



League of Arab States
General Secretariat
Social Sector
Refugees, Expatriates
& Migration Affairs Dept.

**The General Secretariat of the League of Arab States’
Statement on the Occasion of
"Arab Expatriate’s Day"
2021**

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In the framework of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (LAS) celebration of the Arab Expatriate’s Day on the 4th of December, LAS emphasizes the significance of the issue of migration, not only to the Arab region, but to the whole world. Migration has emerged strongly again this year as a crisis and a pressing issue for many countries, with insufficient highlight on the opportunities that migration offers to countries, societies and individuals. Hence, it is important to look at migration as a benefit for all, as well-managed migration can contribute to the comprehensive and sustainable development in countries of origin and countries of destination.

LAS considers the Arab skilled migrants as valuable national resources that must be taken care of, supported and given a distinguished position, and benefit from their expertise and distinction to overcome the crises that many countries in the region suffer from and achieve the desired development. Migrants have played significant role on the front lines to respond to Covid-19 pandemic, starting from providing care for the sick and the elderly, to ensuring food supply during the closure procedures, despite the new challenges faced by migrants and refugees during the past two years due to this pandemic, which affected the livelihoods of millions of migrants, refugees and their families.

The scene was further complicated by the successive events after the Taliban took control of the Afghan capital (Kabul) last August, and recently, the crisis of migrants and refugees stranded at the Belarus-Poland borders in November. Thus, LAS emphasizes the need to respect human rights and human dignity of all migrants and refugees, regardless of their legal status, in line with the obligations of states according to international law, treaties and charters, and the principles of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, the 1951 Refugee Convention, and finally the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

LAS commends the efforts of United Nations agencies and organizations working in the humanitarian field in their quest to deliver humanitarian aid to migrants and refugees in need. It stresses that the issue of migration must be resolved by agreement between the concerned countries in a manner that considers the interests of all parties, and reflects what was stated in the GCM as no State can address migration alone due to the inherently transnational nature of the phenomenon. This demonstrates the need for a comprehensive



approach to maximize the benefits of migration, while addressing the risks and challenges faced by individuals and societies in countries of origin, transit and destination.

H.E. Ambassador Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary General Head of Social Affairs Sector, affirmed LAS keenness to follow up on the GCM implementation in the Arab region. LAS, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) and in cooperation with the Regional United Nations Network on Migration in the Arab Region, organized “The Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region” in February 2021. LAS is also working with partners on conducting the regional review report based on the national voluntary reports of Member States, which will be submitted to the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) to be held from 10-13 May 2022. In addition to its two-year efforts as the secretariat of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP), which will be concluded by the 8th ARCP meeting to be held in the first quarter of 2022, planned to be dedicated to presenting the efforts and updates on the GCM.

LAS seizes this opportunity to express its aspiration for active Arab participation in the first IMRF, and look forward to listening to the Member States voluntary national statements, as a conclusion of all previous efforts in this regard, and shedding the light on the priorities of the Arab countries and the challenges they face before the largest international forum concerned with this issue, in the framework of its keenness to achieve peace, security and stability for Countries, societies and migrants.