sending country’ or ‘origin country’? Can we anticipate a migration transition point (where a country becomes a net immigration or primarily a destination country) in the foreseeable future?

- What is the role of overseas migration as a safety valve for local employment problems?

An earlier analysis carried out by the author for Sri Lanka discussed the employment impact of migration in greater detail and concluded that the employment contribution of overseas migration had been exaggerated (Wickramasekara, 2010). The claims are based on the high share - close to a quarter in recent years - of migrant stock overseas (estimated at 1.9 million in 2010 by the SLBFE) to the total labour force. The basis of the estimate of the Sri Lankan migrant overseas stock has neither been transparent nor reliable, and the SLBFE has now discontinued the series. There is a further implicit assumption that all migrants included in the estimated migrant stock abroad are employed workers.

- What are the social costs of migration – for migrant workers themselves, and families including children left behind?
- Given the temporary nature of most migration outflows, does migration permit sustainable return in the sense that the migrant worker is not under pressure to migrate again? Are they real ‘Rata Viruwos’ or those still struggling for livelihoods?
- What is the role of remittances in the economy – in uplifting migrant workers and their families, their communities and at a broader level on the macro-economy?

- What is role of the Sri Lanka diaspora in contributing to local development efforts? Is there much evidence of the positive contributions of the diaspora community in terms of investments, skill transfers and trade promotion, among others? The response during the time of the Tsunami was very encouraging, but it was probably short-lived. Like some other countries in post-conflict situations, Sri Lanka has a divisive diaspora which makes the situation more complex.

5. Concluding remarks

The ILO Director-General's 2014 report on Fair Migration stated: "The creation of more decent work opportunities in countries of origin is key to making migration an option rather than an obligation. It is also crucial to sustainable development. (ILO, 2014a: 21).

This is also the basis of the first principle of action advocated by the Global Commission on International Migration for "*Migrating out of by choice, not by necessity*" (GCIM, 2005: 4), but it is unlikely to be achieved by most origin countries in Asia in the foreseeable future. Overseas employment, remittances, and diasporas can help, but they cannot remove structural constraints and weaknesses of the economies.

Sri Lanka's National Labour Migration Policy (MFEPW, 2008: 32) recognizes this: "While recognizing this significant contribution and working towards maximizing the benefits of labour migration, the State recognizes that overseas employment cannot be considered as a major strategy to sustain economic growth and achieve national development in the long run" (MFEPW 2008: 32). In the longer run, Sri Lanka has to ensure that there is sustainable growth and development at home which can generate decent work opportunities to citizens.

This is an opportune moment to remind ourselves of Professor Gunasekera's vision of decentralised development in Sri Lanka through promotion of local level development – through District Development Councils. This was a visionary idea on people-centred bottom up approach to development. It also reflected his belief in local level governance - because governance is not only for governments, but for all actors and all levels. The DDCs were a brilliant idea if properly implemented, and would have reduced the pressure to migrate on the part of our women and men to undergo suffering abroad separated from their families 'for a few dollars more'.

At the international level, the Declaration of the 2013 High Level Dialogue called for acknowledging "the important contribution of migration in realizing the Millennium Development Goals", and recognizing that "human mobility is a key factor for sustainable development which should be adequately considered in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda" (United Nations, 2013: 2). A statement by the Office of the UN Commissioner on Human Rights points out: "Indeed, the post-2015 development agenda cannot go on framing migration solely as a global economic phenomenon" (UNOHCHR, 2014). This reiterates the imperative need for rights based approaches to governance of international migration placing migrants and their rights at the centre of such efforts by the international community, instead of some destination countries paying lip service to commitments made at global forums

and summits, propagating unfounded myths about migration, and attempting to build fences and barriers in a globalizing labour market.

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Annex tables

Table 1: International Migrants: stock estimates

Year	Migrants - Millions	World Population (Billions)	Migrant share of population %	Women - % of total migrants
1965	77	3.3	2.6	47.0
1975	90	4.0	2.2	47.7
1985	113	4.8	2.3	47.6
1990	156	5.3	2.9	49.1
1995	166	5.7	2.9	49.3
2000	179	6.0	2.9	49.4
2005	195	6.5	3.0	49.2
2010	214	6.9	3.1	49.0
2013	232	7.2	3.2	48.0

Source: UN Population Division
(United Nations, 2012)

Table 2. International migrant stock by regions (millions)

