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**Second Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe,
Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region**
Cairo, 3–4 July 2024

Summary

The International Organization for Migration, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the League of Arab States, in collaboration with members of the Regional Network on Migration in the Arab Region, and with the support of the United Nations Network on Migration, organized the second Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region, which was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo on 3 and 4 July 2024.

The regional review provided an opportunity to assess progress in implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab region; critically reflect on intra- and inter-regional priorities, emerging issues and gaps; identify regional challenges to the implementation of the actions recommended in the Progress Declaration of the First International Migration Review Forum; consolidate key findings and recommendations for submission to the International Migration Review Forum 2026; highlight good practices and share experiences to accelerate the achievement of the Global Compact's objectives; and identify opportunities to enhance regional and interregional cooperation on migration.

The conference comprised a series of sessions, round tables, presentations and discussions, which resulted in an outcome document summarizing the key messages emerging from the regional review that were presented by member States and other stakeholders at the conference and throughout the consultative process that preceded it.

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Introduction

1. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the League of Arab States, in collaboration with members of the Regional Network on Migration in the Arab Region, and with the support of the United Nations Network on Migration, organized **the second Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region**, which was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo on 3 and 4 July 2024.
2. In the spirit of the Global Compact for Migration and to ensure a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to the review, participants comprised representatives of government institutions, including ministers and high-level officials from relevant ministries and government agencies, national population councils, members of the United Nations Network on Migration and relevant subregional organizations, and members of consultative processes and platforms, and regional and interregional organizations, including the United Nations regional economic commissions and regional consultative processes on migration.
3. Participants also included representatives of stakeholders identified in the Global Compact for Migration, such as migrants; civil society; migrant and diaspora organizations, including those working with migrant women; faith-based organizations; local authorities and communities; the private sector; trade unions; parliamentarians; national human rights institutions; the International Red Cross and Red Crescent; academia; the media; youth representatives; and other stakeholders.
4. The regional review provided a platform for member States and stakeholders to review the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, so as to inform all meetings of the International Migration Review Forum 2026, in line with the comprehensive approach to migration governance. The review critically reflected on intra- and inter-regional priorities, emerging issues and gaps in the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration; identified progress in implementing actions recommended in the Progress Declaration of the First International Migration Review Forum and tackling related regional challenges; consolidated key findings and recommendations for submission to the International Migration Review Forum 2026; highlighted good practices and shared experiences to accelerate the achievement of the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration; and identified opportunities for enhanced regional and interregional cooperation.
5. The conference was divided into six plenary sessions at which the following topics were discussed: migration patterns and trends in the Arab region; expanding regular migration routes and reducing irregular migration; ensuring migrants' right to access basic services; protecting, empowering and activating the role of migrant workers in the sustainable development process; respecting the human rights of all migrants; strengthening national, bilateral, regional and international cooperation; and providing detailed, timely and accessible data. The main messages and recommendations that emerged from the two-day discussions were reviewed during the session dedicated to the key messages.
6. The conference documents, consisting of the concept note, agenda, background papers, and documents of the meetings and consultations preceding the conference, are available on the regional review page on the United Nations Network on Migration website on the review process in Arab States.¹

¹ <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/arab-states-2024>.

I. Key messages emanating from the Regional Review Conference

A. Addressing negative drivers of migration and responding to humanitarian crises

1. **Address conflict and instability:** working to address conflict and instability in Arab countries as negative drivers that have forced millions of people to migrate in inhumane conditions.
2. **Provide humanitarian support to migrants:** recognizing migrants as vulnerable groups in times of crisis, and urging the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance to them to preserve their dignity and ensure their safety.
3. **Support migrant services:** mobilizing resources to support organizations that provide services to migrants during humanitarian crises.
4. **Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goals 1, 8 and 10, to address some of the negative drivers of migration.

B. Improving migration governance

1. **Comprehensive migration policies:** accelerate the development of well-planned, strategic, evidence-based migration policies to protect the rights of migrants and ensure their well-being.
2. **Future planning:** analyse expected demographic shifts and climate trends to anticipate their impact on societies and migration trends and to plan effectively for them.
3. **Comprehensive development policies:** ensure that migration is integrated into development policies across sectors so that no one is left behind.
4. **Reduce the gap between policy development and implementation on the ground** to ensure optimal protection and empowerment of migrants.
5. **Provide timely, detailed, reliable and accessible data on migration** to enable the development of evidence-based migration policies and strategies.

C. Expanding migration routes and reducing irregular migration

1. **Facilitate regular migration:** collaborating to establish regular migration pathways, including establishing a set of visa categories to meet the needs of the labour market for various types of skills, and cooperating to reduce irregular migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and mitigating their exposure to risks.
2. **Address regional development disparities:** tackling disparities in development levels between regions to mitigate factors that motivate people to take dangerous migration routes.
3. **Leverage technology:** focusing on technical aspects, such as digitization and legal identity documentation, to facilitate migration processes and ensure the protection of migrants.
4. **Regularization:** regularizing the status of migrants so as to enable them to exit irregular conditions, reduce abuses committed against them, protect them, ensure better livelihoods for them, and contribute to the economic development of their countries.

D. Migration for development in the Arab region

1. **Preserve the gains of migration:** recognizing and enhancing the gains of migration for the benefit of all.
2. **Build the capacity of young people:** improving education curriculums, including technical and vocational education and training, to prepare young people for national, regional and international

labour markets, and developing mechanisms to match skills with labour market needs in destination countries.

3. **Support countries hosting mixed flows:** providing support to these countries, and ensuring the safe and voluntary return and reintegration of migrants.
4. **Migration as an opportunity:** recognizing migration as an opportunity to diversify economic activity, develop technology, and promote a just transition, including through the use of renewable energy.

E. Protecting and empowering migrants, including workers

1. **Access to basic services for all:** ensuring that all migrants, regardless of their status, have access to basic services, including health and education, as they are an integral part of human and child rights, as well as access to psychosocial support, hygiene, energy and technology, among others.
2. **Reduce language barriers:** overcoming language barriers to accessing services by providing information in multiple languages and making it accessible to migrants.
3. **Reform labour systems:** improving labour systems to enhance labour market mobility, occupational safety and health, and access to justice, so as to protect all migrant workers regardless of their skill level, especially the most vulnerable groups, such as domestic workers.
4. **Adopt a rights-based approach to labour migration:** ensuring decent work and fair and ethical recruitment processes, in line with international standards, and protecting migrant workers from exploitation.
5. **Social protection and inclusion:** involving migrants in social protection mechanisms in countries of origin and destination to improve their well-being, ensuring a minimum standard of living, and guaranteeing the portability of their benefits.
6. **Freedom of association:** ensuring the right of migrants to join trade unions and take leadership roles as key advocates for the rights of migrants, including women migrants.
7. **Skills upgrading and recognition:** investing in skills upgrading and recognition of migrants to enhance their contributions to development in countries of origin and destination.
8. **Child protection and education:** protecting and providing legal documentation for all children, and ensuring their access to basic services, especially health, education and training, regardless of migration status.
9. **Climate change mitigation and migration as an adaptation strategy:** implementing policies to protect migrants and communities, and engage them in adaptation and mitigation efforts against climate change impacts.
10. **Community engagement:** engaging local communities to ensure migrants' access to services and inclusion.

