



Social Sector
General Secretariat
League of Arab States

October 18, 2017

Dear Mr. Juan José Gómez Camacho and Mr. Jürg Lauber,

In preparation for the ongoing consultations on the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (Refugees, Expatriates & Migration Affairs Department), in its capacity as the secretariat of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP), organized an extraordinary meeting for the ARCP, on 25-26 July 2017 at its headquarters in Cairo. The meeting was organized in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The meeting was organized in the framework of ensuring the active participation of LAS Member States in the ongoing consultations of the two Global Compacts and encourage their diplomatic missions in New York to coordinate with each other in this regard. It aimed at raising the awareness of LAS Member States on the ongoing processes to develop the GCR and GCM, and to agree on the key messages that the Arab region is keen to include in the two global compacts.

The meeting took place over two days; the first day of the meeting was dedicated to the GCR, while the second day was dedicated to the GCM. Two separate outcome documents were adopted during the meeting; one on the contribution of the ARCP to the GCR, and the other on **the contribution of the ARCP to the GCM.**

We are pleased to attach the abovementioned documents for your kind information.

Please accept, Excellencies, assurances of my highest consideration.

Dr. Badre Eddine Allali

Assistant Secretary General
Head of Social Affairs Sector
League of Arab States

H.E. Mr. Juan José Gómez Camacho
Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations
Co-facilitator of the Intergovernmental Consultations and Negotiations on the GCM

H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber
Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations
Co-facilitator of the Intergovernmental Consultations and Negotiations on the GCM



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**Extraordinary Meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration
and Refugee Affairs (ARCP)**

*In preparation for the consultations of "the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)"
and "the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)"*

**General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
Cairo, 25-26 July 2017**

**Contribution of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP) in
the Global Compact for Refugees**

The Representatives of the Arab States participating in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs - ARCP (List of participants enclosed), organized by the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (Refugees, Expatriates & Migration Affairs Department), in its capacity as the secretariat of the ARCP, at its headquarters in Cairo, 25-26 July 2017¹:

- Believing in the importance of concerted regional and international efforts to deal with the refugee crisis, the principle of shared responsibility and burden-sharing by various actors in the international community and finding viable practical solutions to address the root causes that have increased refugee flows;
- Emphasizing that the issues of migration and asylum, and the conditions and rights of migrants and refugees, have many political and security implications at the regional and international levels and are no longer limited to the effects they have on the economic, social and humanitarian conditions;
- In the interest of Arab coordination in the international forums that discuss the issues of migration and asylum in general and especially at the current time in which the Arab region is undergoing unprecedented developments at this level;
- Emphasizing the importance of balancing the legitimate security concerns of States with the protection needs of refugees and asylum-seekers;

¹ The meeting was organized in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM); having the first day of the meeting dedicated to the Global Compact on Refugees, and the second day dedicated to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, in the framework of the ARCP efforts to prepare for the ongoing consultations on the two Global Compacts to be adopted by 2018. This is in accordance to the final declaration of the ARCP Extraordinary Meeting which was held in preparation of the High Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, and in line with the outcomes of the previous ARCP regular meetings (April 2015, May 2016 and May 2017).

- In accordance with the resolutions adopted by the Arab Summit in Amman (March 2017) on Syrian asylum²;
- In recognition of the efforts exerted to update the "Arab Convention on Regulating Status of Refugees in the Arab Countries";
- In affirmation of the specificity of each region and every country in the world, especially the Arab region and the neighbouring countries of Syria, which must be taken into consideration when drafting the Global Compact on Refugees , putting it in a flexible manner that respects this specificity;
- Emphasizing the positive role of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP) in unifying the Arab position towards international issues and presenting it during the international fora; as well as the importance of supporting this process and enhancing its role as one of the important existing mechanisms;
- Having perused the presentations made and listened to the ideas and proposals of the participants, and to interventions and discussions that took place during the meeting;

They recommend the importance of taking into account the following items in the development of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF):

I- Reception and admission:

1. To work towards the creation of conditions for proper, safe and dignified reception in accordance with the national laws of each State and in cooperation with international agencies working in this regard;
2. To establish a system for the registration of birth, death, marriage and divorce, and the documentation for refugees and displaced persons in accordance with the national laws of each State;
3. Taking the necessary measures in the case of refugee camps to preserve the civilian and humanitarian character of the camps, and to ensure they are not penetrated by armed groups; as well as ensuring the security and protection of host States and host communities and their social peace;
4. Respecting the human rights principles of all persons leaving their countries to destination or asylum countries for forced reasons regardless of their legal status accompanying their journey to the destination country;
5. To develop programs to deal with women, children, elderly, persons with disabilities, victims of human trafficking and violence against women commensurate with their vulnerability and provide them with the protection and assistance they need in accordance with national legislations and laws in cooperation with States, international organizations, civil society organizations and others.

