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United Nations  
Network on Migration  
Working Better Together



## Second Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region

### Concept Note

#### I. Background

The [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration \(GCM\)](#)<sup>1</sup> is a non-legally binding, cooperative framework based on international law that builds on a set of global outcomes and frameworks, including the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 2013 Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development<sup>2</sup> and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In target 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Member States pledged to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.<sup>3</sup>

The formal endorsement of the GCM by the United Nations General Assembly on 19 December 2018<sup>4</sup> represented a paradigm shift in the approach to migration governance.<sup>5</sup> Putting people at the heart of migration governance, the GCM is anchored in human rights and calls for the respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status. Its 10 guiding principles promote a gender-responsive and child-sensitive approach to migration governance and prioritize the well-being of migrants and the members of communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. They also reaffirm national sovereignty and recognize the respect for the rule of law and due process. Rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the GCM reaffirms the potential of migration for achieving sustainable development and simultaneously seeks to limit its possible negative impacts. The GCM recognizes that good migration governance can only be achieved through adopting whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches and building strong partnerships at the national, regional and global levels. The GCM, with its 23 objectives and their associated actionable commitments and suggested actions, provides a 360-degree approach to migration governance and offers a road map to help achieve safe, orderly and regular migration.

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<sup>1</sup> A/RES/73/195.

<sup>2</sup> A/RES/68/4.

<sup>3</sup> A/RES/70/1.

<sup>4</sup> A/RES/73/195.

<sup>5</sup> A total of 152 Member States voted in favour for endorsing the GCM, including 19 Arab countries, of which five voted against and 12 abstained from a vote.

To ensure its effective implementation, Member States highlighted the importance that the GCM includes a call for voluntary follow-up and review. At the global level, the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), which will be held every four years beginning in 2022, will serve as the primary intergovernmental platform to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all the objectives of the GCM.

Following system-wide consultations, and the proposal by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, the UN Secretary-General established a UN Network on Migration, to ensure effective, coordinated system-wide support to the implementation, follow up and review of the GCM in response to the needs of Member States. In this regard, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is designated as the Coordinator and Secretariat of the Network and is requested to assist in the preparation and organization of regional reviews of the implementation of the Global Compact<sup>6</sup>. It is also noted that the Network will fully draw from the technical expertise and experience of relevant entities within the United Nations system. In addition, recognizing that most international migration takes place within regions, Member States invited relevant subregional, regional and cross-regional processes, including the United Nations regional economic commissions to review the implementation of the GCM at the regional level beginning in 2020, and every four years thereafter.<sup>7</sup> The outcome of regional reviews will inform the IMRF of major regional trends, challenges, successful practices, and emerging issues. General Assembly resolution [73/326](#) on the modalities and organizational aspects of the IMRF emphasized the importance of engaging with all relevant stakeholders to ensure a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

## **II. Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region**

### **A. Context**

The first GCM regional review was organized over two years 2020-2021 in the Arab region by IOM, ESCWA, and the League of Arab States, in collaboration with the members of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration in the Arab Region, and with the support of the Secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration. The regional review process is composed of several components to ensure the widest and most effective engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

In the framework of the second GCM regional review, and given that the GCM follow-up and review is a state-led process, IOM and ESCWA organized an informal briefing on the agenda and modalities of the regional review conference of the GCM in the Arab Region in July 2024.

In line with the GCM guiding principles and to ensure a whole-of-society approach to the regional reviews, ESCWA, IOM, and the United Nations Network on Migration organized two multi-stakeholder pre-consultations in November 2023 and April 2024 bringing together representatives of civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector and employers' organizations, trade unions, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and academia, among others. The dialogue sessions served to raise awareness on the GCM and the regional review process and provided an opportunity for stakeholders to propose means to ensure their optimal engagement in the review process. Leading up

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<sup>6</sup> [A/RES/73/195](#), para. 45; [A/RES/73/326](#), para. 9.

<sup>7</sup> [A/RES/73/195](#), para. 50; [A/RES/73/326](#), para. 10.

to the Regional Review Conference, additional informal dialogue sessions were organized in May 2024.

The regional review process will culminate in the organization of the Second Regional Review Conference.