F. Strengthening regional cooperation and partnerships

1. **Strengthen regional cooperation** to address challenges within and across regions, so as to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration.
2. **Address xenophobia and discrimination:** promoting cross-regional cooperation to protect migrants from the Arab region who face xenophobia and discrimination, and contributing to positive discourse on migration.
3. **Address cross-border criminal activities:** strengthening regional cooperation to address cross-border criminal activities and enhance security.

4. **Cooperation to respond to crises:** leveraging regional cooperation to address overlapping humanitarian crises, and prioritizing the needs of migrants.
5. **Data cooperation:** coordinating data collection efforts at the national, regional and international levels, and building national capacity to develop migration data.
6. **Building stronger partnerships:** working to build strong partnerships with civil society, so as to provide support and address challenges in the field of migration, in view of the key messages emerging from the multi-stakeholder consultation.
7. **Sustaining support and cooperation:** appreciating the support provided by United Nations agencies and other partners, calling for continued cooperation to achieve all the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration, and ensuring a whole-of-society approach.

II. Conference sessions

A. Opening session

7. The session began with a video on migration in the Arab region, which emphasized the role of migration as a driver of development and prosperity if managed effectively, and the importance of the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region as a road map for managing migration, protecting and empowering migrants, and reducing any negative impacts of migration. The video highlighted the six priority areas identified at the first regional review of the Compact in 2021, which formed the framework for the sessions of the current conference.

8. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, made an opening statement in which he addressed the issue of climate change as an important driver of migration in the Arab region, explaining that several Arab countries had taken a series of measures and initiatives in that regard. He expressed his growing concern about the difficulties faced by migrants from the Arab region in recent times, as some of them were subjected to racist practices, discrimination, Islamophobia and marginalization, which made it difficult for them to integrate into societies. Wars had always been a major cause of migration throughout history, and the conflicts in the Arab region had led to an alarming increase in displacement. He also addressed the killing, starvation and siege that the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip were being subjected to, calling on the international community to assume its responsibilities and take decisive and rapid measures to protect them. He stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of migration, linking migration and development through comprehensive development approaches, and working to enhance cooperation between humanitarian and development actors, as the only way to reduce the factors that push people to leave their countries. He hoped that the current conference would contribute to creating a new reality that took into account the interests of all, respected the rights of migrants, and enabled them to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries.

9. Ms. Amy Pope, Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration and Director-General of IOM, made an opening statement in which she addressed the war in Gaza, expressing her regret at the high civilian death toll, and calling for an immediate ceasefire, the release of hostages and the start of the reconstruction process. She also noted the conflict in the Sudan, which had led to the largest displacement crisis globally. She believed that expanding safe migration routes reduced the risks surrounding irregular migration, and allowed migrants to move decently to their destination country. She praised the positive experiences of some Arab countries, noting that migration could stimulate development and enhance the skills and capabilities of workers, stressing the need to protect workers' rights in host communities. She explained that the assessment of achievements and the challenges that remained would be made in view of the six key messages emanating from the 2021 review. She invited participants to discuss their countries' best practices and lessons learned, and to focus on the conclusions that emerged from the consultative meeting held the previous day. She reaffirmed the constructive role of regular migration in the advancement of countries of origin and of host and exporting communities alike, and in optimally utilizing the capabilities of migrant workers.

10. Ms. Rola Dashti, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCWA, made an opening statement in which she stressed the importance of regional reviews in the context of accelerating human mobility in the Arab region. She said that migrants to and from Arab countries played a fundamental role in development through remittances, which constituted a primary source of income for many families. Migrants also transported with them knowledge and skills, brought investments and labour, drove the economy, and stimulated cultural collaboration. She stressed that migration was not only a development issue, but a humanitarian issue par excellence. Political and economic crises, conflict and occupation had forced many to migrate irregularly, and thousands had lost their lives in search of security and work. Migration and migrant protection policies were disjointed in many countries, which limited the process of managing migration effectively. She noted the lack of detailed data on migration and migrants, which prevented the development of targeted policies to protect migrants from discrimination and arbitrary treatment, and deprived them of their rights to decent work, basic services, social protection and access to justice. In conclusion, she called for concerted efforts to expand regular migration routes and ensure the human rights of all migrants, especially those most at risk, improve labour and social protection systems, collect evidence and data, and strengthen national, bilateral and regional cooperation to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration in the Arab region.

11. Ms. Khadija Amahel, MENA Focal Point for the Migration Youth and Children Platform and rapporteur of the stakeholder consultation meeting held the day before the conference, presented the main outcomes reached by participants, which focused on the following work priorities: addressing negative drivers of migration; expanding civic space; improving migration management; changing discourse and combating xenophobia; protecting vulnerable groups of migrants; protecting and empowering migrant workers; expanding migration routes; increasing regional cooperation; empowering young people; and strengthening the role of stakeholders in the regional review process of the Global Compact for Migration.

12. Mr. Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, Prime Minister of Libya, made a statement in which he welcomed participants and thanked the organizers for holding the conference, which was an opportunity to discuss urgent migration issues in the Arab region during the current critical period. He stressed that Libya was working with all international, Arab and African partners to launch a national strategy for border security and management. To preserve human dignity, Libya continued to cooperate with international organizations working to provide facilities for the voluntary return of migrants to their countries, stressing the need to develop policies to combat irregular migration through the exchange of expertise and capacity-building so as to address the problem at its root, and support development projects in countries of origin. He added that Libya was hosting the Trans-Mediterranean Migration Forum to discuss the issue of irregular migration through a shared vision, in addition to a number of pillars, notably establishing a strategic framework that enhanced dialogue and organized cooperation between Africa, Europe and other countries of destination and origin, developing African-European relations to ensure mutual cooperation, building stable and sustainable policies that addressed the real and root causes of migration, and ensuring the rights and safety of migrants and the speed of humanitarian responses.

B. Plenary session 1: High-level panel on expanding regular migration pathways and reducing irregular migration

13. Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector at the League of Arab States, chaired the session. She said that irregular migration comprised various categories, such as refugees, irregular migrants, and vulnerable groups including women and children, and that it took place through several routes, the most dangerous of which was the Mediterranean route where thousands died every year. She noted that such migration had negative effects, especially at the political and security levels, but its approach should not be through these two levels alone because ignoring the social and humanitarian levels might expose irregular migrants to further exploitation, violence and other forms of human rights violations. She reviewed efforts made by the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in that regard, stressing the need to work on enhancing cooperation between countries of destination, transit and origin through various partnerships, so as to reduce the negative effects of irregular migration on countries of destination and on migrants themselves.

