

Statement of the GCM Champion countries at the Briefing on the Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, 16 February 2022

Mr. President,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Champion countries* of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, including my own country, Ecuador.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the GCM. Our governments concur with the Secretary-General that, in order to enable and acknowledge the advantages of safe, orderly, and regular migration for everyone, the Compact should promote the accomplishment of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, while addressing the risks and challenges that individuals and communities in origin, transit and destination nations face.

The report provides us with a deep analysis of the actions taken so far. We are encouraged to note progress in many areas. However, the report makes it clear that further efforts must be made to fulfill the objectives of the GCM.

As champions, we fully support the GCM and are committed to work together towards a successful and strong implementation of the Compact. We are convinced that international cooperation in the field of international migration should be the norm, rather than the exception.

Soon, we will begin negotiations for the Progress Declaration of the first ever International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). The IMRF is an opportunity that we should all seize.

Going forward, our countries reaffirm the GCM's cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles: people-centered; international cooperation; national sovereignty; rule of law and due process; sustainable development; human rights; gender-responsive; child-sensitive; whole-of-government approach; and whole-of-society approach. Indeed, these principles, should guide migration policies all across the globe.

Mr. President,

COVID-19 has had a deep impact on all aspects of human existence. Migration is no exception. However, we would like to take this opportunity to highlight that migrants truly are the unsung heroes of the pandemic. From essential workers to remittance senders, socioeconomic recovery is unthinkable without these agents of sustainable development. Toxic narratives and xenophobic rhetoric should have no place in these discussions.

The constant evolution of mobility restrictions and entry requirements have greatly altered the mechanics and opportunities for admission, stay, work and return. In some cases, unequal access to and distribution of vaccines has put migrants in situations of heightened vulnerability. However, good practices also emerged during the pandemic, with migrants being fully included

in national health responses and vaccination plans, among them many migrants in vulnerable situations due to migration status, including in many champion countries. We must ensure that migrants are fully included in the response and recovery from COVID-19, so that no one is left behind.

Mr. President,

We believe it is time to renew our sense of shared responsibility. All Member States are countries of origin, transit, and destination to different degrees. As countries of migration, we must address its challenges collectively and effectively.

We concur with the Secretary-General's assessment of priorities for collective actions, as we continue to support the GCM's comprehensive approach.

International cooperation is crucial for ensuring safe and regular migration. Concrete actions should be directed to promote pathways for regular migration, including through the conclusion of labour mobility agreements. In this context, we acknowledge the actions taken in response to the pandemic and its impact. We salute the extraordinary work performed by consular officials around the world to facilitate millions of voluntary and safe returns in the context of the pandemic.

However, it is clear that further actions must be taken to prevent loss of life, smuggling of migrants, vulnerabilities of women and children, and related challenges. Member States, stakeholders, and the UN system as a whole must continue to work collectively to address and eliminate practices that may exacerbate such vulnerabilities. Migration-related policies and legislation should not create more risks for migrants. This can include child-sensitive and gender-responsive lenses in migration policy development.

Mr. President,

It will take the full international community to meet these challenges. The IMRF should not merely serve to reaffirm our joint political commitment to the GCM, but to reinvigorate its implementation. We should be open to re-assessing and adapting the approaches and actions to the new realities and challenges of migration in light of the pandemic, without losing sight of the Decade of Action to achieve the SDGs. All the while, we must also fulfill the overarching obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status.

The GCM Champions will strive for a Progress Declaration that includes actionable and measurable recommendations, wherever possible, and work towards ensuring the promotion of its implementation, championing and exchanging good practices.

Today's report merits special attention at an inflection point for migration governance. International migration is not a problem to be solved, but a phenomenon that requires management, cooperation, and support.

When migration is safe, orderly, and regular, it represents a sustainable development opportunity. We have the “what” in the 2030 Agenda. We have the “how” in the GCM. And we must make sure that the IMRF constitutes the “where” for the benefit of migrants and their communities of origin, transit, and destination.

We look forward to working with all Member States towards this objective.

Thank you.

**GCM Champion countries: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, Senegal, Thailand*