

**Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) to adopt
Global Compact for Migration (GCM)
Marrakech, Morocco -10-11 December, 2018**

**Statement by
Mr. Khalil Hashmi, Director General,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan and Head of Delegation
(11 December 2018)**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Let me begin by thanking the Kingdom of Morocco for its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements for this Conference.

We deeply appreciate the leadership and commitment demonstrated by Secretary General Guterres and his Special Representative to navigate the process leading to the Compact adoption.

Our sincere commendation also goes to the Co-Chairs from Mexico and Switzerland for successfully steering the negotiations.

Mr. President,

That migration has always been part of human journey is a truism. We agree that migration is also here to stay. The Global Compact captures this reality. It reflects a delicate but prudent compromise.

Yet, it provides sufficient policy space to all States to evolve migration policies and strategies that respond to our national contexts, while respecting national sovereignty.

In many ways, the Compact on Migration represents the success of multilateralism. Despite divergent interests, we have demonstrated our collective political will to address questions relating to migration in ways that are agreeable to countries of destination and origin.

We consider the Compact a framework of joint commitments on managing, coordinating and cooperating on various facets of migration.

We see it a reference point and a guide to explore avenues of bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

We agree that the Compact does not bind states with legal obligations. We, therefore, are disappointed that a handful states have chosen to stay away from a global framework of political commitments. This notwithstanding, the wide-ranging presence and endorsement of the Compact speaks to the strength and vitality of the Compact. We hope that these states review their choices and revert to the GCM fold soon.

Mr. President,

The Compact marks the beginning of a new era of migration governance, dialogue and international cooperation. The real litmus test of the Compact lies in the degree to which we are willing to sustain the spirit of engagement, mutual understanding and mutual benefit.

We agree with the Secretary General when he said yesterday, contrary to popular myths, most migratory movements are taking place among and between developing countries- from South to South, not from South to North.

Yet, given the varied dynamics involved, no one state can address migration either on its own or in isolation. Hence, the need for dialogue and cooperation among and between states, businesses, organizations and other stakeholders.

At the centre of this conversation should be evidence, data and facts. This is the only sustainable way forward in dealing with migration especially when the dictates of demographics and economics require evidence-based public policy approaches to migration.

Mr. President,

As a country of origin, transit and destination, Pakistan believes in the promise and potential of migration. We consider migration a source of prosperity, innovation and win-win for all countries.

We are one of the largest countries of origin of international migrants. Our diaspora constitutes not only a major source of national development but also for their host countries.

In terms of migration governance, we are cognizant of the multidimensional character of migration. Accordingly, we are pursuing a whole-of-government approach- developing effective migration policies and implementing them through legislative and administrative actions.

We are also engaged bilaterally with several countries including the European Union on a range of migration related issues- in line with the GCM goals of safe, orderly and regular migration. We are actively participating in and contributing to the Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs)

Pakistan is also a destination country of migrants. We continue to host, on an average, more than a million irregular migrants from neighbouring countries and the region for over four decades. Their numbers, time and status notwithstanding, this category of migrants has enjoyed social mobility, employment opportunities and access to health and education.

Despite strains on our state and society arising from the presence of a large foreign population, not a single political party or group has ever resorted to xenophobic rhetoric or populist sloganeering.

Mr. President,

In many ways, managing irregular migration and expanding pathways for legal migration are mutually reinforcing. It is important to assess the impact of restrictive visa regime and stringent border controls on the entire cycle of migration. Similarly, migrants must be spared the brunt of incendiary rhetoric scapegoating them for narrow political gains.

In terms of the Compact follow-up, we look forward to engaging actively on the prospects, opportunities and pathways for regular

migration to facilitate labour mobility and decent work, optimizing education opportunities, upholding the right to family life, and responding to the needs of migrants in a situation of vulnerability.

While States retain the sovereign right to strengthen their border security, this right should be consistent with international law. Migrants, regardless of their migration status, are entitled to the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, which must be respected, protected and fulfilled across all stages of the migration cycle.

The tendencies of xenophobia, racial profiling and Islamophobia in the countries of destination against migrants must be countered. All States must foster inclusive and cohesive societies by empowering migrants to become active members of society.

Mr. President,

As we move towards implementing the GCM provisions, we look forward to enhanced bilateral engagements, energized regional dialogues and global cooperation that are responsive to the GCM commitments.

It would be essential to forge partnerships to facilitate integrated solutions with a focus on requisite financing and evidence based migration solutions.

We look forward to a migration roadmap of dialogue, engagement and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Thank you.