	1990	2000	2010	2013
World	154.2	174.5	220.7	231.5
Developed regions	82.3	103.4	129.7	135.6
Developing regions	71.9	71.1	91	95.9
Africa	15.6	15.6	17.1	18.6
Asia	49.9	50.4	67.8	70.8
Europe	49	56.2	69.2	72.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.1	6.5	8.1	8.5
Northern America	27.8	40.4	51.2	53.1
Oceania	4.7	5.4	7.3	7.9

Source: United Nations (2013), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 Revision*

Table 3: Estimates of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and IDPs

Year	Refugees	Asylum seekers	Internally displaced
2,000	12,129,572	947,926	5,998,501
2,001	12,116,835	943,854	5,096,502
2,002	10,594,055	1,093,755	4,646,641
2,003	9,592,795	996,428	4,181,701
2,004	9,573,397	885,249	5,426,539
2,005	8,661,988	802,174	6,616,791
2,006	9,877,703	741,291	12,794,268
2,007	11,390,930	741,110	13,740,317
2,008	10,489,812	825,043	14,442,227
2,009	10,396,538	989,169	15,628,057
2,010	10,549,679	837,445	14,697,804
2,011	10,404,806	895,284	15,473,378
2,012	10,497,957	928,226	17,670,368
2,013	11,699,638	1,168,273	23,925,555

Source: Extracted from the UNHCR Population Statistics Reference Database, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Date extracted: 2014-09-09

Refugees include individuals recognised under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees; its 1967 Protocol; the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa; those recognised in accordance with the UNHCR Statute; individuals granted complementary forms of protection; or those enjoying temporary protection. The refugee population also includes people in a refugee-like situation.

Asylum-seekers are individuals who have sought international protection and whose claims for refugee status have not yet been determined, irrespective of when they may have been lodged.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are people or groups of individuals who have been forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights, or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an international border.

Table 5: World Bank estimates of Remittance flows to developing countries, 2010-2016

Table 1: Estimates and projections for remittance flows to developing countries

	2010	2011	2012	2013e	2014f	2015f	2016f
	<i>(\$ billions)</i>						
All developing countries	333	373	392	404	436	473	516
East Asia and Pacific	95	107	107	112	123	135	148
Europe and Central Asia	32	38	39	43	45	49	54
Latin America and Caribbean	56	59	60	61	66	73	81
Middle-East and North Africa	40	42	47	46	49	52	55
South Asia	82	96	108	111	118	127	136
Sub-Saharan Africa	29	31	31	32	35	38	41
World	453	507	521	542	581	628	681
Low-income countries	24	28	32	34	37	40	44
Middle-income	310	345	359	371	399	433	472
High income	120	133	130	137	145	155	165
	<i>(Growth rate, percent)</i>						
All developing countries	10.3	12.1	4.9	3.3	7.8	8.6	8.9
East Asia and Pacific	20.2	13.0	0.1	4.8	9.0	9.9	10.1
Europe and Central Asia	-0.8	17.0	2.7	10.0	6.7	8.4	9.4
Latin America and Caribbean	1.1	5.9	0.9	1.9	9.4	10.4	10.6
Middle-East and North Africa	18.0	6.5	11.8	-2.0	5.6	6.2	6.3
South Asia	9.4	17.7	12.1	2.3	6.6	7.3	7.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.0	6.8	0.1	3.5	8.7	9.1	9.4
World	8.7	11.7	2.9	3.9	7.3	8.1	8.4
Low-income countries	10.9	19.3	15.2	4.1	8.6	9.5	9.9
Middle-income	10.3	11.5	4.1	3.2	7.7	8.5	8.9
High income	4.5	10.7	-2.5	5.9	5.7	6.5	6.8

Source: World Bank staff calculations based on data from IMF Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbooks and data releases from central banks, national statistical agencies, and World Bank country desks. See Migration and Development Brief 12 for the forecast methodology. Following IMF BOP Manual 6, remittances are defined as personal transfers and compensation of employees. The dataset for all countries is available at www.worldbank.org/migration.

Source: reproduced from (World Bank 2014)



Prof. H.A. de S. Gunasekera was Professor of Economics and Head of the Dept. of Economics of the then University of Ceylon. He succeeded Prof. Das Gupta to become the second occupant (and the first Sri Lankan occupant) of the Economics Chair in 1961. He also served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Peradeniya (1963-1969) and later on as Secretary, Ministry of Planning (1970-

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Dr. Piyasiri Wickramasekara is an internationally recognized expert in development, migration and employment issues. He has had an illustrious 25-year career with the International Labour Organization (ILO) working in New Delhi, Bangkok and Geneva.

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