

MIGRANTS
31/05/11 PM(2)
33

Mr President,

Sri Lanka acknowledges the expanding horizons of migrant rights and at a time when globalization and the disappearance of national borders are becoming the current trends towards achieving parity of status, it is best to bear in mind that the parochial views we have held towards migrants have to give way to a universal acceptance of a charter of human rights that must guide the emerging consciousness of migrant rights.

Mr President

We in this council pontificate on the deprivation of rights of various kinds but do not for a moment pause to think of those less fortunates who do not have a place to call their home on this minor planet hovering around one of the lesser stars. Is not it ironic that in this context we continue to talk of national

boundaries and sovereign states when we are in fact owned by mother earth and each one of us has a right to a place on this planet.

Sri Lanka too has introduced salutary enactments to regulate the policy on migration and national action plan on human rights contains as a core component a special chapter on migrant rights. It appears that both lawful and illegal migrants suffer devious schemes of exploitation in the hands of both the private and state benefactors. Notwithstanding their illegal migrant status it has to be borne in mind that migrants help to drive the engine of growth of the recipient countries. Some states notwithstanding overwhelming resources in terms of large expanse of territory and national wealth do not even consider the regularization of such illegal status within very strict laws and rules. Should we then embark on a course of

action that would encourage these states to permit controlled migration with a view to enhancing the rights of the migrants while continuing to derive the benefits of migrant labour. Such a policy would contribute in a serious way to discourage the practice of illegal migration