

## **Ministerial Meeting of GCM Champions**

### **Joint Statement**

### **‘The Rabat Declaration’**

Rabat, 25 March 2022

- We, the Ministers of the Member States, acting as “Champion countries” for the implementation, follow up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM), have met today, 25 March 2022, in Rabat and virtually, upon the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco, and His Excellency Mr. Antonio Vitorino, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration.
- We highly commend His Majesty King Mohammed VI’s role as African Leader on the issue of Migration and His strong commitment through the African Agenda on Migration, a roadmap with a clear vision for the continent and the creation of the African Migration Observatory, hosted in Rabat.
- We have gathered to reiterate our full support to the GCM, and commitment to keep working together towards a successful and robust implementation of the Global Compact. We are convinced that international cooperation and the sharing of best practices in the field of international migration in all its dimensions should be the norm, rather than the exception.
- Adopted at the Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakech on December 2018, the GCM represents a major contribution of multilateralism and a collective commitment to improving cooperation to address the challenges and harness the opportunities of international migration and human mobility, through a comprehensive cooperative framework anchored in its vision and guiding principles.
- Amid emerging transitions and in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the vision of the GCM must be promoted in order to facilitate and recognize the benefits of safe, orderly and regular migration for everyone.
- We recall that the Champions’ initiative is an open group of States of origin, transit, destination and return committed to the effective implementation of the GCM, in the pursuit of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We call on other States to join this collective initiative to broaden the platform of Champions representing the full range of migration realities reflected in the GCM.
- We commend the continuous support of the United Nations Network on Migration in the form of guidance and practical tools to accelerate GCM implementation, and its efforts to facilitate collective learning, promote the cross-fertilization of ideas, disseminate information, and the exchange of good practices.
- We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the GCM that shows how governments can put in place laws, policies and practices consistent with the commitments and guiding principles of the Global Compact and how they can lead by example, demonstrating our common humanity, and recommends to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration and fulfil the promise of the Global Compact, in accordance with its vision and guiding principles.
- We acknowledge with appreciation the organization of multiple successful GCM regional reviews and welcome their recommendations and outcomes, as we look ahead towards the

first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), which will take place in New York, from 17 to 20 May 2022, with an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing on 16 May.

- The First IMRF represents a rare window of opportunity to reinforce the relevance and timeliness of the GCM, assess its impact to date and ensure that it is brought to bear in equipping societies for future challenges.
- In this regard, we call on the continued leadership and engagement of States and other stakeholders to ensure comprehensive and inclusive partnerships, in line with the whole of government and whole of society approaches, as one of the key factors for the success of the IMRF.
- We reiterate our commitment to engage constructively to forge a concise, evidence-based, action-oriented and forward-looking Progress Declaration.
- We recall the vital role of the “Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund” as the only financial mechanism, inside the UN, fully dedicated to supporting collective action on migration and GCM implementation in all its dimensions. We appeal for more support and the broadening of its donor base as a clear demonstration of our collective commitment to pursue safe, orderly and regular migration.
- We acknowledge the key role of the “Migration Network Hub” in promoting knowledge-sharing and peer exchanges. We encourage States to actively participate in the various initiatives proposed to showcase practices that can serve as an inspiration and consider the possibility to prepare national voluntary reports or update the existing ones.
- The positive contributions of migrants and migration to advance inclusive growth and sustainable development, as well as cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration are key elements of the Global Compact. The GCM, grounded in international law, calls for full respect for human rights and the humane treatment and protection of migrants regardless of migration status, as firmly grounded in the 2030 Agenda. It also calls for enhancing cooperation to eliminate the adverse drivers and structural factors that cause irregular migration, and compel people to leave their country of origin.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has substantially impacted migration flows and human mobility around the world, with closed borders limiting regular migration routes and migratory journeys becoming increasingly dangerous. The pandemic has also created unprecedented setbacks to development gains and exacerbated existing or created new vulnerabilities faced by some migrants, including women and girls. The pandemic has also shown the role played by migrant workers in COVID-related response efforts.
- While we underline the importance of coordinating international efforts to provide protection, assistance and support to migrants in vulnerable situations, including victims of human trafficking, we recall the shared responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting, protecting and respecting the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status. In this framework, we express our concern at the global trends of xenophobia, racism, intolerance, stigmatization, and discrimination experienced by migrants and their families. We call on the global community to promote balanced narratives on migration in order to help counteract these trends and create inclusive societies.
- Labour migration brings many benefits to migrants, communities, employers, governments, and other stakeholders, in countries of origin and destination. We need to work on expanding and diversifying availability of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration, in accordance with international legal obligations.
- While significant progress has been made to date, more effort is needed to accelerate both the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, through the Decade of Action. Migration should be integrated as a cross-cutting

issue in Sustainable Development frameworks. The positive contribution of migration should be harnessed to advance progress toward the SDGs, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic recovery efforts, which demonstrates at once both the important contribution of migrants to our societies and the acute situations of vulnerability that many of them face.

- Many migrant workers have lost their jobs and many others face the grim reality of forced return. Despite this, and defying predictions, remittance flows have remained resilient as critical sources of support for families and communities. Although migrant workers have played essential roles, notably in front line service sectors responding to the pandemic, they have frequently faced discrimination in their access to testing, treatment and vaccines and essential health technologies, including lack of access to information in a language they understand, costs, and legal, administrative, and other barriers. It is also important to support efforts aimed at building the capacities of States, which are receiving returning migrants to set up sustainable re-integration strategies, especially in the context of the pandemic.
- We call on all States to seize the opportunity provided by the upcoming IMRF to generate global momentum towards further GCM implementation in support of safe, orderly, and regular migration for the benefit of all.
- Finally, we, the Ministers of the Member States, acting as “Champion countries” for the implementation, follow up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM), commit to uphold the Rabat Declaration in our national interventions at the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), which will take place in New York, from 17 to 20 May 2022.