

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Agenda Item 2: Review of migration policies and programmes and their impact on facilitating safe, orderly and regular development

6 November 2017, Bangkok

Statement by the Republic of Korea

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The number of people living outside their country of origin has reached 244 million in 2015. International migration is becoming ever more commonplace in today's interconnected world. To address this issue with planned and well-managed policies and consequently achieve Goal 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, states should cooperate and endeavor to build a good governance of migration, as properly recommended by the Sutherland report in February 2017.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea welcomes the launch of the consultations to establish the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), and is committed to make positive contributions to the process. My government also welcomes the discussion on GCM among Asia-Pacific countries, considering the importance of social and cultural factors to the international migration in the region.

Mr. Chair,

Protecting migrants in vulnerable situations and promoting their human rights have always been a key priority for my government's migration policies. The Republic of Korea introduced an article in its Immigration Control Act to oblige the authorities to provide special protection for migrants including pregnant women, older persons, children, adolescents, and those that have diseases. Accordingly, my government provides protection to migrant women and children who are the victims of violence, while assisting primary and secondary education to school-aged migrants regardless of their parents' immigration status. The government is also providing medical care to migrants who are not covered by existing health care systems to ensure their fundamental right to health.

The Korean government is also committed to addressing root causes of irregular migration, including underdevelopment and conflict. The Korean government has constantly expanded its official development assistance (ODA), and launched Global Disease Eradication Fund to support the prevention and eradication of infectious diseases in developing countries. Furthermore, as chair of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), my government is putting in efforts to mainstream sustaining peace in the UN system and promoting participation in peacebuilding process of people in vulnerable situations such as women and youth.

To facilitate regular migration and discourage the use of irregular pathways, well-managed migration governance on border crossing, transit, entry, return and reintegration is important. In particular, we reaffirm that the return of migrants must be consistent with the states' obligation under international human rights instruments including the principle of non-refoulement.

Finally, my government believes that promoting link between migration and development is crucial. Facilitating remittances of migrants, enhancing international cooperation on labor market gaps, and tapping diasporas' resources and potential are relevant measures to be taken in this regard.

Mr. Chair,

We would like to point out the importance of a disaggregated long-term data focusing on the impact of migration. Detailed long-term data on migration's impact help governments design more sophisticated policies and facilitate substantial cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination. Furthermore, it helps to enhance public awareness on migration and counter discrimination and xenophobia. We expect more cooperation to be promoted in this area.

On a final note, my delegation commends the UN ESCAP for its work on this timely and relevant meeting and reaffirms our continued cooperation and support.

Thank you. /END/