II- Support for refugees' immediate and ongoing needs:

1. To facilitate and coordinate the role of international and regional organizations, civil society, the private sector, various donors and other relevant actors in accordance with national laws and legislations to identify refugee needs and providing them access to basic services;
2. To strengthen education, training and skills development for refugees to reduce their reliance on humanitarian assistance, and preparing them for employment, with the support of the international community and in a way that doesn't lead to competition with the labour market in the host country and in accordance with national priorities;

² Amman Summit Resolution number 681 issued at the 28th Ordinary Session on 29/3/2017 on the issue of the Syrian refugee crisis.

3. To take into consideration the needs of women in all plans, policies and programs of action aimed at protecting and supporting refugees and displaced persons, and designing policies that are appropriate to their circumstances, needs and problems;
4. To support the campaign "Together: Ensuring Respect, Safety and Dignity for All", launched at the High-level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, held on 19 September 2016 in New York, bringing together organizations of the United Nations System, United Nations Member States, the private sector, civil society, Academic Foundations and individuals, that values diversity, discard discrimination and accept refugees and migrants.
5. To establish a team of concerned national authorities and relevant international organizations, including UNRWA, to identify and address the protection gaps faced by Palestinian refugees as a result of the lack of provision for the protection of Palestinian refugees in the Mandate of UNRWA.

III- Providing support for host countries and communities

1. To emphasize the principle of international solidarity with host countries and the importance of concerted efforts by all parties of the international community in dealing with large movements of refugees and increasing migration flows, in a manner that preserves the security, stability and vital interests of States and at the same time preserves the human dignity of these refugees and migrants;
2. To develop mechanisms at the national and regional levels to assess the burden of asylum and to achieve the principle of shared responsibility and burden-sharing by various actors in the international community;
3. To encourage cooperation between the governments of host countries, and international and regional organizations, States and other donors as well as various actors to build the national capacities of host countries to develop programs at the national level commensurate with each country's priorities for the assistance required to provide basic services and provide funding for this purpose, so as to benefit not only refugees, but also host countries and communities, in line with the principle of shared responsibility and burden-sharing by various actors in the international community.
4. To encourage joint planning between humanitarian and development actors to promote long-term development assistance in support of the economy and national development plans;
5. Emphasis is placed on taking into consideration the specific situation of Arab countries hosting refugees, especially those that bear the brunt of the current refugee crisis, with many economic challenges, social tensions, demographic changes, and security and political turmoil in some countries resulting from the situation in the region since 2011 and its repercussions; in addition to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and Arab territories, which requires special support for the countries of the region and providing them with the necessary assistance to enable them to deal with the large numbers of refugees in a sound manner. This will serve to achieve social stability and reduce tension between refugees and their host communities;
6. The support of the international community to the League of Arab States' Project to establish a specific mechanism to assist the Arab States neighbouring Syria as well as the other Arab countries hosting Syrian refugees and forcibly displaced, in a manner that enables them to shoulder the burden from various aspects.

IV- Finding Durable Solutions

1. The need to identify the real causes of asylum and work to address them;
2. To pay attention and support Palestinian refugees, including calling upon the international community to continue to provide the necessary support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to enable it to continue to shoulder its full responsibilities under the relevant UN Resolutions, and to affirm the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland according to UN Security Council Resolution 194, and to work on providing greater support to the countries that receive them, especially with the new state of asylum for Palestinians from Syria, and to call upon the international community to exert pressure on Israel (the occupying power) to respect the international law, including the Geneva Conventions and Resolutions issued by the United Nations, and to stop the aggression, siege, ethnic cleansing and racial discrimination policies aimed at continuing the displacement of Palestinians from their homeland;
3. To call upon international actors to respect the international commitments that have been given and to translate them into concrete support for Syrian refugees;
4. To involve refugees in efforts to achieve national reconciliation in countries of origin;
5. The creation of conditions for the voluntary return of refugees to their countries with safety and dignity, which requires funding for reconstruction and development in countries of origin, encouraging the investment in these countries and the rehabilitation of refugees to contribute to the reconstruction projects of their home-countries;
6. To support the gradual return of refugees to their countries of origin where possible in accordance with paragraph 76 of the New York Declaration;
7. Assisting countries of origin to integrate the special needs of returning refugees into the national development planning, so as to ensure that their displacement is not renewed when the situation stabilizes;
8. To expand access and resettlement opportunities of refugees to third countries in accordance with relevant international conventions and commitments to reduce burdens on countries of first asylum by developing programs to engage the private sector, families and communities through private sponsorship programs, grant humanitarian visas, and to expand the scope of scholarships and study visas granted to students in countries in crisis, taking into account humanitarian considerations and non-discrimination when developing such programs in accordance with the national laws of each State;
9. Transit Countries are not necessarily considered in expanding refugee resettlement as third countries.