14. Ms. Evan Faiq Yaqoub Jabro, Minister of Migration and Displacement of Iraq, made a statement in which she noted that Iraq was one of the countries greatly affected by migration inflows and outflows. Internal displacement was still ongoing due to the practices of Da'esh, numerous families were still residing in camps in the Kurdistan Region, and climate change was pushing a large number of people to move from southern and central Iraq. The country also faced the problem of irregular migration and the accompanying forms of violence and exploitation, which endangered the lives of migrants and negated the potential benefits of migration. She explained that the solution lay in expanding legal and safe migration routes due to their benefits, such as strengthening the economy and reuniting families, and called on countries to share their experiences in expanding migration routes.

15. Ms. Amy Pope, Director-General of IOM, made a statement in which she focused on the positive role of migration in economic growth and in achieving development goals. She said that what currently hindered that role was the growth of irregular migration owing to a lack of regular pathways, and the negative repercussions that accompanied it on migrants and host countries, which highlighted why expanding migration pathways was one of the three main strategic priorities of IOM.

16. Mr. Hussam Eddin Ala, Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the League of Arab States, made a statement in which he stressed the need to work on a radical solution to the causes of migration, displacement and asylum, and to provide an enabling environment that ensured the return of migrants and refugees to their countries of origin. He said that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained the main reason behind the migration of Palestinians who were still unable to return to their country. He praised the importance of discussing the issue of safe migration routes, because irregular migration put the lives of migrants at risk and led to the escalation of hate speech against them. It also caused countries of origin to lose their workforce and young people, thus increasing the economic gap between countries of destination and countries of origin. He addressed the Syrian situation, stressing the need for Syrian refugees to return to their country to contribute to the reconstruction process, especially since a large number of areas had become safe and suitable for return.

17. Mr. Ali Hassan al-Halabi, Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the League of Arab States, made a statement in which he addressed the issue of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, noting that the influx of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic posed a challenge to the already weak service infrastructure, in view of the worst economic crisis the country had ever known. He called on the international community to take action, mobilize resources and cooperate with the Lebanese Government to ensure their voluntary and safe return.

18. Mr. Riyadh al-Akbari, Permanent Representative of Yemen to the League of Arab States, made a statement in which he addressed the deterioration of the situation in Yemen owing to the conflict with the Houthis, and the deterioration of the already difficult living conditions of the population, which prevented the country from providing what was necessary to migrants, especially irregular migrants, coming from the Horn of Africa, and exposed them to various forms of exploitation. He proposed recommendations to enhance joint action, reviewed some of the measures taken by his country in line with available capacity, and proposed holding a seminar dedicated to conducting detailed research into the issue of irregular migration to Yemen.

19. Mr. Hussein al-Amin al-Fadil, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, said that the Sudan had become the country that exported the largest number of migrants after it was the country that attracted the largest number of migrants, following the outbreak of the conflict with the Rapid Support Forces, which had forced more than 15 million citizens, most of whom were women, children and older persons, to flee areas where these forces were present. He addressed the emergence of new migration routes from south to south, known as horizontal migration. After renewing his country's commitment to implementing the Global Compact for Migration, he called on countries receiving Sudanese refugees fleeing war to take into account the basic principles of human rights, in accordance with what was stipulated in the Compact and other international agreements. He commended neighbouring countries, especially Egypt and Libya, for receiving hundreds of thousands of Sudanese, and called for facilitating procedures for displaced persons to obtain entry visas, and for irregular migrants to obtain basic services and enhance their integration into host communities. He urged IOM to work on facilitating the voluntary return of Sudanese in Egypt to safe areas in the Sudan.

20. In a joint statement by Ms. Naila Gabr and Mr. Ihab Abdel Aati of Egypt, Ms. Gabr reviewed the institutional and legislative efforts made by Egypt to confront irregular migration, most notably the Law on Combating Illegal Immigration and Smuggling of Migrants issued pursuant to Law No. 82 of 2016, and managing the status of illegal migrants, especially young and unaccompanied children, and criminalizing smuggling operations. Egypt was preparing studies on the causes of irregular migration, and working to address them, implement awareness programmes and create job opportunities. She said that Egypt had always received migrants, but it now hosted more than 9 million migrants, including refugees, which required it to intensify efforts and cooperate with international organizations to rehabilitate them and enable them to meet their basic needs.

21. Mr. Ihab Abdel Aati reviewed the experience of the Egyptian Ministry of Labour, and listed some of the efforts made to expand regular migration routes. He noted the bilateral agreements concluded in the field of labour mobility with Arab and European countries, such as Cyprus and Greece, and the signing of cooperation protocols to educate young people and launch initiatives to develop their skills. He also discussed the Ministry's efforts to develop the labour law and prepare a draft law to regulate domestic workers. He stressed the importance of collaboration to find solutions to the emerging challenges resulting from the changes sweeping through the region.

22. Mr. Ismail Chekkori, the representative of Morocco, noted the importance of the Global Compact for Migration, which constituted the broadest platform for Arab and other countries to exchange migration, provided that it was linked to implementation, and that its reviews focused on people rather than processes. He added that Arab countries were currently facing additional challenges because most of them had become transit, destination and origin countries at the same time. He stressed the need to frame regular migration to protect migrants, the importance of preserving the character of the Arab region as a cultural bridge, and the need for cooperation and coordination to improve the frameworks regulating migration and combating migrant smuggling networks. He also addressed the issue of the rise of hate speech against migrants, and the need to tackle it by working to highlight a positive image of them.

23. Ms. Ahlem Hammami, Director-General of the National Observatory on Migration in Tunisia, listed the achievements made by her country in its efforts to implement the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration, including concluding and implementing a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements to regulate migration and combat human trafficking, strengthening agreements with European partners on the movement of labour within legal frameworks, and including the issue of migration in various ministries' programmes. She called for addressing the root causes of irregular migration and approaching the issue from a humanitarian rather than a purely security perspective, taking into account human rights.

24. Mr. Mohamed Al Aswad, Expatriates Labour Specialist at the Labour Market Regulatory Authority of Bahrain, reviewed his country's experience in dealing with migrant workers, particularly during the recruitment phase. He highlighted a number of measures and procedures aimed at promoting "ethical" recruitment and preventing the exploitation of recruited workers, such as launching a labour registration programme, providing necessary health insurance, ensuring migrants' ability to return to their country of origin, and providing grace periods periodically to allow irregular migrants to regularize their status.

C. Scene setting: Migration patterns and trends in the Arab region

25. Ms. Misato Yuasa, Regional Liaison and Policy Officer, IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, presented the results of the 2021 Global Compact for Migration Review. She gave an overview of the Global Compact for Migration, explaining that it was based on human rights, rooted in the 2030 Agenda, and provided a comprehensive approach to migration governance through its 23 objectives. She reviewed the highlights of the 2021 Arab regional review, presenting the number of participants, the reports submitted and the questionnaires conducted. She also discussed progress, priorities, challenges and future prospects, and addressed existing opportunities, including enhancing technical capacity to generate, use and disaggregate data to develop evidence-based policies; promoting national partnerships; and developing sustainable national strategies that enable countries to benefit from migration.

