

**Opening Remarks**  
**Ms. Carmela Godeau, Regional Director, RO MENA**  
**Migration and the SDGs in the Arab Region, Capacity Building Workshop by the Working Group on**  
**International Migration in the Arab Region**  
**16 July, 09:00am**

**Ms. Enas Fergany, Director, Refugees, Expatriates & Migration Affairs Department, League of Arab States,**

**Ms. Sara Salman, Populations Affairs Officer, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, UNESCWA,**

**Dr. Ayman Zohry, President of the Egyptian Society for Migration Studies (EGYMIG), Adjunct Professor at American University of Cairo,**

**Members of Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region,**

**Distinguished delegates and participants,**

Good morning.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the first Regional Training on SDGs and Migration taking place here in Cairo today and tomorrow with delegates joining from North Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf following the many efforts and the dedicated work of the colleagues in the last months to formulate and develop the training formula.

As one of the co-chairs of the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region under the Regional Coordination Mechanism, I am particularly pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you today. This Working Group, which includes 16 UN agencies and the League of Arab States, is an important forum that enables important, joint initiatives, to be carried out in the framework of partnership in migration and is co-chaired by the LAS, ESCWA and IOM.

The Sustainable Development Goals or the SDGs outline 17 goals and 169 accompanying targets. For the first time ever, Migration is solidly ingrained in the 2030 Development Agenda beyond target 10.7, under the Goal that seeks to reduce inequalities, calling to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.”

The Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda recognize that migrant women and men are a group, often with vulnerabilities to be protected as well as also serve as agents of development, and of change.

There are additional targets that directly call for the eradication of forced labour and human trafficking, promotion of rights of migrant workers, reduction of the cost of remittances and an increased student mobility. Apart from these clearly outlined targets, migration is a crosscutting issue through all goals and targets, with respect to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, health care, climate change and decent work, where migration considerations should be well-thought-out during implementation.

All the above elements are reflected in the latest draft of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration which has been completed last week in New York as an important

milestone that will improve international cooperation on migration.

*“This is not the end of the undertaking but the beginning of a new historic effort to shape the global agenda on migration for decades to come,”* said IOM’s Director General William Lacy Swing.

The GCM sets out a range of principles, commitments and understandings among Member States, affecting nearly 260 million international migrants and the communities that host them, including considerations relating to human rights, humanitarian, economic, social, development, climate change and security issues.

The GCM is the first global framework for cooperation on migration governance and as such is a landmark for all of us in this room today.

The inclusion of migration in the SDGs leads the way towards enhanced collaboration between migration and development sectors and consequently towards greater policy coherence that

is central in the GCM context. The SDGs goals are enshrined in the Global Compact and as such, this training is extremely timely.

Perhaps the most relevant objective for our discussions is the **objective, number 23**, calling on States to Strengthen international cooperation and global partnership for safe, orderly and regular migration.

With IOM's foreseen role as coordinator and secretariat for the **UN Migration Network** that will support the implementation, follow up and review of the GCM, we look forward to working with our partners in the UN, many represented here today, to support our partner States along the full spectrum of migratory experiences to work together to find mutually beneficial solutions that keep the wellbeing of migrants at their core.

We hope that this training will help you not only to further understanding and frame the SDGs in your work, but will also give you additional tools to build upon and enhance the work you are doing in your respective countries.

IOM is pleased to offer a variety of resources, such as the “**IOM Migration and 2030 Agenda, a guide for practitioners**” which is now being completed in English, and will also be translated into Arabic, to assist your countries in their plans to achieve migration related SDGs.

In conclusion, I would like to thank participants for being here today, as well as thank you in advance for your active engagement and commitment to this training.

I thank the Members of the Working Group for their participation and technical presentations to give us food for thought. I lastly thank my fellow co-chairs, the League of Arab States and UNESCWA, for all of your diligent work and commitment to help bring to light this innovative training which we invite you all to fully engage in and potentially seek to replicate in your own countries. We stand ready to support you in this process and wish you a fruitful and productive workshop.

Thank you.