

## **STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL COMMISSIONS IN THE CONFERENCE ON THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION**

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Successful implementation of the Global Compact for Migration requires understanding of the regional dynamics of human mobility. While international migration is a global phenomenon it occurs mostly within regions. And in each region, migration trends are impacted by different drivers, opportunities and legal regimes, and show different outcomes. Thus, understanding and addressing the regional dimensions of migration is crucial for ensuring safe, orderly, and regular migration.

We share in general common root causes of large movements of migrants and refugees. Migration is often associated with demographic change, the search for better educational and job opportunities; the pursuit of individual aspirations; the flight from unemployment, poverty, inequality, violence, and crisis, often due to natural or man-made disasters and environmental degradation.

These root causes of migration which have different regional particularities, are increasingly pushing people out of their countries of origin, often through their neighboring countries to seek opportunities abroad either through regular or irregular means. Many face exploitation and abuse during their journeys or at their destinations. Millions of men, women and children find themselves in vulnerable situations, at the mercy of traffickers, smugglers and other criminals.

Of course, large movements of migrants carry substantial adjustment costs, but it also has an overwhelmingly positive social, economic and cultural impact on countries of origin (through remittances) and destination (low cost labour and social security contributions) and on the migrants and their families. In 2015, migrants' contribution to global GDP was roughly \$6.7 trillion, or 9.4 percent of global GDP.



Recognizing the importance of the regional dimension of international migration and the necessity of regional cooperation, Paragraph 50 of the GCM entrusts sub-regional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations, including the UN Regional Economic Commissions with a critical role in reviewing the implementation of the Global Compact within the respective regions, beginning in 2020, to inform each edition of the International Migration Review Forum.

RECs can particularly contribute with the implementation of the GCM and its regional follow up and monitoring processes:

**Firstly**, by promoting data improvement to support evidence-based migration governance for the benefit of countries and migrants alike, incl. This includes regional observatories and methodologies to include information that results from CENSUS and Household Surveys as official sources that can help update and produce disaggregated data by sex and age throughout the migratory cycle as origin, transit, destination and return. Each region has its own particularities so empirical analysis on the trends of regional migration to understand the root causes of migration, gather and produce data, provide methodologies to improve comparability and disaggregated data and break the statistical silence. Policy makers need to have statistics and facts on the size of these movements of people, their age structure, their skills, languages, health, nutrition and education needs. Regional perspectives and data can be of great utility to all stakeholders, including the migrants themselves.

**Secondly**, per their convening power to bring countries and other stakeholders together to discuss follow-up measures and propose concrete action, and by providing intergovernmental regional platforms and participating in interagency forums such as the newly-created UN Global Migration Network. Another example RECs are the technical secretariats of regional forums for sustainable development which can ensure the linkages between Agenda 2030 and the GCM. The results of such forums are directly presented to the High Level Political Forum and brings together different sectors of governments, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders of each region. RECs are assisting countries to include SDGs in the national plans and budgets, this could be extended to the GCM

objectives. It is proven that synergies between different institutional spaces such as consultative processes, economic and political integration agreements, and intergovernmental forums, where countries can dialogue and share experiences, are more feasible to take place at the regional level.

**Thirdly**, by proposing evidence-based policy analysis to establish critical links between demographics, migration and economic aspects which include trade, productive structures, labour markets, innovation and technology, including the understanding that equality is a driver of growth and not a result of it and this includes focusing on education health and nutrition of migrants.

**Fourthly**, a two-fold strategy related to capacity building for member States jointly with other UN entities. On one side, Regional Commissions can provide a regional on-line knowledge platform as an online open data source and support regional centres for research and training on migration and migration observatories to collect and analyse data. On the other, by assessing skills needed for migrants and recipient communities to upgrade education programmes and ensure the absorption of technological progress.

**Fifthly**, by linking the implementation of the GCM to South-South cooperation, including enhancing the portability of rights, social security, education titles, among others. It is crucial that the GCM follow-up and monitoring processes be evidence based.

All five regional Commissions see the GCM as a historic opportunity to recognize the triad of rights, development and migration, as part of the future of the nations, while recognizing the complexity of the task of identifying and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by international migration while properly addressing its challenges at the local, national, regional and global levels.