## **B. Objectives**

The Regional Review Conference will provide a platform for Member States and all relevant stakeholders to review the implementation of the GCM to effectively inform each edition of the IMRF in line with the 360-degree approach. It will:

- Critically reflect on intra-regional and cross regional priorities, emerging issues, and gaps in the implementation of the GCM.
- Identify regional progress and challenges in implementing the recommended actions set out in the IMRF Progress Declaration.
- Consolidate critical findings and recommendations to inform the 2026 IMRF
- Highlight good practices and exchange experiences to accelerate the achievement of the GCM objectives
- Explore opportunities for strengthening regional and cross-regional cooperation on migration.

## **C. Structure**

The format and organization of the Second regional review conference will be aligned with that of the six key priority areas identified through the first regional review process in the Arab region (<https://migrationnetwork.un.org/country-regional-network/arab-states>). Accordingly, the below draft structure is suggested:

<b>DAY 1: Wednesday, 3 July 2024</b>	
09:30 – 10:00	<b>Registration</b>
10:00 – 10:45	<b>Opening Session</b>
10:45 – 11:00	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:00 – 13:00	<b>Plenary Session 1: High-level Panel on Expanding regular migration pathways and reducing irregular migration</b>
13:00 – 14:15	<b>Lunch</b>
14:15-14:45	<b>Scene setting: Migration patterns and trends in the Arab region</b>
14:45-16:00	<b>Plenary Session 2: Ensuring that migrants have access to basic services</b>
16:00-16:15	<b>Coffee break</b>

16:15-17:30	<b>Plenary Session 3: Protecting and empowering migrant workers and operationalizing their role in the sustainable development process in countries of origin and destination</b>
17:30 – 17:45	<b>Closing of Day 1</b>
<b>DAY 2: Thursday, 4 July 2024</b>	
09:00-09:30	<b>Registration</b>
09:30-10:45	<b>Plenary Session 4: Respecting the human rights of all migrants, especially the most vulnerable</b>
10:45-11:00	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:00-12:15	<b>Plenary Session 5: Strengthening national, bilateral, regional and international cooperation</b>
12:15 – 13:30	<b>Lunch</b>
13:30-14:45	<b>Plenary Session 6: Providing detailed, timely and available data</b>
14:45 – 15:00	<b>Coffee break</b>
15:00-15:45	<b>Contribution of the UN Network on Migration to the achievement of the GCM in the Arab region</b>
15:45-16:00	<b>Summary of Key messages</b>
16:00 – 16:15	<b>Closing remarks</b>

#### **D. Inputs**

Member States' and stakeholders' written inputs to the second regional review conference will be posted onto the United Nations Network on Migration website. It is foreseen that with input from the Regional United Nations Network on Migration, a background note will be prepared for each session focused on the six priority areas identified in the first regional review process. The background notes will serve as input to the conference and will help guiding the discussion during the regional review conference by presenting a brief overview of the situation in the region relating to the selected topics, identify some of the key issues and challenges, and propose a number of guiding questions for discussion.

## **E. Outputs**

The process will result in the production of summary reports of regional review meetings and an Outcome Document of the second regional review conference that will summarize the key messages from all participants. It will also include an annex of key messages from the stakeholder consultation(s). The Outcome Document should be finalized by September 2024, and will be considered at the plenary meeting of the General Assembly in the second half of 2024 to be presented by the Coordinator of the Network, as in A/RES/76/266, paragraph 77, as well as to inform the next IMRF in 2026.

## **F. Participants**

In the spirit of the GCM and to ensure whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to the review, the Second Regional Review Conference will bring together representatives of governmental institutions, including ministers and high-level officials from relevant ministries and other government agencies including National Population Councils, the members of the UN Network on Migration and relevant subregional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations, including the United Nations regional economic commissions or regional consultative processes, and all the relevant stakeholders including migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders.

## **G. Date, venue, and languages**

The Second regional review conference will be organized from Wednesday, 3 July to Thursday, 4 July 2024. It will be organized in person and streamed virtually via an online platform to allow remote participation with simultaneous interpretation to Arabic, English, and French.

## **H. Documentation**

- New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants [A/RES/71/1](#);
- Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration [A/RES/73/195](#);
- Format and organizational aspects of the international migration review forums [A/RES/73/326 5](#);
- Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum [A/RES/76/266](#)
- Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [A/RES/70/1](#);
- Regional Consultation on International Migration in the Arab Region, 2017, [outcome document](#);