

Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Asia Pacific Region

OHCHR intervention

Madam chairperson, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

- The UN Human Rights Office warmly welcomes this Regional Review of the Global Compact for Migration, and stands ready, along with our colleagues in the UN Regional Network on Migration, to support Member States and stakeholders.
- Rather than uncoordinated, ad-hoc and unilateral approaches to migration governance, which often fail to see migrants as fellow human beings or to uphold their safety, dignity and rights, the Global Compact for Migration provides a path built on cooperation, solidarity and predictability.
- Our recent experience in the devastating COVID-19 pandemic has made abundantly clear what is at stake.
- Where migrants are subject to criminal sanctions because they are undocumented; at times of crisis they will be unable to or fearful of being included in essential public health strategies, such as testing and tracing protocols and vaccine roll-out.
- Where economic policies rely on a steady supply of cheap, disposable migrant labour; at times of crisis migrants who have lost their jobs will be forced to return in haste to their own countries, placing additional strain on fragile health systems.
- Where measures are not taken to ensure evidence- and values-based public discourse on migration; at times of crisis stigma, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants will flourish.

- The Global Compact for Migration, and international law and the principles of the UN Charter on which it is based, allow us to imagine an alternative paradigm of human mobility.
- According to such a paradigm, the starting point for improving migration governance must be the principle that *all* migrants regardless of why they choose or are compelled to move, what their legal status is as they move, where and how they earn a living, what is their age or their gender; regardless of these considerations, they are *all* first and foremost human beings and holders of inalienable human rights.
- We urge Member States in the Asia Pacific region to continue and step up their implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in line with this fundamental premise and the obligations of international human rights law and standards.

Thank you.