



## **Country Statements on Agenda Item 2**

Review of progress and challenges with regard to implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Asia and the Pacific, including the implications of the coronavirus disease pandemic

**Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste**

Excellency Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is with great honour that, despite this challenging time, we are participating virtually in this important meeting today to discuss the developments and challenges in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Asia and Pacific.

Timor-Leste had experienced displacement of its people as refugees to many countries in the world throughout its history. Today, many of Timorese people emigrate abroad for studies and employment opportunities. Timor-Leste also serves as a destination country for a considerable number of immigrants, to help fill the labour gaps that our growing economy require. Therefore, Timor-Leste strongly believes that GCM is a critical framework that will provide an opportunity to improve the mobility of Timorese citizens, inform national migration policies to strengthen labour migration efforts, border control as well as combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and establish a concrete and coordinated approach to address all aspects of international migration.

Excellency Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

The Government of Timor-Leste is fully committed to ensuring that migration is voluntary, regular, safe and orderly. Therefore, as part of our effort, Timor-Leste has signed two bilateral agreements with the Republic of Korea and Australia to provide overseas work programmes opportunities to Timorese citizens to have the chance to work abroad for a fixed amount of time.

One of Timor-Leste's priority is to combat human trafficking in the context of international migration. As a result, Timor-Leste has ratified several key Conventions, introduced critical legislation and actively involved in regional cooperation, such as Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, to ensure that the rights of the migrants are protected.

Timor-Leste has benefited from the remittances from its migrant workers abroad where currently serve as the second-highest contribution to our national income. This, again, emphasize the important role that migrants labour has in contributing to the attainment of the Timor-Leste Sustainable Development Goals Agenda. To scale up this contribution, the Government of Timor-Leste is currently developing its gender-inclusive National Diaspora Policy that recognizes the Timorese diaspora's potential in contributing towards sustainable development and reforming its institution to promote the faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances.

Excellency Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

Despite important achievements, several challenges in the area of migration remains a national concern. Most Timorese workers abroad are working as low-skilled labours. Therefore, there are more to be done in empowering labour skills to provide them with better opportunities abroad.

Data availability on migration is still lacking, which is a serious challenge for the government to develop evidence-based decision-making. There are also significant improvements that need to be done in the area of Border control and management.

Excellency Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

To conclude, given the importance of migration in contributing to the sustainable development of Timor-Leste and recognizing the needs to strengthen international cooperation to address the issues on international migrations, the government of Timor-Leste is fully committed to implementing the GCM.

Thank You.