



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

**The General Secretariat of the League of Arab States’
Declaration on the Occasion of
"Arab Expatriates’ Day"
2017**

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In recognition of the important and effective role played by Arab expatriates in countries of destination, and in appreciation of their efforts to preserve their national identity and at the same time find means of cultural and civilizational communication with their new communities. And on the basis of the resolutions issued by the League of Arab States (LAS) Council at the ministerial level; No. 6454 dated 14/9/2004 and No. 7411 dated 13/9/2011, LAS celebrates the Arab Expatriates’ Day every year on the fourth of December.

In the framework of the attention given by LAS to the issue of migration and expatriates, and in response to the recent events in the Arab region which have led to increased migration and asylum among countries in the region as well as from the region abroad, and being aware of the importance of coordination at different levels, LAS General Secretariat has established new mechanisms to help coordination among Arab Member States as well as with international and regional organizations working in the field of migration in the region. The most prominent of these mechanisms was the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP) which, since its establishment in 2014, has exerted considerable efforts on various topics related to migration. It came out with a joint Arab position on the High-Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants held by the United Nations General Assembly on the sidelines of its 71st ordinary session in September 2016. ARCP also issued two separate documents containing the key messages that need to be taken into consideration in developing the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The ARCP continues its work to encourage States to participate actively in the governmental consultations and negotiations leading to the adoption of these two Global Compacts in 2018.

The Arab region is currently in dire need of the efforts of its citizens residing in the region and abroad. At this point, it is worth noting the intensive attention paid by Arab expatriates to participate in the development process in the Arab



region to support their home countries and help them to cross the stage and bring development and renaissance in various fields. We in the League of Arab States commend these initiatives and emphasize the importance of organizing and disseminating these efforts to maximize their benefits in the favor of the Arab region through coordination with Arab Member States.

In this framework, the Arab States continue to seek to integrate migration into national development plans and to involve Arab competencies and institutions abroad in the development process in the region through the transfer of their expertise, the development of partnerships and networking with their counterparts and help them obtain better information on employment opportunities and investment in the region, benefiting from modern means of communication and technology to achieve these targets. LAS General Secretariat is working to raise the awareness of the Member States' concerned officials on how to implement this through the capacity building programs directed to them. It also stresses the importance of encouraging initiatives by countries and international and regional organizations in reaching out to expatriate communities in order to promote development efforts in countries of origin, as well as individual initiatives by migrants themselves in order to benefit their countries of origin in various fields. It supports the United Nations' Campaign "Together: Respect for Safety and Dignity for All" to counter misinformation and misconceptions about refugees and migrants, and it highlights the significant role played by Arab States in this campaign. LAS General Secretariat also pays special attention to supporting expatriates in the communities in which they migrate or work, so that they can play a positive role that benefits their new communities as well as their home countries.

On this occasion, LAS General Secretariat invites Arab communities abroad to hold events celebrating their cultural and civilizational heritage, and to affirm their cohesion, unity and pride of their origins and roots, and to highlight their positive role in the countries of destination and in their countries of origin.