



**General Secretariat
Social Affairs Sector
Refugees, Expatriates
and Migration Affairs
Department**

Tenth Global Forum on Migration and Development 2017 Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugees Affairs (ARCP) Position Paper

In preparation for the Tenth Global Forum on Migration and Development to be held in Berlin, Germany during the period from 28 to 30 June 2017, with an overarching theme: “Towards a Global Social Contract on Migration and Development”, which refers to the necessity of creating a fair balance of interests for migrants as well as for their countries of origin and destination in the framework of safe, orderly and regular migration;

As the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugees Affairs (ARCP) gives particular attention to the two upcoming rounds of the GFMD which are co-chaired by Morocco as the first Arab country to assume its chairmanship;

Reference to the ARCP regular follow-up on New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants at the Arab regional level, as well as the adopted measures and the ongoing consultations of the Global Compact for Refugees, and the Global Compact for Orderly, Safe, and Regular Migration, and submitting the outcomes of this follow-up to the United Nations General Assembly assigned forums for this purpose;

And on the occasion of holding the Third Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugees Affairs (ARCP) Meeting at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States on 8 and 9 May 2017, the Arab position towards the themes of the GFMD was discussed during the first day of the meeting, when the Member States wished Morocco success during its co-chairmanship of the GFMD and expressed their readiness to support it in organizing the forum in the best possible way. It was agreed that the Member States adopt this paper during their participation in the Tenth GFMD (Berlin, 2017).

Regarding the GFMD’s three themes, which are divided into two round tables for each theme, the topics to be addressed in the round tables were discussed and the participants agreed on the following:

First Theme: Migration and Development through National Strategies: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Domestic Policies:

Roundtable 1.1: Tools and Safeguards for Policy Coherence – Finding the right policy mix to balance different interests and objectives:

1. Recognize the importance of creating and developing national mechanisms for coordination between the various governmental bodies and institutions working in the field of migration at the

national level, with the aim of developing coherent national policies and strategies to achieve complementarity and prevent duplication.

2. In recognition of the importance of social cohesion in achieving development, we emphasize that this coherence can only be achieved by promoting policies that preserve diversity and cultural integration and work on the participation of all, in line with the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, as bridging the gap between cultures is necessary and urgent for peace, stability and development.
3. Promote cooperation between concerned countries of origin and destination to manage migration and asylum in an appropriate way and develop effective plans and policies to address the challenges related to the increasing migrants and refugees flows, particularly those occurring in an irregular manner.
4. Evaluate the initiatives undertaken by some Arab countries, such as the establishment of advisory councils which include groups of scientists living abroad and are specialized in providing scientific and technical consultations in all fields. We affirm the importance of the policies developed by some countries to benefit from the expertise of their migrants abroad, as well as benefiting from their visions to develop more effective policies aiming at mainstreaming migration into development. We also call for the encouragement of individual and joint initiatives by some Arab migrants in order to benefit their countries of origin and help them to bring about development and renaissance in various fields.
5. Emphasize the importance of respecting human rights and dignity of migrants, including displaced persons, refugees and victims of human trafficking, while developing policies, since ensuring and respecting human rights and dignity of migrants is essential for promoting their contributions in countries of origin and destination, in accordance with national laws and international obligations of each State.
6. Emphasize the importance of the ARCP in the following areas:
 - a. Harmonizing migration policies at the regional level and open new horizons for cooperation and partnership among Member States;
 - b. Strengthening the Arab Member States' position in negotiating migration issues on the regional and global levels;
 - c. Being an important platform for holding consultative sessions with regional and international parties and other RCPs in order to develop dialogue and promote understanding on topics of common concern in the field of migration, thus helping to strengthen strategic cooperation with other parties in the formulation of programs and policies.

In this framework, we encourage Member States to continue their active participation in the ARCP's meetings as well as the activities organized to implement its work plans.

Roundtable 1.2: From Global Agenda to Implementation – National Action Plans for migration-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

1. The importance of mainstreaming international migration, as one of the prime factors that motivate social and economic development, in development policies at national and regional levels, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and national development plans, as the Arab region is currently in need to link migration issues with development. The implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda will affect the migration drivers from Arab countries - especially brain drain - which are often economic and social drivers.
2. Continue the efforts undertaken to mainstream migration into national development plans in the Arab countries and engage the Arab skilled migrants in the development process in the Arab world through transferring their skills and expertise; developing partnerships and networks between them and their counterparts in the Arab region; helping them to get better information on employment

opportunities and investment in the region by utilizing the means of communication and modern technology.

3. Emphasize the importance of the ARCP's role in assisting Member States to translate the migration-related Sustainable Development Goals into policies, norms, standards and guidelines that can be implemented at the national level, and serve as a link between national and global levels through collecting Member States' efforts in this regard, analyzing them at the regional level, and presenting them in international forums in a unified manner, in recognition of the importance of responding collectively to the challenges facing the region with regard to migration during the current crisis.
4. Urge Member States to participate in the GFMD with papers reflecting their efforts, achievements and challenges to implement the migration-related Sustainable Development Goals, and to present best practices in creating inter-ministerial and central-local government coordination mechanisms on the national level to implement these objectives. Also urge them to conduct reviews in the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD) and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Second Theme: Migration and Development through Multilateral and Bilateral Partnerships: Creating Perspectives for Inclusive Development:

