

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

Ms. Kristina Mejo, Deputy Regional Director, IOM Middle East and North Africa

Welcoming Remarks

Excellencies,

Distinguished Parliamentarians,

Esteemed Guests,

- It is my pleasure and honor to be with you today for this important Dialogue.
- Since the start of the New York Declaration, the migration and development nexus has gained increased recognition and salience with the important adherence to the 2030 agenda and the adoption, in 2018, of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by a majority of Member States.
- Significant progress has been achieved in relation to migration governance and the protection of migrants as countries are increasingly cognizant of the essential role that migrants play in their development agenda.
- These critical roles have been further highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic as many migrants are in the frontline working in the health systems or continue, despite lockdowns, to work in basic services for people of all ages, backgrounds and gender.
- Despite this unprecedented time, countries have untiringly pursued their efforts by leaving no one behind working towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact Objectives.
- Success and promising practices have emerged, such as a broader inclusion of migrants in health care systems or even, in some cases, in social protection schemes.
- In this regard, parliamentarians have played a critical role. As representatives from countries, including migrants, they have voiced their concerns and priorities, ensuring the development and respect of human and labor rights.

- As Parliamentarians, you work tirelessly towards the elaboration and implementation of respective governments' plans and strategies. Elected by a broad diversity of people, parliamentarians have the duty to guarantee that those plans and strategies reach and protect all groups of the population.
- The Global Compact has recognized the crucial role that parliamentarians play in the migration framework, of which parliamentarians are encouraged to participate in the national, regional and global reviews of the GCM.
- This dialogue is therefore an opportunity to discuss your experiences in addressing migration issues. Furthermore, the exchanges of this dialogue will further strengthen the outcomes of the GCM regional review process in the Arab region, which will take place the 24th and 25th of February.
- Additional efforts and coordination will be needed in the upcoming months to ensure that migrants are included in the recovery plans of governments and notably in the vaccination campaigns, which have recently started in the region.
- It is only with the inclusion of all groups in government recovery plans that the various challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic will be tackled. Because no one is safe until everyone is.
- I want to conclude by thanking all the esteemed audience for its attention and I look forward to a fruitful discussion. Thank you very much.