26. Ms. Sara Salman, ESCWA Population Affairs Officer, made a presentation on migration patterns and trends in the Arab region. She reviewed important data on the six priorities identified in the first regional review, and progress made in implementing them. Among the achievements she mentioned were the amendments introduced by some countries to procedures related to visas, entry and residence, explaining that bilateral collaboration efforts in that regard were promising. Within the same framework, she noted the growing phenomenon of irregular migration in the region, which included some of the most dangerous irregular migration routes, especially the Mediterranean route, stressing the need to think about how to protect lives and reduce irregular migration. She added that migrants still suffered from difficulties in accessing basic services, and called for more efforts in that context. She reviewed the contribution of migrants to the development of economies in host countries and in countries of origin through remittances, and pointed to the gaps between policies concerned with respecting migrants' rights and their implementation, and the continuing lack of detailed, timely and accurate data.

D. Plenary session 2: Ensuring that migrants have access to basic services

27. Mr. Ismail Chekkori, Director of Comprehensive Issues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Abroad of Morocco, chaired the session, and Mr. Mohammed al-Maaytah from the Arab Trade Union Confederation in Jordan facilitated it.

28. The chairperson made an introductory statement in which he raised three main points. Firstly, he spoke about objective 15 of the Global Compact for Migration related to ensuring the rights of migrants to access basic services, explaining that it was the most important and most discussed between Governments, and that its presence in the Compact was a gain for all stakeholders, although it was currently under threat in view of the challenges in the Arab region. Secondly, he noted the misconception that migrants only benefited from those services, noting that they were in fact contributors to them to a large extent. He added that the current trend in the Arab region was towards adopting comprehensive social protection plans, and the main question in that regard was how to integrate migrants into them.

29. The session moderator made a statement in which he stressed the need to ensure the right of migrants to access basic services. To achieve that objective, it was necessary to provide accurate and timely information about all migrants, and to ensure that they had the necessary documents to benefit from services. He noted that migrants still faced legal obstacles that prevented them from accessing services, and they faced challenges owing to discrimination, language barriers, resource scarcity in some destination countries, the high cost of services, and the effects of military conflict, climate change and disasters. He raised a series of questions to frame the discussions, including the following: What are basic services? What are the challenges? What are the successful experiences? How can Governments cooperate with international organizations in times of crisis? What is the role of technology in improving access to services? How can international and regional partnerships be strengthened to provide services to migrants?

30. Mr. Murtaza Ali Khan, Regional Managing Partner of Fragomen for the Middle East and Africa, discussed economic migration, which led to brain drain from the Arab region owing to current market requirements for competencies and skills in view of the boom in economic reform plans, emerging trends and technologies, and the development of renewable energy use. He stressed the need for social protection plans, and the role that technology could play in that regard.

31. Ms. Amal Emam, Executive Director of the Egyptian Red Crescent, reviewed the organization's strategy on migration and displacement. She said that the strategy aimed to protect lives and preserve human dignity; ensure safer lives and more resilient livelihoods; and enhance partnerships and activate the role of the Red Crescent as a key player in the field of migration. She reviewed the activities and services provided by the Red Crescent to ensure the rights of migrants and refugees, including conducting rapid labour market assessments and personal qualifications assessments, providing vocational training and paid work, providing seed funding and grants, training community volunteers, and offering cash and rental assistance.

32. Ms. Valentina Abdul Karim Mohammed Mahdi, President of the Yemen Women Union, made a statement in which she noted that the continued increase in the number of migrants in Yemen necessitated additional efforts to resolve conflicts in the country and in surrounding countries. She called on migrant-exporting countries to work on solving their problems to reduce the number of irregular migrants, and on countries hosting regular migrants to combat hate speech. She said that the ongoing war in Yemen had led to a significant deterioration in the economic and humanitarian situation, which required, on the one hand, supporting the Government and civil society organizations with the necessary resources to implement the provisions of the Global Compact for Migration, and on the other, reducing the flow of irregular migrants and raising awareness of the dangers of irregular migration and its effects on communities. She thanked Egypt for opening its doors to migrants coming from Yemen.

33. Mr. Sami Mohammed, the representative of the Sudanese Red Crescent, gave an overview of good practices in his country, which had long supported migrants before the war. Efforts were now focused on supporting Sudanese displaced from one region to another. He listed examples of promising practices such as the universal health initiative, which supported hospitals on condition that they provided free services to migrants, and a special department for migrants without identity papers to enable them to access education. He then addressed the most prominent challenges facing the Sudanese Red Crescent, such as difficulties related to language, identity papers for refugees, and a lack of sufficient resources to provide assistance. He stressed the need for social empowerment to prevent unsafe migration, and the importance of providing humanitarian services to migrants and host communities alike to avoid tensions.

34. Ms. Tonia Rifai, the representative of the World Health Organization, made a statement in which she noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in unprecedented social cohesion, with vaccines and health services being made available to both citizens and non-citizens in many countries. She discussed primary health-care services, which were particularly important because they were the gateway to the health system, and were the main type of service that migrants needed. She stressed the need to address the shortage of medical staff, and to include migrants in health care systems. She underscored the importance of migrants being healthy to be productive and participate effectively in the labour market.

35. Ms. Rosal Fischer, on behalf of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), made a statement in which she addressed several provisions related to children's rights, especially migrant children. She stressed the need to combine efforts and enhance collaboration to provide the necessary protection for them, and prevent them from being exposed to exploitation and other kinds of violations, so as to avoid the related psychological and physical problems.

36. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Lebanon made a statement on the humanitarian crisis suffered by the Palestinians in Lebanon, especially after some countries had stopped funding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). He called for the resumption of funding to meet the needs of the Palestinians, and stressed the need to push towards a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict so that they could return to their homes with dignity.

37. Mr. Hussein Elamin Elfadil Elhag, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, queried how a country already suffering from economic crises and deteriorating infrastructure and services owing to internal conflict could provide migrants with what they needed without receiving support from abroad, stressing the importance of providing resources to countries suffering from crises so that they could provide services to migrants.

38. The representative of Egypt made a statement in which he explained that his country had provided COVID-19 vaccines to all migrants, and had organized many health campaigns to detect diseases, stressing that Egypt dealt with migrants and refugees through a whole-of-society approach.

39. At the close of the session, the Chair thanked all the speakers, noting that what was discussed boded well for the situation in the region to be more positive for migrants. Despite the magnitude of the existing

challenges affecting the situation of migrants in general, they were accompanied by responses, lessons learned and good practices that could be built upon.

**E. Plenary session 3: Protecting and empowering migrant workers
and operationalizing their role in the sustainable development
process in countries of origin and destination**

40. Mr. Wael Badawi, Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Migration, Refugees and Human Trafficking of Egypt, chaired the session. He stressed the importance of protecting migrant workers and empowering them to reduce their exposure to exploitation and human trafficking.

41. Mr. William Gois, Regional Coordinator of the Migrant Forum in Asia and moderator of the session, noted that migration benefited both countries of origin and destination. Migrants had the potential to contribute positively to the sustainable development of countries of origin and destination.