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*In preparation for the consultations of "the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)"
and "the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)"*

General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
Cairo, 25-26 July 2017

**Contribution of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs
(ARCP) to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration**

The Representatives of the Arab States participating in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs - ARCP (List of participants enclosed), organized by the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (Refugees, Expatriates & Migration Affairs Department), in its capacity as the secretariat of the ARCP, at its headquarters in Cairo, 25-26 July 2017¹:

- Being keen on strengthening the positive aspects of Arab migration and limiting its negative implications on the development process in the Arab states;
- Believing in the importance of cooperation on migration at the regional and international levels, in such a way that ensures it is effectively and humanely managed;
- Emphasizing the importance of competent Arabs in the diaspora, who are considered a national wealth that should be taken care of, supported, and given a privileged position within the strategic development options of the Arab states;
- Being aware of the increasing irregular migration incidences and migration flows in the Arab region taking place on land and maritime routes, especially the Mediterranean, despite the efforts undertaken to stop these flows;
- Being aware of the hazardousness of the insecure routes that migrants and refugees use to flee conflicts, which can lead them to fall prey to human smugglers, and subsequently result in grave violations of their rights and human dignity;
- Acknowledging the implications of conflicts on international migrants living and working in countries in crisis,

¹ The meeting was organized in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM); having the first day of the meeting dedicated to the Global Compact on Refugees, and the second day dedicated to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, in the framework of the ARCP efforts to prepare for the ongoing consultations on the two Global Compacts to be adopted by 2018. This is in accordance to the final declaration of the ARCP Extraordinary Meeting which was held in preparation of the High Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, and in line with the outcomes of the previous ARCP regular meetings (April 2015, May 2016 and May 2017).

- Emphasizing that the issues of migration and asylum, and the conditions and rights of migrants and refugees, have many political and security implications at the regional and international levels, and are no longer limited to the effects they have on the economic, social, and humanitarian conditions;
- Emphasizing that the specificities of each region and every country of the world should be respected, which makes it imperative to consider them when drafting the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration, putting it in a flexible manner that respects this specificity. It is also important that the compact includes ways and methods to translate the principles and commitments into achievable goals;
- Affirming the positive role of the the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP) in unifying the Arab position towards international issues, and presenting it during international fora, as well as the importance of supporting ARCP and enhancing its role as an important existing mechanism;
- Having pursued the report of the special representative of the UN Secretary General for Migration, modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration -- which determined the six themes to be discussed in the informal thematic sessions on facilitating safe, orderly, and regular migration-- and the presentations made during the meeting, and ideas and proposals of the participants, and to interventions and discussions that took place during the meeting;

They recommend the importance of taking into account the following items in the development of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration:

First: Human Rights For All Migrants, Social Inclusion, Cohesion, and Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination:

1. Affirm the principle of shared responsibility between countries of origin and destination, and develop balanced approaches and visions to protect the rights of migrants and their families and raise awareness of their rights and duties in the countries of destination. Ensuring that human rights and respecting the human dignity of migrants is essential to strengthen their contributions in both countries of origin and destination, in accordance with national laws and international commitments of each country.
2. Acknowledge the importance of respecting human rights principles for all persons who are forced to leave their countries to countries of destination or asylum, regardless of their legal status during their journey to the country of destination.
3. Pay special attention to the vulnerable and marginalized groups of migrants, namely women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and victims of human trafficking and violence against women, treat them as appropriate to their situation, grant them the needed protection and assistance pursuant to the national laws and regulations, develop programs to introduce them to their rights, and develop responses that are appropriate to their needs, in cooperation between states and relevant regional and international organizations.
4. Fight all types of racism, xenophobia, islamophobia and discrimination against religious beliefs, and protect migrants against racist practices through community awareness raising campaigns using traditional media and social media, and through promoting dialogue between migrants and host communities, and enabling migrants to share their personal experiences.

