

International Migration Review Forum Progress Declaration
Zero draft
17 March 2022

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives, meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 17 to 20 May 2022 at the International Migration Review Forum, convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all aspects of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, including as it relates to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders *[GCM para 49]*, have adopted the following Progress Declaration.

Introduction

2. We reaffirm the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, also known as the Marrakech Compact on Migration, and recall General Assembly resolution 73/195 of 19 December 2018, by which it endorsed the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration as well as General Assembly resolution 73/326 of 19 July 2019 on the “Format and organizational aspects of the international migration review forums”.

3. We also reaffirm that the Global Compact is based on a set of cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles: people-centred, international cooperation, national sovereignty, rule of law and due process, sustainable development, human rights, gender-responsive, child-sensitive, whole-of-government approach and whole-of-society approach. *[73/326, pp4]*

4. We recommit to fulfilling the objectives, commitments and actions outlined in the Global Compact, in line with its 360-degree vision and guiding principles, by facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration, reducing the incidence and negative impact of irregular migration and promoting the contributions of migrants at all skills levels to sustainable development at the local, national, regional and global levels, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. *[based on GCM para 11 and 12]*

5. We acknowledge our shared responsibilities to one another as Member States of the United Nations to respect each other’s needs and concerns over migration, and we recognize that all migrants, regardless of their migration status, are human rights holders, and reaffirm the need to protect their safety, dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms, without any kind of discrimination, while promoting the security and prosperity of all communities. *[based on GCM para 11 and 76/172, pp5]*

6. We reaffirm the importance of facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies and, in this regard, recognize the positive contributions of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development in their countries of origin, transit and destination, and in the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. *[based on HLPF 2021, para 31]*

7. We recognize that as many as 281 million people were international migrants in 2020 globally, of whom 48 per cent were women or girls and 15 per cent were under the age of 20, and that the transfer of recorded remittances to developing countries amounted to USD 549 billion in 2020. *[based on SG report snapshot]*

8. We also recognize that women migrant workers are important contributors to social and economic development in countries of origin and destination, and underline the value and dignity of their labour, including the labour of domestic workers. *[based on 76/172, pp 19]*

9. We commend the positive role of millions of migrants as agents of sustainable development and in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including as essential workers, and remain deeply concerned that the pandemic has had a severe impact on migrants, including through increased risk of COVID-19 infection, restricted or non-existent access to health services and social protection, job losses, discrimination, protracted family separation, inability to access online learning and child services, and unsafe and undignified returns. *[based on SG report and SG's Policy brief on COVID-19 and People on the Move]*

10. We are concerned about the impact of financial and economic crises, as well as natural disasters and the effects of climate-related phenomena on international migration and migrants. *[based on 76/172, op2]*

11. We declare our profound solidarity with, and support for, the millions of people in different parts of the world who, for reasons beyond their control, are forced to uproot themselves and their families from their homes. *[71/1, para 8]*

12. We are deeply concerned that thousands of people continue to go missing or die each year along perilous routes on land and at sea, in transit and destination countries, with reports of more than 8,436 known migrants having lost their lives and 5,534 migrants having gone missing in transit globally from 2019 to 2021. *[based on SG report snapshot and DESA International Migration 2020 Highlights]*

13. We welcome the regional reviews of the implementation of the Global Compact.

14. We also welcome the reviews of progress at the national level, including the voluntary elaboration and use of national implementation plans, drawing on contributions from all relevant stakeholders, as well as parliaments and local authorities, in line with a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

15. We acknowledge with appreciation the work of the Champion countries of the Global Compact and the Friends of Migration group, including their initiative in sharing insights, lessons learned and promising practices in support of the implementation of the Global Compact.

16. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General of 27 December 2021 (A/76/642) on the implementation of the Global Compact, and its guidance for the deliberations during the forum, including policy priorities for consideration by the forum.

17. We commend the work of the United Nations Network on Migration in support of the implementation of the Global Compact, including the establishment of the Capacity Building Mechanism, the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the Migration Network Hub.

