

## Asia-Pacific Stakeholders Discuss Border Governance and Migrant Protection During Consultation on the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

**Bangkok** - The second of four multi-stakeholder consultations in preparation for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) took place virtually on 19 November to discuss migrant protection through rights-based border governance and border management measures.

The consultation was organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific to take stock of the progress made to date in the implementation of the GCM in the region.

“The question for us is how do we ensure that the targets and indicators agreed [in these GCM objectives] translate into meaningful change and enhance human rights protections on the ground,” said Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons who spoke at the opening of the event.

“The role of civil society will be critical,” she added.

Cross-border movements in the Asia-Pacific region are vast, varied and complex. Millions of migrants arrive at international borders in the region, through regular and irregular means, for different purposes: work, marriage or family reunification, education, to leave situations of vulnerability, or for a combination of factors. This diversity and complexity was reflected in the issues and concerns raised by participants in the event.

During the consultations, over 80 organizations expressed their concerns on various topics including rights-based border management, legal identity and documentation, search and rescue and missing migrants, return and reintegration, migrant smuggling, human trafficking and immigration detention.

In his opening remarks, Hasan Al-Akraa, Founder of Al-Hasan Volunteer Network, and Co-Founder of the Refugee Emergency Fund – REF, shared his personal experience of immigration detention as a child, and highlighted the power young people like him have to support the protection and realization of the human rights of migrants.

Some promising practices were identified, such as the role of local authorities in ensuring migrants have access to legal identity documents.

Several recommendations were also made during the consultation which will feed into the intergovernmental meeting to be held next March. There was broad consensus that the availability of safe pathways is crucial, that there should be transnational coordination on search and rescue, an end to immigration detention, meaningful reintegration of returning migrants and that borders should be seen as a point of vitality and exchange. The consultations were seen as a starting point for the meaningful participation of civil society in the upcoming regional review.

The next Asia-Pacific stakeholder consultation will focus on supporting migrants' protection, integration and contribution to development and will be held on 16 December. For more information on this, click [here](#).

See the [agenda](#) of the event [here](#). All reports from stakeholders will be accessible [here](#).

*The first consultation took place on 28 October and focused on enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration and facilitating fair and ethical recruitment.*

*This series of four consultations is a collaborative exercise between a diverse range of stakeholders (including CSOs, academics, trade unions, national human rights institutions and local authorities) and the member entities of the UN Network on Migration, in preparation for the intergovernmental meeting of the Regional Review which will take place next March.<sup>1</sup>*

For more information, please contact

Florence Kim at the UN Network on Migration secretariat: [fkim@iom.int](mailto:fkim@iom.int); +41 79 748 0395.

Klaus Dik Nielsen, Stakeholder Liaison, Asia Pacific Regional Review of the Global Compact for Migration: [klaus.nielsen@un.org](mailto:klaus.nielsen@un.org)

Shima Islam, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific, Tel: Office: +66 (0) 2 356 9407, [ssislam@unicef.org](mailto:ssislam@unicef.org)

Todd Pitman, UN Human Rights Regional Office: Tel: +66632169080, [todd.pitman@un.org](mailto:todd.pitman@un.org),

Rebecca Miller, UNODC Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, +66 2 288 2100, [rebecca.miller@un.org](mailto:rebecca.miller@un.org)

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<sup>1</sup> The organizing team of this consultation was comprised of: Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, Bonigi, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Udyama, Help- Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe, International Detention Coalition, Lord's Universal College of Education - University of Mumbai, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).