

STATEMENT

By the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

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**Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to thank UNESCAP for organizing this important event and bringing us together here in Bangkok. It is a pleasure and an honor to be part of such a distinguished audience and participate in discussions.

Azerbaijan's social and economic development, realization of international energy and transport projects, as well as booming tourism due to facilitation of visa requirements has intensified migration processes in my country in recent years. The number of foreigners arriving in Azerbaijan has considerably increased and as such, Azerbaijan became not only the country of origin, but also the country of transit and destination and all these developments created an urgent need to take effective measures to manage migration processes.

Azerbaijan has already taken and continues to take steps to regulate migration processes through flexible procedures and facilitation of documentation. Thus, since 2009 "one window" principle has been implemented in migration management and the State Migration Service has been designated as a leading agency to carry out migration policies.

Azerbaijan adopted its Migration Code in 2013 to bring its national legislation in line with international standards and this Code has considerably facilitated migration procedures. We observe quite large interest from foreign countries to Azerbaijan's experience in this area and we stand ready to share this experience. We have also established Centralized Migration Database System to keep registration of foreigners and stateless persons in Azerbaijan.

We also enjoy close cooperation with international organizations, such as IOM, UNHCR and EU on migration management and we appreciate these organizations' efforts directed at improving migration management in our country. We also continue to work on bilateral and multilateral agreements with our partners to protect the rights of migrants and we remain open to such cooperation. Thus, with this experience and commitment to national migration management, the Government of Azerbaijan continues to engage in global migration governance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is only through international cooperation that the challenges of migration can be effectively managed. Azerbaijan strongly supports the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and

Migrants and the subsequent developments for the establishment of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. These processes are fundamental steps of international cooperation for the management of large movements of people, including the forcibly displaced ones and Azerbaijan is ready to play its part for their adoption in 2018.

As i said, from the very beginning, the Government of Azerbaijan has been strongly committed to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. We partnered with IOM Azerbaijan to organize a total of six one-day consultation sessions on the Global Compact in June and July 2017. The national consultations had the participation of a wide range of state agencies, academia, civil society, and media. The goal of the consultations was to sensitize all stakeholders about the Global Compact process, and capture and document recommendations for the Government of Azerbaijan to deliver at the GCM Global Meeting in December 2017. The National consultations in Azerbaijan were planned and conducted ensuring that recommendations to be presented to the GCM process would be compatible with IOM Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) and migration related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The series will also contribute to IOM and State Migration Service joint efforts of drafting a Migration Management Strategy for Azerbaijan.

Hence, Azerbaijan is among the first countries in the world that has undertaken such a, comprehensive and inclusive process, demonstrating a deep understanding of the relevance of migration in the 21st century.

The recommendations developed in Azerbaijan have already been submitted to the relevant UN bodies. This is a long list of recommendations, encompassing different areas, such as protecting migrants in crisis, migration and climate change, migrants' health, migration management practices and policies, migrants' rights, human trafficking and migrant smuggling. I can't enlist all of the recommendations due to the time constraints, however, i would like to name just 3 areas which we deem very important to add to the Draft Global Compact in addition to those areas which are already contained in the Annex of the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants. The first one is the support to the solution of problems of internally displaced people, including support to their right to return home voluntarily in safety and dignity. Azerbaijan considers it of vital importance that the Global Compact addresses the issue of the rights of IDPs and reflects our commitment to support this extremely vulnerable group of people. Azerbaijan sensitivities towards this issue is understandable. We have almost 1 million IDPs forced to flee their homes due to the conflict with neighbouring Armenia. More than that, UNHCR reported that the total number of IDPs has reached 41 million all over the world, the highest figure on record. As such, Azerbaijan fully supports all efforts to raise the visibility to the sufferings of IDPs. The references to IDPs in the 2030 Agenda, the goal set by the Agenda for Humanity to reduce internal displacement by at least 50 per cent by 2030 as well as the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which notes the need for reflection on effective strategies to ensure adequate protection and assistance for IDPs and to prevent and reduce such displacement, certainly, are right steps, but clearly not sufficient. The grave situation of millions of IDPs requires renewed attention, rethinking of approaches to prevention, addressing the root causes as

well as concerted action at all levels. That is why we want the draft Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to address the issue of internally displaced persons as well.

Two other recommendations are protection of migrants' health; and support to countries of origin in eliminating root-causes of illegal migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

With the mentioned recommendations Azerbaijan wants to bring a comprehensive contribution to developing robust consensus on GCM and achieving stakeholders' ownership of the final outcome. They are a testament to our Government's commitment to multilateral solutions for similar challenges around migration governance. The Government of Azerbaijan will continue its commitments to the global processes in governing migration with a respect to the international law and close collaboration with the international community.

I look forward to fruitful discussions and wish every success to the work of the Meeting.

Thank you.