Progress, challenges and gaps in the implementation of the Global Compact

18. We recognize the many efforts and progress made and the good practices that have emerged in implementing the Global Compact, including in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, by local and

national governments, the UN system and other international organizations, migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, parliamentarians, trade unions, national human rights institutions, the media, local humanitarian actors and other relevant stakeholders.

19. We are concerned that progress in fulfilling the vision of the Global Compact to facilitate and harness the benefits of safe, orderly and regular migration is slow in many areas and that the impacts of COVID-19 have, in many instances, negatively impacted progress, and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities of migrants. Only a limited number of Member States have developed ambitious national responses for the implementation of the Global Compact. We recognize that challenges and gaps in the implementation of the Global Compact exist and may be due to limited resources and national capacities, as well as inadequate coordination within governments and with stakeholders. *[based on SG report para 13]*

20. We recall the decision of General Assembly resolution 73/326 to cover all 23 objectives of the Global Compact in four round tables during the International Migration Review Forum.

Round table 1 (objectives 2, 5, 6, 12 and 18)¹

21. Progress has been made in mainstreaming migration and mobility into national development or sector plans, climate strategies and climate change adaptation policies. Progress has also been achieved in the conclusion of bilateral and regional labour migration agreements, efforts to simplify administrative procedures related to the migration process, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and actions to reduce vulnerabilities faced by migrants in an irregular situation, including by facilitating their access to the formal economy, labour market and basic services.

22. Progress has been made by many Member States, the private sector and other stakeholders in promoting fair and ethical recruitment and decent work for migrant workers, regardless of their migration status, upholding international human rights and labour standards, and banning recruitment fees and strengthening labour inspection capacities. There has been an increased use of digital technologies during the pandemic, which enhanced the effectiveness and transparency of migration procedures. Efforts have also been made in building the capacity of consular services and in facilitating recognition of academic and vocational qualifications and skills of migrant workers and returning migrants.

23. The interactions between climate change and migration present increasing challenges. Climatic conditions, events and variability are important drivers of migration, with migration responses to specific climate hazards being strongly influenced by economic, social, political and demographic processes. Efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change have been insufficient, as acknowledged by the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and as part of the Glasgow Climate Pact. The responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of climate change and other systemic shocks have laid bare the

¹ Objective 2: *Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin*; Objective 5: *Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration*; Objective 6: *Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work*; Objective 12: *Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral*; Objective 18: *Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences*.

gaps that remain in anticipating and preparing for risks and threats that might trigger future migratory movements.

24. The lack of mutual recognition of skills and qualifications of migrants often leads to a waste of talent, limiting migrants' potential as well as their contribution to development, and leaving migrants vulnerable to exploitation. Many migrant workers continued to face wage theft, reduced salaries, discriminatory dismissals, withholding of benefits, forced unpaid leave and protracted separation from their families, which have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Migration procedures often lack predictability and allow for high levels of discretionary action, limiting opportunities for migrants to appeal immigration decisions.

Round table 2 (objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 21)²

25. Progress has been made in issuing migrants with identification documents. Stakeholders have developed guidance for the development of transnational search mechanisms, promoting cross-border operational cooperation and information-sharing, and the establishment of other internationally coordinated efforts on missing migrants. Progress has also been achieved in establishing observatories to collect migration data, in curbing the incidence of smuggling of migrants and in improving the capacity of Member States to identify networks of migrant smugglers and their organizers, and in identifying and responding to the needs of the persons who are being smuggled.

26. There are increasing efforts by Member States to foster cross-border collaboration for the effective investigation and prosecution of human traffickers and to develop life skills for victims of trafficking in persons who return or are returned to their country of origin. Efforts are being made to modernize border crossing points, including by simplifying procedures and upgrading infrastructure and equipment, to reduce immigration detention, including by implementing non-custodial alternatives to detention in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to end child immigration detention in line with international law. In response to the challenges posed by the pandemic, some Member States temporarily suspended forced returns and expanded assistance to returning migrants.