Roundtable 2.1: Moving beyond emergencies – Creating development solutions to the mutual benefit of host and origin communities and displaced persons:

1. Reaffirm the necessity of strengthening international cooperation, support and solidarity with the most affected countries and communities by the large movements of refugees and migrants, identifying the problems faced by those countries, and help them bear the burdens and contain the humanitarian situation which has become beyond their capacities. This must be done through: increasing international assistance not only for humanitarian needs but also for development and economic support, increasing crisis response capacity and providing legitimate channels for migration.
2. Call for increasing the opportunities of receiving refugees in third countries, in accordance with the relevant international conventions and commitments, in order to reduce the burden on countries of first asylum.
3. The importance of providing services and multi-sectoral response to the most vulnerable groups, and emphasize the importance of responding in a suitable way to violence against women, girls and children.
4. Call on the international community to work on supporting and achieving development and reconstruction in the areas of return of displaced persons and refugees, and to create the conditions and atmosphere that will ensure the rehabilitation of refugees to enable them to contribute to the reconstruction of their countries, as the assistance in meeting the living and educational needs of refugees is considered as an investment in a secured future for the region and the world.
5. Emphasize the special situation of the Arab countries hosting refugees which bear the biggest burden of the current refugee crisis, with many economic challenges, social tensions, demographic changes, security and political turmoil in some countries resulting from the situation in the region since 2011 and its repercussions, besides the Israel occupation to the Arab territories, which make it difficult for refugees to have positive contributions to these hosting communities.
6. Concerning the Palestinian refugees, the participants reaffirm their condemnation of the occupying state of Israel that is causing the refugees' ongoing suffering, and hold Israel

responsible for this long-standing distress and its effects on the development process. They call upon the international community to continue in providing the necessary support for The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) so that it can continue bearing its full responsibility towards them in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions, and reaffirm the right of return based on the UN General Assembly resolution No. 194, and call upon the international community to put pressure on Israel to abide by respecting the international law, stop aggression, siege, ethnic cleansing, and racist policies that aim to continue displacing the Palestinians from their homelands.

Roundtable 2.2: Fostering the development impact of returning migrants

1. The importance of creating coherence between reintegration programs, national development strategies and the needs of the local communities which receive returning migrants, and developing policies aiming at enhancing migrants' contributions to the development process, including their reintegration in the labor market to benefit from their expertise and skills.
2. The importance of coordination between countries of origin and countries of destination with regard to migrants' voluntary return, re-admission and reintegration, taking into account the principles of human rights and the preservation of human dignity when dealing with them.
3. Give incentives to migrants urging them to return to their countries of origin after the end of their employment contracts, and encourage circular migration by establishing seasonal employment programs and granting temporary work visas.

Third Theme: Migration and Development: Finding strategies beyond the State

Roundtable 3.1: Raising the Global Talent Pool – Harnessing the Potential of the Private Sector for Global Skills Partnerships

Recognize the importance of migration for countries of origin and destination; as it could serve as a solution to limited employment opportunities in the labor markets of countries of origin, and at the same time provide solutions to demographic imbalances in countries of destination. In this framework, participants emphasize the importance of:

1. Establishing labor market systems in countries of destination, conduct periodic studies on labor market needs in these countries, clearly identify the required skills, and announce available employment opportunities, allowing countries of origin to develop suitable education and training policies, recognition of countries of destination of scientific qualifications (certificate equivalency) according to the rules and standards of each country.
2. Encouraging the private sector to engage in cross-border partnerships, provide necessary training aiming at creating qualified migrants or potential migrants in order to meet business needs, and work to establish a database of skilled, qualified and trained personnel as a beneficial global pool. This would strengthen the legal channels of migration, reduce irregular migration, and would also help to benefit from these skills in the development process in countries of origin and destination.

Roundtable 3.2: Strengthening Cooperation – Enabling Civil Society Contributions in Migrant Integration

1. Urge countries of destination to develop national policies to combat racism, discrimination, xenophobia and Islamophobia. In this regard, we affirm the important role which can be played by relevant civil society organizations, including religious organizations and migrants' NGOs, private sector, employers' organizations, labor organizations and other relevant stakeholders, and call for the protection of the rights of Arab communities abroad.
2. Participants emphasized their support to "Together: respect, safety and dignity for all" campaign launched at the High-level Plenary Meeting on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016, which is working in partnership between the United Nations, its Member States, civil society, private sector and academic institutions. In this regard, they commend the efforts of the Arab countries which have carried out several activities in the framework of this campaign, namely; Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan and Tunisia.
3. The importance of enhancing the efforts of civil society organizations established by expatriate communities to support migrants and help them integrate in hosting communities through providing them with the necessary technical and linguistic training, informing them with their rights and duties and making them familiar with the laws and regulations of host countries in order to respect them.
4. Emphasize the responsibility of refugees and migrants in respecting the laws, regulations and public order of their hosting countries, as the commitment of migrants, their potential and their ability to communicate will be of help in the integration process.
5. Encourage various civil society organizations to play a role in building intercultural and interreligious understanding in order to support social cohesion through the integration of migrants and enhancing the sense of belonging, which in turn promotes full participation in society and economy.
6. The importance of playing a positive role by civil society organizations in dealing with women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and victims of human trafficking and violence against women and girls, in a way that commensurate with their vulnerability and lead to their proper integration in society.