42. Ms. Hind Moto, the representative of the Executive Office of the General Union of Moroccan Workers, mainly addressed the rights of migrant workers. She said that those rights were stipulated in laws, and must be implemented, provided that implementation was coupled with enhanced monitoring, with the necessary financial and legal means. She stressed that migration was an advantage and a gain, not a source of concern and danger, and that it was essential for any social dialogue to take into account the issue of migration and the rights of migrants. She then addressed the issue of trade unions, stressing the importance of freedom of association and the participation of trade unions in the preparation of agreements. Trade unions were the voice of workers, and migrant workers must have the right to join them and participate in trade union work. She added that fair and ethical employment was the responsibility of both Governments and employers, and that it should begin in the countries of origin through to the countries of destination so as to protect migrants from exploitation. She highlighted the importance of bilateral agreements, since they guaranteed the safe movement of labour between the two countries involved in the agreement.

43. Ms. Sylvia Eid, the representative of the secretariat of Caritas in the Middle East and North Africa, made a statement in which she said that empowerment was a comprehensive approach that began in the country of origin, where people who intended to migrate to another country must receive training that raised awareness of their workplace rights. She gave an example from Lebanon, where migrant workers received orientation training upon arrival in the country, and a language guide upon arrival at the airport to help them overcome the language barrier. Workers could refer to the organization or their embassy if they encountered problems. Workers who had been subjected to abuse and trafficking and were in shelters received skills training, so that they could start their own businesses. She referred to coordination with entities in the countries of origin to support migrants upon their return to their country. She also stressed the need for migrants to register their marriages and births to benefit from the services they needed.

44. Mr. Mohsen Ali Al-Nassi, the representative of the United Arab Emirates, made a statement in which he noted that his country was one of the most attractive countries for foreign labour owing to economic diversification, a favourable environment for establishing businesses, and engagement in technology and green economy. The country had adopted a series of measures to protect the rights of migrant workers, such as developing a new type of visa for job seekers; establishing a long-term visa system; separating residency from employment, allowing workers to remain in the country even after the end of the employment contract; and improving contractual terms. Changing jobs had become possible provided that the employer was notified in advance. He listed the country's efforts to provide health coverage to all residents without discrimination, provide unemployment protection for migrant workers, develop new frameworks for managing mandatory social insurance for workers in the private sector, and launch initiatives aimed at increasing the financial security of migrant workers. He referred to the country's active role in the Abu Dhabi Dialogue process to improve the governance of labour migration between Asian countries of origin and destination, and to ensure the protection of migrant workers and enable them to realize their potential.

45. Mr. Ryszard Cholewinski, Senior Migration Specialist at the Regional Office of the International Labour Organization (ILO), made a statement in which he noted that the Arab region had the highest percentage of migrant workers. He reviewed efforts to improve the conditions of migrant workers, especially in Gulf Cooperation Council countries, including the reform of the sponsorship system and its positive impact on the productivity of labour markets, stressing the need to apply those reforms to all without discrimination. He also stressed the importance of ensuring fair migrant employment, explaining that it was not only the responsibility of Governments but also required coordination between various stakeholders. He addressed the challenges facing migrants, most notably language barriers, which required the provision of translation services. He called on Arab countries to guarantee the right of migrants to a safe working environment, enhance social protection, and work to integrate migrant workers into processes aimed at improving their conditions and raising their voices.

46. Ms. Lana Stade, the representative of the United Nations Development Programme, made an online statement in which she stressed the importance of providing migrants with optimal opportunities to make positive contributions to host communities. She highlighted the close link between the empowerment and protection of migrant workers and their contribution to the economies of both countries of origin and destination.

47. The moderator and chair concluded the session activities by thanking participants for their valuable and enriching interventions, and by giving an overview of the main points made in the discussions, notably the importance of promoting a legislative framework, providing protection and integration, exchanging information between countries of origin and destination, activating the role of unions, and monitoring the adverse impacts of climate change on occupational settings of migrant workers.

F. Plenary session 4: Respecting the human rights of all migrants, especially the most vulnerable

48. The session was chaired by Mr. Safaa Hussein Ahmed, Director-General of the Department of Migration Affairs of Iraq, and moderated by Ms. Sara Al-Khatib, Programme Manager and Migration Specialist for the Middle East and North Africa Region at the Solidarity Center.

49. The chairperson noted that human rights were a vital issue because they were the framework governing people's access to the law, humanitarian assistance and security protection, and that the issue of migration was an important humanitarian phenomenon that affected the lives of millions worldwide and required the combined efforts of local, regional and international parties.

50. The moderator stressed that human rights were universal, comprehensive and indivisible rights that applied to all persons, and therefore to all migrants. Migrants were among the groups most vulnerable to risk, discrimination and violence based on gender, age, skin colour, nationality, disability and other factors. Among the groups at risk were children and women, especially domestic workers. She said that policies criminalizing migration might lead to the imprisonment of migrants and their deprivation of the right to access justice. She addressed hate speech, stating that it contributed to increasing injustice against refugees. She then raised a set of questions, most notably: What were the gaps and challenges related to regional cooperation, and could beneficial areas of cooperation be identified? Were there examples of successful initiatives? How did Governments address issues of hate speech against migrants?

51. Ms. Hasna Omar Farah, responsible for migration and protection at the National Migration Response Centre in Djibouti, made a statement in which she noted that her country had developed a national plan to implement the Global Compact for Migration. She reviewed the three stages of the process of preparing the plan, including discussions with international organizations and civil society organizations to identify needs and shortfalls. She made a presentation on current financial, institutional and constitutional challenges; weak coordination between government institutions and associations; lack of funding; and wars and conflicts in the region. She indicated that the solution lay in strengthening regional and international cooperation, increasing funding, and organizing awareness campaigns.

52. Ms. Duha bint Alawi al Ibrahim, the representative of the Human Rights Commission of Saudi Arabia, made a statement in which she affirmed her country's commitment to the principles of the Global Compact for Migration, by supporting efforts to respect the human rights of migrants, and providing them with the necessary support and humanitarian and relief assistance. She reviewed some of her country's achievements, such as working to enhance international cooperation to regulate migration and reduce irregular migration, reviewing the legal frameworks related to migration, developing a legal action plan to combat people trafficking, launching the national referral system for victims of human trafficking, improving contractual relations between employers and workers, and launching the *Musaned* electronic platform to facilitate the recruitment of domestic workers.

53. Mr. Abdul Aziz Hassan Saleh, Director of the Department of Consulates and Expatriates at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, made a statement on children in the Sudan who were deprived of their rights due to war. He said that they were unable to access drinking water, suffered from malnutrition, were exposed to rape and other forms of violence, were deprived of education as a result of the destruction of education institutions, and suffered psychological problems and disorders. He added that the Sudan had developed separate strategies to protect children, such as a plan to protect street children, and another to protect children from the dangers of the Internet. He noted that children were exposed to many forms of exploitation and violations during migration, such as separation from their families. He reviewed a set of recommendations, most notably providing care and protection; providing technical and material support; preparing educational programmes to mainstream a culture of peaceful coexistence with migrants; and contributing to ending wars.