27. Despite the progress made, many Member States still lack robust civil registration systems or the capacity to issue identity and travel documents. Migrants continue to face risks throughout the migration journey, owing to a lack of proof of legal identity, insufficient access to information or lack of predictability in migration procedures.

28. Humanitarian assistance provided to migrants along perilous routes and in other situations where their life or safety is in danger is often criminalized, even in the absence of material or financial gain, which is a pre-condition for establishing a criminal offense in line with the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

² Objective 4: *Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation*; Objective 8: *Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants*; Objective 9: *Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants*; Objective 10: *Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration*; Objective 11: *Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner*; Objective 13: *Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives*; Objective 21: *Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration*.

29. The breadth of mobility restrictions imposed as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated vulnerabilities faced by migrants, including through insufficient efforts to manage national borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner.

30. Poverty and economic marginalization, which have increased during the pandemic, are among the key risk factors of trafficking in persons, including for women, children and young people. The COVID-19 pandemic has complicated access to and the provision of support to victims of trafficking in persons. In some instances, public health considerations were used to justify detention or unlawful deportation. Member States also faced practical challenges in ensuring rights-based alternatives to detention, particularly with regard to providing adequate living conditions and access to services for released migrants.

Round table 3 (objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22)³

31. Consular support has been strengthened through “one-stop” virtual mechanisms and regional and sub-regional coordination. The COVID-19 pandemic has also given rise to unprecedented levels of consular collaboration to assist in the safe, voluntary and dignified return of migrants. Efforts to provide equal and affordable access to services, including affordable access to healthcare and vaccines, as well as access to unemployment benefits and adequate social protection, and without risk of deportation or detention, have been essential in the effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular at the local level. Progress was also made in promoting inclusion and social cohesion, including through language and professional training, employment, education and social inclusion measures, as well as through community awareness campaigns, based on the principle of equal opportunity.

32. Progress was achieved in the provision of health and psychological assistance to those impacted by the pandemic through efforts of diaspora networks and communities that set up humanitarian initiatives and digital platforms. Progress was also made in the recognition of the role of diaspora engagement and remittances in national development strategies, and in programmes that are being undertaken to improve financial inclusion and the literacy of foreign workers and their families. Several Member States concluded and implemented bilateral or multilateral agreements to foster the portability of social security entitlements.

33. At the same time, many migrants struggle to gain access to basic services, such as healthcare, despite being disproportionately exposed to COVID-19 due to their living conditions and their employment in essential jobs. Migrants were often not systematically covered by COVID-19 vaccination policies and programmes as well as pandemic-related socioeconomic support and recovery measures, despite their loss of jobs and income. Access to basic services, social protection or recovery assistance often remained limited to migrants with a regular status, thereby placing irregular migrants in a situation of vulnerability.

³ Objective 14: *Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle*; Objective 15: *Provide access to basic services for migrants*; Objective 16: *Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion*; Objective 19: *Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries*; Objective 20: *Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants*; Objective 22: *Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits*.

34. There is an uneven distribution across Member States of digital remittance channels, which depend on sound infrastructure and on digital and financial inclusion. Many women lack access to financial services and mobile-enabled data, even though they rely disproportionately on receiving remittances. Coverage and portability of social security benefits and other entitlements remain limited due to exclusion, barriers to eligibility, lack of implementation of existing frameworks and limited cross-border cooperation.

Round table 4 (objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23)⁴

35. Progress has been made in improving the collection and use of disaggregated migration data, including through the establishment of migration data and knowledge centres and observatories, as well as the promotion of bilateral and regional exchanges and initiatives on migration data. During the pandemic, many Member States and local authorities launched awareness-raising initiatives and translated COVID-19 related information into multiple languages to help improve migrants' access to information and health services. Consular services put in place virtual counselling.

36. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Member States have taken action to reduce migrant vulnerabilities, by providing migrants, regardless of their migration status, with access to COVID-19-related healthcare services and vaccinations; by extending visa and residence permits to avoid migrants falling into an irregular status; and by halting forced returns. Member States and stakeholders have taken steps to combat discrimination, by sharing examples of migrants and communities working together to make the places where they live and work more inclusive. Many Member States and stakeholders cooperated internationally in implementing the Global Compact, including by developing and strengthening bilateral, subregional, regional and inter-regional initiatives, such as bilateral labour migration agreements, and regional migration observatories.

37. Gaps in data collection and analysis persist, often due to outdated, incompatible or inadequate sources and systems for data collection and disaggregation as well as limited digital capacity. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated challenges in data collection in particular with regard to the 2020 round of population censuses, which are a key source of migration data. Discrimination, xenophobia, misinformation and stigma against migrants or minorities associated with migration remain widespread, including narratives that falsely associate migrants with criminal activities or heighten anti-immigrant anxieties. The funding of the Migration Multi-Partner Trust has been insufficient to meet the strong demand from Member States and stakeholders to support the implementation of the Global Compact.

Recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact

38. We commit to building on the promising practices that emerged in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to harness the benefits of safe, orderly and regular migration and to promoting inclusive access to basic social protection services for migrants, including by ensuring that all migrants, regardless of their migration status, are granted access to essential services and continuity of care, such as COVID-19 vaccinations, testing and treatment in line with the principles of universal health coverage, and by

⁴ Objective 1: *Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies*; Objective 3: *Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration*; Objective 7: *Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration*; Objective 17: *Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration*; Objective 23: *Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration*.

ensuring that no one is left behind in combatting and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including by ensuring the meaningful participation of migrants in the COVID-19 response and recovery. *[based on SG report, para 98; on 76/172, OP6(f); and A/CONF.219/2021/IPC/CRP.2, para 84]*

39. Building on the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic and realizing that there is a need to prepare for future pandemics, we commit to integrating promising practices, consistent with the Global Compact, into all aspects of migration policies. In this regard, we commit to accelerating efforts to integrate public health considerations into all aspects of migration policies in ways which are clear, equitable, non-discriminatory, and which leave no one behind.

40. We will accelerate efforts to develop and implement policies, practices and discourse to confront xenophobia and disinformation on migration and migrants, including by promoting open and evidence-based public discourse on migration and migrants, in partnership with local actors and migrants, with a particular focus on the role of migrants as agents of sustainable development. *[based on SG report, para 57 and 76/172, OP11(g)]*

41. We commit to effectively promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, especially those of women and children, and to addressing international migration through international, regional or bilateral cooperation and dialogue and a comprehensive and balanced approach, recognizing the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting and protecting the human rights of all migrants and ensuring that their legislation and migration policies and practices are consistent with their applicable international human rights obligations, in order to avoid approaches that might aggravate the vulnerability of migrants. *[based on 76/172, OP 1]*

42. We commit to adopting national gender-responsive migration policies and legislation to protect the human rights of all migrant women and girls, regardless of their migration status. In this regard, we stress the importance of ensuring full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in the formulation of migration policies, especially to address the challenges that put them in a vulnerable situation. *[based on 76/141, OP31]*

43. We will redouble our efforts to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration in response to labour market realities, promote pathways for migrants affected by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation, and for other migrants in vulnerable situations, including by working coherently across all relevant multilateral fora, facilitating family reunification and regularizing migrants in an irregular situation. In this regard, we commit to providing migrants access to information pertaining to their rights and obligations during all stages of migration, including information on fair recruitment, skills, qualifications, entry and exit requirements, living and working conditions, wages and benefits, and access to services, among others. *[based on SG report, para 101]*

44. Recognizing the foundational role of proof of legal identity in fulfilling the objectives of the Global Compact, such as enhancing access to regular pathways and facilitating safe and dignified return, we commit to accelerating efforts to ensure that migrants have non-discriminatory access to proof of nationality and other relevant documents, including through digitalization efforts and strengthening the capacities of consulates. *[based SG report, para 72]*

