



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Arab Parliaments Dialogue on the Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region

Concept note

I. Background

The global debate on migration gained increasing momentum in the past decade, which led to the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016 by the United Nations General Assembly. In this declaration, member states committed themselves to launching an intergovernmental negotiating process that culminated in the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which was formally approved by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018. The Global Compact for Migration provides a comprehensive and inclusive vision for migration governance and a roadmap to help achieve safe, orderly and regular migration through its 23 objectives, implementable commitments and related proposed actions. The Global Compact for Migration is based on a set of guiding principles that place human rights and the well-being of people at its heart. These principles call for a whole of government and whole of society approach to migration governance, as well as the adoption of a human-rights based, gender responsive and child sensitive approach among others.

Committed to ensuring the effective implementation of the agreement, Member States decided that the Global Compact for Migration should include a call for voluntary follow-up and review, and that the International Migration Review Forum be the main global intergovernmental platform for member states to discuss progress in implementing all the objectives of the GCM, and that this forum be held every four years, starting in 2022. It also called on Member States to monitor and review progress in implementing the GCM at the regional level, starting in 2020, and every four years thereafter, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, provided that the outcomes of the regional reviews feed into the International Migration Review Forum. The General Assembly also encouraged all Member States to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national level, and to consider presenting the result of their reviews of progress in implementing the GCM, on a voluntary basis, drawing on contributions from all relevant stakeholders. In this context, a concept note and an indicative template were prepared for guiding the voluntary GCM review reports in the Arab region, in line with the guidelines developed by the United Nations Network on Migration.

In order to assist them in the preparation and organization of regional reviews, Member States requested support from the International Organization for Migration in its capacity as Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration. Member States also invited relevant sub-regional, regional and interregional processes, platforms and organizations, including the United Nations regional economic commissions and regional consultative processes, to review the implementation of the Global Compact at the regional level. Member States also stressed the importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in

order to ensure an inclusive approach to the whole of government and whole of society to achieve effective implementation, by building strong cooperation and partnership with migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, labor unions, parliamentarians, employers, the private sector, religious organizations, authorities, local communities and National human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders

Migration issues are considered one of the priorities in the Arab region, which is still characterized by complex migration patterns, as Arab countries are countries of origin, transit and destination. In 2019, the number of migrants and refugees in the region exceeded 40 million, and women constituted nearly a third of them, while more than 31 million people immigrated from Arab countries and nearly half of them remained in the region.

The Coronavirus pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the movement of people and the ability to move around the world. It affected border management systems, migration movements and the situation of migrants, including those who have been displaced. The pandemic has drawn attention to the risks of human trafficking that migrant communities face and has made detection, protection, and prosecution more difficult. It also highlighted the importance of the contributions of immigrants to our societies who are still working in key economic sectors to meet the basic needs of people of all ages, genders and backgrounds.

Parliaments play a critical role in expressing migrants' priorities and issues and advancing their human and labour rights. Parliamentarians are responsible for ensuring that laws take into account the needs of migrants and are effective in protecting their rights. As representatives of the entire population, including migrants, they are responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of government plans and strategies and ensuring that they target and reach the most vulnerable. Last but not least, parliaments in most Arab countries are responsible for scrutinizing and approving the national budget, and accordingly they must ensure that adequate financial resources are allocated to meet all population groups, including migrants.

II. A multi-stakeholder consultation on the regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region

Within the framework of the efforts deployed to conduct the GCM regional review in the Arab region, and in line with the guiding principles of the GCM that call for a whole of society approach to the follow up and review of the agreement, ESCWA and the International Organization for Migration are organizing, in cooperation with the members of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration, consultations with relevant stakeholders concerned with migration in the Arab region. This dialogue includes migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, religious organizations, authorities, local communities, the private sector, employers, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media, and other relevant stakeholders at the global, regional and national levels.

The GCM highlighted the role parliamentarians play in this area and stressed the need for their participation in the national, regional and global reviews of the GCM. In this context, ESCWA and the International Organization for Migration, in cooperation with members of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration, are organizing the first dialogue with Arab parliaments on the regional review of

the GCM. This dialogue is of particular importance at this time, as governments and stakeholders in Arab countries are working to conduct the first review of the implementation of the GCM.

A. Objectives of the Dialogue:

The dialogue seeks to achieve the following goals:

1. Provide parliamentarians with an overview of recent developments in migration governance at the global, regional and national levels and highlight the new structures in place for coordination on migration and the regional review process;
2. Encouraging peer learning and cooperation between parliamentarians regarding their involvement and contributions to the implementation of the Global Compact, its follow-up and review at the regional and national levels;
3. Discuss ways to ensure optimal engagement with and contribution to the regional review of the global agreement in the Arab region.

B. Time and place of the Dialogue

Due to the ongoing spread of the new Corona virus, the dialogue will be conducted through Kudo, an electronic conference platform with simultaneous translation services in English, French and Arabic.

The dialogue will be held on Thursday, February 4, 2021, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Beirut time).

C. Results of the Dialogue

- Increase parliamentarians' awareness of the national and regional review processes of the global compact and promotion of exchange of experiences regarding the global compact review processes at the national level.
- The dialogue will guide the regional review process in the Arab region so as to ensure the approach of the government and society as a whole to this process

Agenda

Thursday, February 4, 2021(Beirut time)

11:00 – 10:45	Online registration
11:05 – 11:00	Welcoming remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Mehrinaz El Awady, Director, Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development, UN ESCWA- Ms. Carmela Godeau, Regional Director – MENA, International Organization for Migration
11:05 – 11:25	Scene setting session <p>The session aims to pave the way for discussion by providing an overview of the principles, objectives, follow-up and review of the Global Compact in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Principles and Objectives of the Global Compact for Migration (7 minutes)</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Sara Salman, Regional Advisor on Population Affairs, ESCWA• <i>The Global Compact for Migration Follow-up and Review process at the national, regional and global levels (7 minutes)</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Hind Kinani, Regional Research Officer - IOM• <i>Questions and Answers (7 minutes)</i> <p>Moderator: TBD</p>
11:25-12:25	First session: The role of Arab parliaments in dealing with migration issues <p>This session aims to provide a platform for peer-to-peer dialogue and learning among members of Arab parliaments about their experiences in addressing migration issues.</p> <p><i>Questions for guiding discussions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Has your parliament addressed any of the migration issues?</i>- <i>What are the challenges you face?</i>- <i>Was there a special role in light of the Corona pandemic?</i> <p>Moderator: Ms. Sarah Salman, Regional Adviser on Population Issues, ESCWA</p>

12:25 – 12:55	<p>Session 2: Open discussion on promoting the whole of society approach to the voluntary review of the GCM at the national level in the Arab region</p> <p>This session aims to exchange ideas on means and methods to ensure the effective participation of parliamentarians in the regional review of the Global Compact for Migration, especially in the regional conference that will be organized on 24 – 25 February 2021.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Othman Belbeisi, Senior Regional Advisor for MENA - IOM</p>
12:55 – 13:00	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>IOM</p> <p>ESCWA</p>