54. Ms. Kinga Janick, on behalf of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), noted that migration was an opportunity to build communities through the combined efforts of migrants and local populations, and that wars, economic crises and climate change were factors that had exacerbated the already dire situation of migrants. She also emphasized the need to eliminate discrimination against migrants. She listed the situations that caused migration, including extreme poverty, natural disasters, gender inequality, war, a lack of education, water and food, violence, deprivation of liberty, and separation from family. She explained the suffering that migrants went through during their journey to destination countries, and the discrimination they faced on the basis of age, race, nationality, religion, language and disability. She proposed a number of recommendations, such as bridging the gap between strategy development and implementation by promoting dialogue and discussion at the local level; adopting a rights-based approach to migration; and working to change hate speech from fear and discrimination to hope and positivity, in preparation for achieving social integration.

55. Mr. Anis Ibrahim, the representative of the National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms of the Comoros, presented a series of initiatives and reforms implemented by his country to protect the human rights of migrants, including the development of a national gender-sensitive plan and a plan to combat human trafficking. He noted that the National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking played a key role in building partnerships with other countries. He also highlighted the importance of providing complaint mechanisms for all, including migrants.

56. Ms. Rosal Fischer, on behalf of UNICEF, made a statement in which she reviewed a number of articles and laws related to children's rights. She stressed the need to protect children, especially those who were separated from their families or forced to migrate alone without any identification papers, explaining that this protection was achieved by raising awareness of and training front-line workers on children's rights. If children were received upon their arrival at border points and referred to specialized centres, they became less vulnerable to exploitation, while abandoned children were vulnerable to violence and exploitation, which affected their psychological health and ability to learn. She emphasized that UNICEF collaborated with Governments and various organizations to ensure children's rights.

57. In the ensuing discussion, Mr. Badee Jubail, Chief of Expatriates Grievances at the Labour Market Regulatory Authority of Bahrain, indicated that his country, which was considered a recipient of migrants, was intensifying efforts in the field of migration governance and was working to build collaboration with countries

of origin. He reviewed the most prominent achievements, such as establishing a comprehensive and specialized centre to protect migrant workers and ensure the enjoyment of their rights without discrimination, providing shelter for actual and potential victims of people trafficking and providing them with a hotline in several languages, and offering them psychological care. He said that his country had also put in place mechanisms to monitor cases of forced labour and trafficking, to guarantee the right of migrant workers to litigate in the event of a legal dispute with their employer, to ensure the right to move and leave, to facilitate workers' travel to their home country regardless of their work status and whether they possessed the necessary identification documents, and to ensure the right not to discriminate between migrants for any reason.

58. The representative of Yemen made a statement in which he discussed the concept of human rights, stating that approaching the concept of human rights from its simplified perspective might facilitate progress in implementing strategies related to migration.

59. The representative of Lebanon made a statement in which he noted that strategies and plans related to migration must take into account the needs of individual countries. He gave the example of Lebanon, which had a demographic composition different from other countries, and was currently affected by a steady increase in the number of displaced persons. He called on the international community to assist the Lebanese people and displaced persons so as to alleviate social tensions.

60. The chair of the session made a closing statement in which he thanked all the speakers and reviewed the main recommendations that had emerged from the interventions, namely committing to the principles of international agreements to protect the rights of migrants; building cadres capable of dealing with those issues; continuing to hold meetings to discuss problems related to migration; ensuring access to services for all migrants in all countries without discrimination; addressing the main causes of migration; promoting cooperation between countries to provide the necessary support and assistance to countries trying to offer services to migrants; benefiting from technology in managing migration issues; integrating the children of migrants into education programmes; ensuring the safe, voluntary and dignified return of migrants; developing strategies that could be applied on the ground; enhancing the contribution of migrants to development programmes; avoiding discrimination between categories of migrants; and not involving children and women in war and military conflict. He noted that implementing those recommendations required the cooperation and concerted efforts of all parties.

G. Plenary session 5: Strengthening national, bilateral, regional and international cooperation

61. The session was chaired by Ms. Naela Gabr, Head of the National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Human Trafficking in Egypt, and moderated by Ms. Lala Arabian, representative of the Cross Regional Centre for Refugees and Migrants.

62. The moderator discussed the importance of objective 23 of the Global Compact for Migration, and how to embed partnerships and collaboration in its guiding principles; and stressed the importance of improving regional and cross-regional cooperation and dialogue. She raised a range of topics that participants could address in their interventions, such as successful models in their countries, obstacles to implementation, and how to accelerate the conclusion of bilateral agreements on managing migrant flows while protecting their rights.

63. Ms. Enas al-Fergany, Director of the Department of Refugees, Expatriates and Migration Affairs at the League of Arab States, made a statement in which she reviewed the steps taken by the League to enhance national, bilateral, regional and international cooperation, most notably cooperation and coordination with member States at the regional level through an Arab regional consultation process on migration and refugee affairs, led by the League of Arab States, to provide communication networks between member States, exchange experiences and best practices, and formulate a unified vision. She said that the Department of Refugees, Expatriates and Migration Affairs kept Arab States informed of developments in the field of migration to enhance the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, and encouraged countries to

enhance coordination at the national level. It cooperated with its counterparts, including international organizations, United Nations agencies and regional mechanisms, through the mechanism of an alliance on migration issues in the Arab region. It also cooperated with the European Union and participated in many regional processes and international forums on migration. She stressed the commitment to moving forward in implementing the Global Compact for Migration with member States of the League of Arab States. The chair of the session commented on the above, noting the need for each country to have a mechanism for coordination between the various parties concerned with migration, an example of which was the committee she chaired in Egypt. She stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation, approaching the issue of migration from a developmental perspective rather than just a security one, and cooperating with international bodies concerned with migration issues.

64. Mr. Issa Abdessalam, Commissioner for the Diaspora of the Comoros, made a statement in which he noted that strengthening collaboration was currently a major challenge in view of ever increasing and diversifying mechanisms of movement, accompanied by rise in migration rates. He said that his country was an island with many migration routes, which made its borders difficult to control and exacerbated the phenomenon of uncontrolled migration. He stressed the need to urgently develop a national migration policy that included mechanisms for coordinating and managing migration, highlighting the importance of strengthening cooperation between State institutions and civil society. He reviewed the main achievements of the Comoros in terms of local, regional and international cooperation.

65. Ms. Elena Panova, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Egypt, made a statement in which she commended the role of Egypt in providing services to migrants, its tireless work to implement the Global Compact for Migration, and its commitment to the Compact's objectives. Those efforts had led to a reduction in human trafficking, exploitation of migrants, and violations of their rights. She added that Egypt today was surrounded by conflicts and disputes, and was a transit and destination country for millions of migrants and displaced persons, which doubled the burden of the Government. She noted the partnership between the United Nations and the Egyptian Government on the issue of migration and migrants, and the joint strategic initiative launched by the United Nations to empower migrants hosted by Egypt, especially vulnerable groups. She discussed the joint platform for migrants and refugees launched by the United Nations and the Egyptian Government, which had allowed for enhanced cooperation and dialogue to better address needs and mobilize more resources. She emphasized the positive role played by migrants in Egypt in collaboration with host communities.

