



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Dialogue with Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on the GCM Regional Review in the Arab Region

Thursday, 28th January, 2021
11:00am to 1:00pm Cairo/Beirut time

Opening Statement

Dr. Mehrinaz El Awady

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UN ESCWA

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Dear colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you today to this timely dialogue with the regional consultative processes in the Arab region, a mere two years after the adoption of the historic Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.

The GCM offers a paradigm shift in approaching migration governance and puts migrants' rights and wellbeing at the heart of inclusive development. The GCM comes at a critical time for our region that witnesses unprecedented levels of human mobility with the region hosting more than 40 million migrants from around the world, while more than 30 million people have migrated from Arab countries.

The region is also characterized by complex migration patterns and trends, with many countries serving as countries of origin, transit, and destination. The region is also connected by active migration corridors with neighboring regions, including South East Asia, Africa, and Europe. And while significant developments have been witnessed in better governing migration across these corridors, we still unfortunately witness large scale irregular movement across those corridors that puts the lives of thousands of people at risk. The role of the regional consultative processes in this regard is critical to encourage and foster regional coordination and collaboration to improve migration governance.

Esteemed guests,

Slowly but surely, progress is being made towards achieving safe orderly and regular migration, despite some setbacks including the most recent COVID-19 pandemic that has exacerbated migrants' vulnerabilities.

Governments around the world committed themselves to conduct periodic review of the implementation of the GCM to identify trends, challenges, promising practices, and to collectively think about means to accelerate the GCM's implementation to achieve its noble goals.

In our region, and over the past year, ESCWA and its partners have been actively supporting our Member States to conduct their first regional review. Fully cognizant that the GCM review is State lead, we have aimed to assist Member States with developing their national voluntary review reports. We have also sought to provide open spaces for dialogue among all relevant stakeholders. And our year long efforts will be crowned with a regional review conference that will be held on the 23rd and 24th of February.

Our meeting today is in line with these efforts, and we hope that we can exchange knowledge and reflect on our experiences regarding the GCM implementation and its first regional review. I also take this opportunity to extend our invitation to all of you personally to actively participate in and contribute to the regional review conference and of course the colleagues will coordinate with you closely following today's meeting in this regard.

Our meeting is short, yet its agenda is heavy. After a couple of brief scene setting presentations, the first session will seek to provide an opportunity to exchange experiences regarding the GCM implementation and review, while the second session of the day will offer us an opportunity to discuss with you mean to optimize your significant contributions to the GCM regional review process.

I thank you once again for your valuable participation and wish you all a fruitful discussion.

Thank you