

Statement of the Republic of Korea

Thank you for providing an opportunity for me to present at this venue. I am the Republic of Korea representative, and I am very pleased to participate in this first Asia-Pacific Regional Review.

The Global Compact acknowledges that a cooperative approach is needed to optimize the overall benefits of migration, while addressing its risks and challenges. One of the objectives of immigration policies of the ROK is 'Future oriented governance based on cooperation'. To achieve this objective, we would like to strengthen international collaboration to recognize common responsibilities and establish common objectives for all countries.

In accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, our government strives to facilitate the migration and integration of people by implementing planned and well-managed migration policies.

With an emphasis on policies relevant to international migration, our government introduced the Framework Act on Treatment of Foreigners Residing in the ROK. Moreover, it has designed the Basic Plan for Policies on Foreigners. This plan involves attracting immigrants and providing integration support for them. We also contributed to the development of labor-sending countries by guaranteeing freedom of remittances and transferring technical knowledge through migrants.

GCM objectives are well-reflected in our national policies through the third Basic Plan for Policies on Foreigners, effective until 2022.

To realize the vision of 'The safe Korea respecting human rights and diversity', the government aims to enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration on the basis of the public consensus. International migration is indispensable to address imminent demographic shifts caused by low birth rate, aging, and labor shortages. The government aims to earn public consensus on this matter, which can open doors to immigration policies.

In our Basic Plan, we prioritized 'An integrated society supported by the engagement and self-reliance of migrants', which is in line with GCM Objective 16, Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion. By abiding to this goal, we hope to create an environment where Korean nationals and immigrants coexist and enhance national discourse on international migration. This can encourage immigrants' success and self-reliance, which can lead to personal accomplishment and maximal contribution to the society.

Finally, I would like to address responses to COVID-19 which affects us globally. Relevant government organizations are responding to the pandemic in a whole-of-governmental manner by establishing the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters. Policies to curb the spread of COVID-19 are determined based on the following principles – openness, impartiality and transparency.

Especially, in order to address the specific situation of migrants in the country and to protect both nationals and migrants from COVID-19, our government implements the following measures. All people are offered free testing and treatment. The Immigration Contact Centre provides multilingual support to non-nationals with advice on how to act in the midst of the pandemic. As we have seen some non-nationals unable to return to one's home country due to border closure, we have either extended their visa or lowered requirements for visa extension. Through IT system development, non-nationals can gain online access to immigration services. To encourage irregular migrants to get tested without fear of being revealed, we have exempted health authorities from relaying their personal information to law enforcement authorities.

I hope that this venue encourages international migration cooperation and mutual understanding. Thank you.