66. Mr. Pierre Thomas Perry, representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), stressed that migration was at the heart of FAO work since it was driven by food insecurity, noting that many Arab countries suffered from severe food insecurity. He noted that migration often started from rural agricultural areas, so it was necessary to develop those areas, provide relief assistance to them, and support their inhabitants to remain in their areas. Even in areas suffering from conflict, helping farmers to produce crops by providing them with seeds prevented them from moving to another country. He focused on the need to promote resilient livelihoods among migrants, displaced persons and rural communities, develop strategies to adapt to climate change, and highlight the positive contributions of migrants to the agricultural sector.

67. Mr. Mohsen Ali al-Nassi, Assistant Undersecretary for Inspection Affairs at the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation of the United Arab Emirates, made a statement in which he focused on his country's efforts to enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation through the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, reviewing some of its activities over the past years in guiding policies and initiatives on labour migration. He highlighted some examples and good practices in terms of skills development; policies to monitor recruitment mechanisms to ensure fair and ethical recruitment; initiatives to facilitate the integration of migrants in their countries of origin upon their return; and skills acquired by migrants during their period of work abroad. He noted the signing of several bilateral agreements with countries of origin to protect the rights of migrant workers.

68. Ms. Hasna Omar Farah, Head of Migration and Protection at the National Migration Coordination Office of Djibouti, made a statement in which she presented her country's achievements in terms of objective 23, such as signing partnerships to strengthen its border management capacity. She noted that her country lacked the

necessary resources and was experiencing difficult security conditions, which hindered efforts in that regard. To address those obstacles, Djibouti had sought to strengthen cooperation through bilateral or multilateral agreements. She stressed that migrant flows could benefit her country if migration were properly managed.

69. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Lebanon discussed the growing problem of irregular migration by boat in his country. Most of those migrants were either Lebanese, Syrian or Palestinian, belonged to poor social groups, and had sold everything they owned or borrowed money to cover the cost of the journey, which often ended in drowning and death. To combat the phenomenon, Lebanon had worked with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development to launch an integrated maritime strategy to support effective border management in Lebanon. He said that Lebanon was also working on developing an assessment study for a draft legal framework on its maritime domain to enhance maritime safety and security, and was working with the World Bank and other international organizations to reduce irregular migration from Lebanon to Europe.

70. The representative of Morocco focused on the importance of partnerships between countries or with international organizations, provided that those partnerships were based on clear references and took into account the priorities of the States Parties, with the aim of formulating balanced agendas. He noted the difficulties that accompanied the implementation of those agreements, most notably how to promote them to gain acceptance in the relevant circles. He said that the link between development and migration was agreed upon, and that Arab countries were among the first to promote it. He expressed his hope that the current momentum would be maintained to push towards implementing the Compact for Migration and to promote efforts to enforce it.

71. The representative of the Sudan said that transit countries were perhaps the most affected by irregular migration, particularly in terms of the risk of people trafficking, stressing the important role of national committees working to combat the phenomenon. He underscored the need to classify issues according to the priorities of host communities and those of migrants' communities of origin.

72. The representative of Somalia noted the steady increase in the number of migrants in his country, whether internally displaced or those moving across borders. The Somali Government and civil society organizations in the country had taken a series of measures to combat and reduce the phenomenon, such as establishing the National Authority for Displaced Persons and Refugees, raising awareness of the dangers of irregular migration, providing decent work opportunities, offering training and programmes, providing the requirements for a decent life, strengthening international cooperation, and ensuring the right to safe voluntary return for Somalis abroad. He reaffirmed the specificities of each country and the differences in their needs, especially in view of the current circumstances in the region as a whole.

73. The representative of Egypt discussed the Khartoum Process, which Egypt currently chaired, and which was based on the principle of sharing responsibility and burdens among States. He highlighted the importance of the Process in terms of exchanging experiences and best practices among member States.

74. The representative of Tunisia addressed objective 23, which enshrined the essence of the Compact for Migration, as it referred to the concept of sharing responsibilities. She said that no country or party could deal with the issue alone, as it required concerted and combined efforts. She added that the objective struck a balance between protecting borders and national sovereignty, and ensuring freedom of movement for individuals. She noted the various processes and dialogues in which her country had participated, such as the Rabat Process, the Rome Dialogue, and the Euro-African Dialogue. She added that what was lacking was a culture of evaluation, as a mechanism must be put in place through which lessons learned could be drawn and obstacles identified so as to determine aspects that could be improved in view of emerging challenges and crises.

75. The representative of Jordan reiterated what had been stated previously regarding the importance of evaluation at the level of agreements, and the importance of the principle of burden-sharing between countries.

H. Plenary session 6: Providing detailed, timely and available data

76. The session was chaired by Mr. Hussein al-Amin al-Fadil, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, and moderated by Mr. Ayman Zohry, a researcher and expert in population and migration issues.

77. The chairperson noted the problem of limited data, stressing the importance of concerted efforts between government and non-government institutions to provide necessary data, and the need to build partnerships between State institutions, civil society and non-government institutions to exchange data on migrants, especially regarding irregular migration.

78. The session moderator stressed the importance of collecting and utilizing data, and establishing and strengthening research centres and observatories in the field of migration, as the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration could not be achieved without data on the stages of migration, recalling the third objective of the Compact on providing accurate and timely information on all stages of migration. He said that challenges hindering progress in implementing the Compact included the absence or withholding of information, and challenges related to the availability, reliability, and comparability of data and adopted scientific methodologies. He posed a series of questions to frame the discussion: Were there national plans to collect data based on international standards? How were these plans prepared to benefit other countries? Had Governments developed mechanisms to coordinate data collection at the internal and external levels? Had questions on migration been included in the population census? Had Governments established partnerships with non-governmental organizations and academic circles on migration data? What were the gaps in data collection? Had Governments developed mechanisms to exchange data on migration with countries of origin, destination and transit?

79. Ms. Ahlam Hammami, Director-General of the National Observatory for Migration of Tunisia, made a presentation on the Tunisian experience in providing detailed, timely and accessible data. She noted the establishment of a national information system on international migration in Tunisia, which was an advanced system that aimed to collect statistics and administrative data from institutions concerned with migration for decision makers and other stakeholders to formulate policies and develop strategies; provide automatic access to the institutions that collected and produced the database, each within its scope of competence; contribute to determining the State's policies in the field of migration; and provide a cornerstone for research and studies on the various profiles of migrants. She said that the sources of data and statistical information for the system were national sources, most notably the general population and housing census issued by the National Institute of Statistics; the national survey on international migration; and partnership agreements with the Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation, the Central Bank of Tunisia, and the National Authority for Combating Trafficking in Persons. She also reviewed progress in the information system. She indicated that the results of the project's mainstreaming would allow for the creation of a database based on a unified numbering system; the electronic storage of each file with its attachments in the central system; the adoption of electronic authentication; and the taking and storing of fingerprints.