Second: Addressing Drivers of Migration:

1. Acknowledge that migration is the other face of development through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which will largely impact migration, since poverty and unemployment are considered among the main drivers of migration. As such, developing the countries of origin and transit by improving the infrastructure and facilitating trade and investment will create new job opportunities. Having job opportunities and education available can limit the push factors of migration.
2. Call upon the international community to provide financial and technical support to establish small and mid-size projects in countries of origin, which help create job opportunities for the youth in their homeland.
3. Improve cooperation between humanitarian and development stakeholders, through joint analysis and planning, to move from emergency humanitarian assistance to longer term development responses.
4. Emphasize the importance of resolving conflicts which lead to an increase in the number of refugees and migrants.
5. Cooperate between states to solve crises and natural disasters and mitigate their impacts on migrants in countries in crisis.

Third: International Cooperation and Governance of Migration in All its Dimensions:

1. Emphasize the importance of relying on effective elements of migration governance, based on developing national mechanisms to coordinate between the different governmental parties and institutions working on migration issues at the national level, so as to ensure coordination between the ministries, as well as between central governments and local administrations, in order to develop coherent national policies and strategies that achieve complementarity and avoid duplication.
2. Promote cooperation between countries of origin and destination to achieve consistency between migration policies, through different methods including developing a system for labour markets in countries of destination, conducting regular studies on the needs of labour markets in these countries, determining the needed skills clearly, develop joint mechanisms to acknowledge the skills and qualifications of migrants of different levels, and announce the available job opportunities, which allow countries of origin to develop appropriate education and training policies.
3. The importance of developing and adopting a national approach that is based on accurate information coming from collecting data on migration, improving its quality and analyzing it. This can be done through working on building the national institutional capacities.
4. The necessity of incorporating migration in development policies at the national, regional, and international levels, in consistence with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the national development plans.
5. The importance of taking into consideration the gender disparities in all aspects of migration management to achieve equality for women, in consistence with the 5th goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and addressing this issue at the legal, political, and practical levels.
6. The importance of enhancing efforts of civil society organizations of expatriate communities to support migrants and help them integrate in the host communities through providing them

with the needed technical and language trainings, and giving them the needed information to know their rights and duties, and be familiar with the laws and regulations of the host countries and respect them.

7. Consensus and coordination between countries of origin and destination in the field of voluntary return of migrants, readmission and reintegration, as part of the bilateral agreements and arrangements, protecting their dignity and respecting human rights principles when dealing with them, pursuant to the international covenants and national laws; and enforce the international law on the return of the forcibly displaced due to the conflicts and occupation of land, as in the case of Palestine.
8. The importance of harmonizing reintegration programs with national development strategies and the needs of the local communities to which the migrants return, and developing efficient policies that enhance the contributions of migrants to the development process, including their reintegration in the labour market to benefit from their experience and skills.
9. The importance of flexibly drafting the principles and commitments of the global compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration in a way that takes into consideration the specificities of each region and country, and the interests of all relevant stakeholders, through the development of agreed rules and principles and breaking them into binding and non-binding elements.

Fourth: Contributions of Migrants and Diasporas to all Dimensions of Sustainable Development:

1. Acknowledge positive contributions of migrants in countries of origin and destination and encourage them, since migrant remittances, investments and transfer of skills and knowledge contribute to the development of countries of origin. Similarly, migrants play an important role in the development of countries of destination as well.
2. The importance of considering migration as being beneficial to both countries of origin and destination, since migration is a solution of the lack of absorption of local labour markets to the workforce in countries of origin, while at the same time providing a solution to the demographic imbalance in countries of destination. As such, it is imperative to emphasize the importance of:
 - a. Facilitating access to safe and legal movement opportunities, according to regulations that respect human rights principles and preserve human dignity, through simplifying entry and residence visa process for different purposes;
 - b. Taking migration into account in the national development plans in countries of origin and destination; working on developing programs to engage Arab expatriate competencies in the development process in the Arab world; and providing the needed frameworks and mechanisms for knowledge transfer through migrants;
3. Continue to strive to include migration in national development plans in the Arab countries, and engage Arab competencies and institutions abroad in the development process in the Arab world through transferring their expertise; developing partnerships and communication networks between them and with their counterparts in the Arab region; and helping them get better information on jobs and investment opportunities in the region. using the means of communication and modern technology to achieve this.
4. Take care of the Arab expatriate competencies residing abroad and encourage their utilization to support sustainable development efforts in countries of origin and destination, and

motivate them to support national development programs, and transfer knowledge and expertise they acquired as well as the modern technology to their countries of origin, and link them with the Arab scientific institutions and entities that are working in the same fields of expertise.

