



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 Expatriate’s Day"
2018**

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The fourth of December of every year marks an important date in which the League of Arab States (LAS) celebrates the "Arab Expatriate’s Day". LAS Council at the Ministerial level issued two resolutions in this regard; No. 6454 dated 14/9/2004 and No. 7411 dated 13/9/2011. This indicates the great interest given by LAS to the Arab expatriates living abroad, and considered as an acknowledgment of the important and effective role they play both in their countries of origin and countries of destination.

Since the beginning of this decade, the region has witnessed major challenges that have resulted in unprecedented flows of refugees and migrants from their countries of origin. These crises have placed a great burden on the Arab countries, which showed impressive solidarity and generosity, with huge burden on different economic, social and political aspects of life. These crises have also cast a shadow over neighboring regions, which made this issue one of the most important discussed on the global arena. This was reflected in the inclusion of migration related targets in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, besides its general goal of "ensuring that no one is left behind". The United Nations General Assembly also held a High-Level Meeting on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants on the sidelines of its seventy-first ordinary session in September 2016, which issued the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and within few days the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees will be adopted.

LAS played an important role in unifying the Arab position, presenting it to international forums and urged Member States to participate actively in these events and in consultations and negotiations on the two global compacts. In 2014, LAS established the *Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP)* according to a resolution by LAS council at the ministerial level, which provided a platform for Member States to discuss the challenges facing the Arab region as well as related issues on the global level. It also provided technical support to Member States, helped in coordinating Arab positions and adopting a unified Arab position sent to the relevant UN bodies.



Through the ARCP as well as other mechanisms established to develop the work in the field of migration and refugee affairs in cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations, LAS will follow up with its Member States on the progress of implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the two Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees, and will provide them with the necessary technical support in this regard.

This month (December 2018) is well deserved to be called *the migration month*, as we celebrate the Arab Expatriate's Day (4 December), the International Migrants Day (18 December), besides convening the 11th Global Forum on Migration and Development (5-7 December), and the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, Regular Migration (10-11 December), both in the Arab region, namely in the Kingdom of Morocco. This month will also witness the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees.

On this occasion, LAS General Secretariat invites Arab communities abroad to hold events during this month to celebrate their cultural and civilizational heritage, reflect the right image of Arabs, spread knowledge on Arab civilization and raise awareness on the positive role of Arab expatriates who had, since the beginning of their migration, significant contributions to the development of their countries of destination in various economic, social, political, cultural, scientific, technical and sports fields. Arab Expatriates have always been keen to communicate with their countries of origin, and recently we have witnessed great interest from Arab competences abroad to participate in the development process in the Arab region, through transferring their expertise or investing in their countries of origin. We in the League of Arab States intend to continue working with Member States on mainstreaming migration into development plans at the national and regional levels, aiming at the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the implementation of the commitments of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, as well as the Global Compact for Safe, orderly and regular migration.