45. We will accelerate our efforts to facilitate the recognition of formal and informal skills and competencies acquired by migrants, including by issuing documents to this effect, to support the skilling and reskilling of returning migrants, to promote decent work opportunities, to enhance international cooperation to allow for the recovery of benefits and entitlements of returning migrants, and to promote the sustainable reintegration of returning migrants by providing them with equal access to social protection and services. *[based on SG report and 76/141]*

46. Concerned that the cost of transferring remittances remained at 6.3 per cent during the third quarter of 2021, we commit to redoubling our efforts to reduce the average transaction cost of migrant remittances by 2030 to less than 3 per cent of the amount transferred, as agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including by adopting digital solutions and accelerating access to transaction accounts for migrants. *[based on FFD outcome 2021, para 39; Remittance Prices Worldwide - Issue 39, September 2021 World Bank, 2022 FSDR page 85]*

47. We invite relevant subregional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations, including the United Nations regional economic commissions and regional consultative processes on migration, in reviewing the Global Compact, to consider ways to enhance cooperation in the implementation of the Global Compact, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and, while maintaining a 360-degree approach, prioritize those objectives and actions which have received less attention during the first round of regional reviews and where regional cooperation is essential for their implementation.

48. We will integrate migration as a cross-cutting issue in national development plans and other relevant frameworks, develop ambitious national implementation plans and promote international cooperation and partnerships to implement the Global Compact. *[SG report, para 109]*

49. We request the Secretary-General, in his next biennial report, to propose a limited set of indicators, drawing on the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as contained in General Assembly resolution 71/313 of 6 July 2017 and other relevant frameworks, to assist Member States in conducting regular and inclusive reviews of progress in the implementation of the Global Compact, as well as to include a comprehensive strategy for improving migration data at the local, national, regional and global levels.

50. We commit to strengthening national capacities, including through the Capacity Building Mechanism of the Global Compact, and we encourage Member States and stakeholders to submit good practices and lessons learnt to the Migration Network Hub's Repository of Practices, and to consider making financial contributions to the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

51. We welcome the efforts of the Network in strengthening enhanced system-wide coherence in support of the implementation of the Global Compact and call on the Network, to work with Member States and stakeholders to strengthen collaboration, engagement and linkages at regional and national levels. *[SG Report, para 92]*

52. Building on the pledging initiative of the Network,⁵ we encourage Member States and stakeholders to make pledges in the lead-up, during and following the forum and, in this regard, request the Network

⁵ The Network organized a pledging initiative in the context of the first International Migration Review Forum to support the further implementation of the Global Compact.

to provide support to Member States and stakeholders in their implementation of their pledges, as appropriate.

53. We will further align the implementation of relevant commitments and actions from the Global Compact with those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and other relevant internationally agreed instruments.

54. We commit to strengthening the linkages between the Global Compact, the 2030 Agenda and their review forums and welcome that 20 of the 42 voluntary national reviews submitted during the 2021 High-Level Political Forum referred to migrants or migration. We will include progress, challenges and gaps in implementing the Global Compact in our voluntary national reviews of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, invite the Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration to report on the status of implementation of the Global Compact during the High-level Political Forum, and encourage relevant subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council to contribute to the review of the implementation of the Global Compact.

55. We commit to developing clear, safe and predictable disembarkation mechanisms for rescued people, promoting responsibility-sharing in providing a place of safety, complying with international obligations at borders and along migratory routes, and refraining from obstructing humanitarian efforts aimed at providing life-saving assistance, and from criminalizing those who provide such humanitarian assistance. *[SG report, paras 104 to 106]*

56. We request the Secretary-General, with the support of the Network, to include actionable recommendations on strengthening cooperation on missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress with the aim of preventing loss of life in transit, including by collaborating with humanitarian organizations, in his next biennial report.

57. We request the President of the General Assembly to hold a plenary meeting of the General Assembly in the second semester of 2024 in order to consider the next biennial report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Compact, as well as the outcomes of the regional reviews, presented by the Coordinator of the Network, and for Member States and stakeholders to present, on a voluntary basis, progress in implementing the pledges they have made in the context of the forum.