

African regional review of the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

31 August to 1 September 2021

Concept note

Background

Adopted at an intergovernmental conference in Morocco in December 2018, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, also known as the Marrakech Compact on Migration, is a cooperative framework for migration governance, by which States have committed to a comprehensive, 360-degree vision for international migration, based on the recognition that no State can address migration alone, and that national migration policies are more likely to succeed through a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach to international cooperation that is grounded in respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The formal endorsement by the United Nations of the Global Compact, in General Assembly resolution 73/195 of 19 December 2018, has favoured a paradigm shift in the approach to migration governance. The human dimension at the core of the instrument advocates strongly for the respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status.

Africa, which contributed actively to the United Nations negotiating process that led to the adoption of the Global Compact, has demonstrated to the world its commitment to the Compact's implementation, through the establishment and operationalization of the African Migration Observatory of the African Union. Proposed by King Mohammed VI of Morocco and endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, the Observatory will contribute to the realization of the first objective of the Global Compact by providing the continent with evidence-based migration policies through data collection, analysis and sharing, among other mandates. The work of the Observatory will help to counter existing negative narratives regarding migration in the African context.

African member States have embraced a State-led approach to the implementation of the Global Compact, within the United Nations framework and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

Consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Agenda on Migration, the Global Compact, through its 23 objectives and associated actions, aims to leverage the potential of migration for the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals. It represents a concrete road map for achieving safe, orderly and regular migration. The Global Compact acknowledges that each State experiences migration differently and affirms each State's sovereign prerogative to set its own migration policies, while respecting its obligations under international law.



African member States are committed to the implementation of the Global Compact at the national, regional and global levels, in cooperation and partnership with all relevant stakeholders, including migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders (see para. 44 of the Global Compact).

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the African Union Commission (AUC) are working together to support the implementation of, follow-up to, and review of the Global Compact in Africa. For a coordinated approach and to effectively support African member States and regional economic communities (RECs), the review of the Global Compact in Africa is being undertaken at the national, subregional and regional (i.e., continental) levels. ECA is guiding the process at the regional/continental level; AUC is guiding the review at the subregional/REC level; and IOM, which is also the coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration, is supporting member States in preparing country reports at the national level.

A summary report on the implementation of the Global Compact in Africa will be presented at a regional review conference that will be hosted by the Government of Morocco on 31 August to 1 September 2021.

Objectives of the African regional review conference

The objectives of the regional review conference are to:

1. Enable governments and stakeholders to take stock of progress in implementing the Global Compact;
2. Provide an opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities, identify gaps, discuss regional priorities and determine resource requirements for implementing the Compact;
3. Provide a platform for interaction among all relevant stakeholders, the exchange of lessons learned and good practices, and the promotion of peer learning within the region, to contribute to the review of the Compact;
4. Formulate key findings and recommendations that will constitute Africa's contribution to the International Migration Review Forum.

Date and venue of the regional review conference

The regional review conference will be hosted by the Government of Morocco and will be held in a hybrid format on 31 August to 1 September 2021.

Structure of the consultations

In engaging the stakeholders, the United Nations Network on Migration will aim to ensure balance in relation to thematic and geographic representation, scope of mandate, and gender.

The consultations, which will be held online, will use the same template for the concept note and programme to ensure consistency.

All sessions of the consultations will be conducted in plenary so as to promote lively and interactive discussion.

Expected output

A summary report with salient recommendations will be produced following each consultation that will capture the key issues raised and the proposed solutions. The summary will feed into the preparation of a continental report that will constitute Africa's input to the International Migration Review Forum.

Organization

To facilitate the contribution of the African regional review conference to the International Migration Review Forum, the structure of the conference will mirror that of the Review Forum. In particular:

1. The review meeting will cover all 23 objectives in the Global Compact, to be addressed during four thematic round table discussions, while considering regional specificities and priorities, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Due regard will be paid to geographic, demographic and gender balance, reflecting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, in the selection of keynote speakers, panellists and moderators;
3. The modalities will allow for the meaningful participation of civil society and relevant stakeholders, and of appropriate subregional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations;
4. Discussions at the meeting will be interactive, evidence-based and action-oriented, and will include a policy debate focusing on regional challenges in the implementation of the Global Compact, and address international human rights norms, the 2030 Agenda and other regional frameworks, capacity-building mechanisms, and contemporary and emerging issues related to the migration dynamics of the region.

Documentation and the language of the conference

The documentation of the regional review conference will comprise publications, reports and materials related to the four thematic areas. They will be made available on the web site to be created for the regional review.

The working languages of the consultations will be English and French. Interpretation into both languages will be provided. All documents tabled during the consultations will be made available in both languages.