80. Mr. Souhail Mohamed Toumi al-Ghariani, the representative of the Moomken Organization – For Media and Awareness, gave a presentation in which he stressed the importance of collecting and updating data given that they constituted the backbone of decision-making processes. He added that access to data facilitated policy implementation and for accurately providing migrants with their basic needs, stressing the importance of making data available to everyone because transparency enhanced trust and collaboration. He noted language barriers that sometimes hindered the data collection process owing to an inability to communicate with migrants. He listed a set of recommendations in that regard, including strengthening national data collection systems; creating platforms for exchanging data between stakeholders; adopting a unified methodology for data collection that was comparable; recognizing the role of civil society organizations in data collection; and supporting local authorities in building their capacity to deal with language barriers. He added that the data collection process was not purely technical, but rather a moral duty that allowed for informed decisions to be made to implement the Global Compact for Migration.

81. Ms. Zahra Mohamed Omar, the representative of the National Research Institute of Djibouti, discussed her country's achievements in terms of migration-related data, such as the establishment of a national committee on migration, a national institute of statistics, and a migration studies unit. She also highlighted the partnerships between the Government of Djibouti and the United Nations. She said that a major problem that needed to be urgently addressed was the scarcity of data analysis and dissemination. She stressed the need to strengthen collaboration between international and local institutions, provide technical and financial support to that end, and develop the necessary tools for data dissemination.

82. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Yemen commended the efforts of Djibouti, stressing that everything achieved in Djibouti benefited Yemen, hence the need to enhance cooperation between the two countries. He called for offering civil society organizations an opportunity to participate in the data collection process.

83. The representative of Mauritania said that to harmonize legislation to implement the Global Compact for Migration, the Mauritanian authorities had conducted a comprehensive census of migrants, which showed that their number amounted to 150,000. He also referred to collaboration between ministries to employ migrants.

84. The representative of Morocco noted increasing waves of racism against migrants, stating that the only way to address the issue was by providing data and information so that migration was handled on the basis of accurate information rather than on what was circulated in speeches.

85. Ms. Sara Salman commented on the above, noting the need to develop a framework for peer learning and to benefit from pioneering experiences in developing migration data, such as the Tunisian experience. She stressed the need to adopt a specific methodology in Arab countries to produce comparable data. She addressed data gaps that in most cases led to responses that were not commensurate with migrants' needs.

86. The representative of Iraq highlighted the importance of databases and information, and addressed the problems and challenges that might hinder that, based on his country's experience. Such challenges included the failure of destination countries to provide data on migrants; and the reluctance of migrants, once settled in destination countries, to provide information to embassies for fear of being forcibly returned to their countries. He called for coordination and cooperation between destination, origin and transit countries under the auspices of United Nations organizations.

87. The chairperson made a statement on the challenges of data availability in the Arab region, which varied according to a country's circumstances and the conflicts and natural disasters it suffered. He reviewed the obstacles that made it difficult to obtain data in the Sudan, including the vast geographical area; the spread of conflicts; the multiplicity of migration routes; and forced displacement, including internal displacement between cities, villages and states or migration to neighbouring countries. He derived some recommendations from the session, including unifying the methodology to improve data; encouraging the building of platforms to disseminate migration data; collaborating with civil society organizations and research and scientific institutions; capacity-building; coordinating between migration actors at all local, regional and international levels; promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation between countries; and providing training to human resources to facilitate the data collection process.

I. Contribution of the United Nations Network on Migration to the achievement of the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region

88. The session was facilitated by Ms. Sophie Nonnenmacher, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Advisor at IOM. Ms. Rosal Fischer, Consultant for Children on the Move at UNICEF, and Ms. Kinga Janik, Human Rights Officer at OHCHR, as co-chairs made a joint presentation on the regional workstream for the protection of persons on the move and their right to liberty. The presentation concluded with the following recommendations: promote cooperation to integrate services for children and persons on the move; include young persons in decision-making; and establish a peer committee to share experiences and best and promising practices.

89. Mr. Ryszard Cholewinski, Senior Migration Specialist at ILO, made a presentation on the virtual regional dialogue on the climate change-migration nexus in the Arab region and the multiple issues involved, such as migration trends and climate change, migration as a climate change adaptation strategy, the importance of fair mobility, and food insecurity and water scarcity as both drivers and consequences of climate change-related migration. The dialogue had resulted in 17 key messages, notably the integration of climate change issues into migration governance frameworks, the adoption of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach and a gender-sensitive approach as referred to in the Global Compact for Migration, strengthened collaboration and coordination mechanisms, and partnership building at the regional level to address the challenges posed by climate change-related migration.

90. Ms. Riham Abouelhassan, Data and Research Assistant at IOM, made a presentation on regional actions related to missing migrants and on humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress. She gave an overview of the deaths and disappearances recorded among migrants, noting that many of those cases were not officially recorded. She outlined some recommendations aimed primarily at saving migrants' lives, enhancing the capacity of member States to search for and identify missing persons, and providing support to the families of migrants who had died or gone missing.

91. Ms. Cecile Riallant, Head of the Sustainable Development Unit at IOM, made an online presentation on approaches to support and advise Governments and stakeholders in implementing the Global Compact for Migration. Those included an implementation guide that set out practical tools, guiding questions and references to guide action in each country; and a six-step process for implementing the Compact: initiation, needs assessment, design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review, and reporting. She gave examples of countries that had launched national implementation plans based on the six-step process, such as Kenya.

92. At the close of the session, Ms. Azrah Karim Rajput, Senior Regional Policy Officer at the Secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration, made a presentation on the mechanisms adopted for capacity-building, including needs-based systems, multi-partner migration trust funds, and migration network centres. Those mechanisms allowed for the provision of concrete solutions according to the specific needs of each country.

J. Key messages from the Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region

93. Ms. Sara Salman presented the key messages from the Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region. She said that the messages would be presented at the International Migration Review Forum 2026 as the outcome of the second regional review process.

K. Closing session

94. At the closing session of the second Regional Review Conference on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Mr. Othman Belbeisi, Regional Director of IOM for the Middle East and North Africa, made a statement in which he thanked participants for the active and fruitful discussions, stressing that effective migration management must include all stakeholders.

95. Ms. Enas al-Fergany, Director of the Department of Refugees, Expatriates and Migration Affairs at the League of Arab States, made a statement on behalf of Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector at the League of Arab States, in which she lauded the rich discussions that had taken place at the conference, and thanked member States and stakeholders. She stressed that the experiences, best practices and lessons learned that were exchanged at regional reviews would contribute to moving forward in implementing the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration and improving migration governance in a manner that was consistent with the needs and circumstances of the Arab region, while taking into account its priorities, responding to the challenges it faced, and allowing for the achievement of desired development.