5. Emphasize the importance of providing incentives to attract the remittances of migrants in development through:
 - a. Calling upon countries of origin and destination to take the required measures to facilitate remittances by taking action to decrease remittance fees, and work on increasing their flows through official channels²;
 - b. Encouraging countries of destination to consider tax exemptions on the money transferred to countries of origin, and provide financial, technological, and administrative support;
 - c. Developing programs to attract migrants' remittances to the national economy of countries of origin, and raising awareness on how families of migrants spend the money;
 - d. Developing programs to encourage investments of migrants in their countries of origin.
 - e. Calling upon the countries of origin to consider diversification of the investment channels in the individual and community projects, provide incentives to maximize the use of remittances, and create appropriate conditions for maximizing the benefits of these remittances in advancing social and economic development efforts.
6. Emphasize the importance of remittances in promoting development, knowing that it is not the main source of development funding, and not an alternative for international development aid, since these remittances fluctuate and neither them nor their impact on fighting poverty can be measured.
7. Being aware of the importance of social cohesion in achieving development, we affirm that this cohesion can be achieved through encouraging policies that lead to the safeguarding of cultural diversity and integration and work on the engagement for all, in pursuance with the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, since bridging the gap between the different cultures is essential and instant for peace, stability, and development.
8. Develop policies to utilize the Arab expatriate competencies as they are considered an intellectual property for countries of origin, through, inter alia, creating strong communication networks between migrants and their countries of origin, removing barriers to circular migration, and developing human capital in countries of origin.
9. Encourage the initiatives taken by countries and international and regional organizations to communicate with expatriate communities in order to strengthen the development efforts in countries of origin, as well as the individual initiatives that migrants take to benefit their countries of origin in different fields.

Fifth: Smuggling of Migrants, Trafficking in Persons and Contemporary Forms of Slavery:

1. Support combating irregular migration, migrant smuggling, and human trafficking, and the protection against organized crime networks, which range from migrant smuggling to human trafficking and terrorist activities, through raising awareness of its dangers and enacting the necessary laws and enforcing them.

² In implementation of Addis Ababa Action Agenda issued by the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Resolution of the UNGA No. 313/69 issued during the 69th session on 27/7/2015).

2. Call upon the international community to provide the needed support to build the capacity of the personnel of the national law enforcement bodies and relevant institutions, and provide programmes and equipment to reinforce border control capacities in the field of human trafficking.
3. Expand the role of the educational and media institutions in raising awareness on the danger of migrant smuggling and human trafficking, their various dimensions and impacts.

Sixth: Irregular Migration and Regular Pathways:

1. Emphasize the importance of increasing legal migration pathways and providing opportunities for safe, orderly, and regular migration, which can reduce the push factors of irregular migration.
2. Provide pathways for regular migration and legal entry to the countries of destination through:
 - a. Provide information on the conditions of entry, residence, and work and other relevant information;
 - b. Increase scholarships and opportunities for technical and vocational trainings;
 - c. Increase the opportunities of circular, temporary, and seasonal migration;
 - d. Facilitate the procedures to get entry and residence visas for different reasons (education, scientific research, culture, training, ...etc.) pursuant to the national laws and regulations;
 - e. Facilitate family reunions.
3. Reduce labour recruitment fees and regulate the activities of the agencies recruiting abroad to ensure the conclusion of legal and documented employment contracts, and to provide suitable working conditions for migrants in pursuance with fair recruitment principles.
4. Establish unified service points to provide pre-employment training and qualification services, to acknowledge academic certificates and equivalencies, and to facilitate travel arrangements.
5. Emphasize the necessity of linking short term policies that determine means of combating irregular migration with long term development approaches that address the root causes of the flows of irregular migration by re-affirming the correlation between migration and development, especially since the security approach is not enough to address the root causes of the problem.