



League of Arab States
General Secretariat
Social Sector
Population Policies,
Expatriates & Migration Dept.

***International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) 2016
Assessing progress in the implementation of the
migration-related SDGs
11-12 Oct-2016***

SESSION 3. Rethinking partnership frameworks for achieving the migration-related targets

**League of Arab States Presentation on:
LAS Partnerships for achieving migration-related SDGs**

**Enas El Fergany
Director of Population Policies,
Expatriates and Migration Department,
League of Arab States**

Ms. Laura Thompson, Deputy Director General, International Organization for Migration (IOM),

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the onset allow me to congratulate the IOM for being a related organization of the United Nations and thank them for organizing and hosting the 6th Global RCPs meeting this year on the occasion of IOM 65th anniversary.

It is a great honour to participate with you today representing the League of Arab States, and will seize this opportunity to highlight LAS mechanisms of cooperation in the field of migration.

LAS has always been the platform for dialogue and cooperation between the Arab countries on issues related to migration and human mobility within the region, and with sending and receiving regions as well. A lot of meetings were held on different levels (ministerial, high-level officials and experts meetings) to discuss issues of migration and Arab expatriates.

Over the previous decades, LAS has built cooperation with various organizations related in a way or another to migration. It has a strong base of partnerships with different levels of commitment and continuity. The Afro Arab summit, the Summit of South American-Arab Countries and the European Union Arab League foreign affairs ministerial meetings are examples of the established mechanisms of cooperation with other regions. The Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) of the Arab States between LAS and the UN and their specialized agencies was also established in 1999.

A number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed with many international and regional organizations like the ILO in 1958, the IOM in 2000, the UNHCR in 2000. Many activities and projects were implemented in the framework of these agreements.

After the uprisings in a number of Arab countries, triggering huge refugee and migration flows, there was an urgency to develop more mechanisms of cooperation at both regional and international level to promote dialogue and ensure effective response and action among LAS Member States, related international agencies and institutions working in the region and external receiving and sending regions.

In this framework, LAS established the **Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration (ARCP)** according to a resolution issued by Arab League Council at ministerial level in 2014, as a State-driven, non-binding, flexible and informal forum to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between its member States on migration issues. The ARCP was officially launched during the “Fifth Global Meeting for Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration” hosted by LAS at its headquarters and organized in collaboration with IOM in October 2015. The ARCP endorsed its strategy and its 2016-2017 work plan, where the migration related SDG targets are reflected in both documents.

The **Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region** is another mechanism to cooperate with international organizations working in the Arab region in the field of migration, with the aim to ensure a consistent, system-wide message and strategy for migration. It was established in March 2013 and cochaired by LAS, IOM and UN-ESCWA, and with the membership of 13 UN agencies.

The **Africa Arab Technical and Coordination Committee on Migration (TCCM)** co-chaired by the African Union (AU) and LAS was also established according to the resolution adopted by the Africa Arab Summit held in Kuwait in November 2013, to help strengthening their cooperation in migration management, and to promote and protect migrants rights, especially in the provision of sound advice to Member States on issues related to migration in both regions, in conformity with regional and international instruments.

LAS also proposed to establish a **Working Group on International Migration between LAS and the EU** in the framework of the Arab - European strategic dialogue, in order to enhance cooperation between both sides in this field, particularly with the escalating refugee crisis that involves countries in both regions as sending, receiving and transit. The concept note of the working group is planned to be endorsed during the second EU-LAS Strategic Dialogue Meeting on 30 November 2016 at LAS headquarters in Cairo.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

No country will be able to successfully implement the SDGs or can manage migration effectively on its own, and this makes interstate cooperation at both regional and global levels essential. At this stage, building bridges with UN agencies, other regional and international entities and civil society organizations is of great importance. In this framework, LAS, as the secretariat of the ARCP and through its different abovementioned mechanisms will address the migration related targets in the SDGs with its member states in cooperation with its partners.

The ARCP will work as a link between the national level and the global one; inputs and perspectives from the national level should be considered and analyzed at the regional level and feed into the global process. It can also help countries to translate global goals into policies, norms, standards, and guidelines that can be implemented at the national level, as well as mobilize partnerships and cooperation.

The ARCP will play an important role in raising awareness, improving knowledge base on migration related targets, coordinating policies of the Arab countries in the field of migration, providing policy guidance through enhancing regional dialogue, implementing training programs and sharing information, experiences and best practices. The ARCP will focus on supporting the governments of its member states to develop more effective policies for utilizing migration in favor of Arab regional development, integrating expatriates in national development plans and building bridges of dialogue. This role should take into consideration the current crises in the Arab region and joint response to existing challenges should be one of our targets.

In this framework, a **Regional Technical Task Force** was established by LAS, UNFPA and UNESCWA, in coordination with LAS Member States. It comprises experts and representatives from different related bodies including Arab National Statistics Offices in selected countries. The task force organized two meetings where it discussed and reflected on the Arab region SDG agenda and its priorities and the linkage at regional and national levels, A final list of ICPD based SDG indicators reflecting the priorities of the Arab regional has been identified for follow up and review with member

states, a mechanism for reporting every five years at regional and national level has been agreed upon.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We believe that the synergy resulting from collaborations based on good will, common objectives and transparency between different partners both at the regional and international levels is what our region needs to face the complex situation particularly in this exceptional time.

In this framework, LAS is seeking to undertake joint arrangements with relevant international and regional actors, through its mechanisms of cooperation, not only to follow-up on the migration related SDG targets, but also on the outcomes of the High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, as well as the consultations of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to be adopted in 2018.

Thank you for your attention..