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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P.O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/ Ext 2558

Website: www.au.int

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release

AU Member States call for intensive efforts to foster dialogue and mutual cooperation among regions of Africa to manage Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Lusaka, Zambia, June 18, 2019: Member States of the African Union and the regional economic communities (RECs) meeting to validate the Draft Implementation Plan of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Africa started on June 18th June in Lusaka, Zambia.

The meeting is organized by the Department of Social Affairs at the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the Republic of Zambia. UN Agencies including United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), International Organization for Migration (IOM), The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and International Labour Organization (ILO) are also in attendance.

The main objective of this meeting is to consider the draft plan of action on the implementation of the GCM in Africa. The specific objectives are to:

- a) Provide an opportunity for AU Member States, RECs and other participants to be updated on the implementation of the GCM at the international level.
- b) Present the draft plan of action for consideration by Member States and RECs for their validation in order to guide the implementation of the GCM in Africa for the next 3 years;
- c) Provide an opportunity for participants to identify capacity building priorities, based on the continental priorities for technical support and joint resource mobilization;
- d) Discuss and agree on the continental, regional and national coordination, reporting and follow up mechanism of the GCM.

Furthermore, the meeting's anticipated outcomes will be the following:

- a) A validated revised draft Plan of Action with inputs from participants for presentation to the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Migration, Refugees and IDPs later this year;
- b) A clear roadmap on the follow up and review mechanism of the GCM in Africa;
- c) Agreed priorities for resource mobilization to effectively build the capacity of AU Member States and RECs to implement the GCM.

During the two-day meeting, participants will be taken through proposed activities based on the GCM commitments and continental priorities that will put in place mechanisms to enhance improvement and investment in the collection and use of accurate data and promote research in migration areas for their deliberations and validation. They will also deliberate on the challenges of border management and prevention of irregular migration on the continent.

In his welcoming remarks during the opening ceremony, Dr. Chileshe Mulenga, Permanent Secretary ISD said that the government of Zambia is happy to express satisfaction and will spare no efforts to make the meeting successful. Dr. Chileshe Mulenga encouraged the meeting to come up with strong recommendations that contribute to the continental, regional and national coordination, reporting and follow up mechanism on the GCM.

Mr. Sabelo Mbokazi, the Head of Labour, Employment and Migration Division in the Department of Social Affairs emphasized that “The Migration Policy Framework for Africa comprehensively brings together the African aspirations and thoughts about migration and mobility. It provides robust guidance on migration governance in Africa.” He further added “emanating from the research reports, the AU has established African Migration Facts and Figures. For instance it is an established fact that a total of 80% of Africa migrants move within the continent and this is in contrast to the small number of African migrants that move abroad to Europe, the Gulf States, Asia and the Americas”.

Mr. Mbokazi briefed the participants mainly from AU member states and RECs about the AU’s involvement in the Global Compact for Migration and its pivotal role in the conceptualization and shaping of the GCM. The development of a Common African Position was used to advance and integrate the aspirations of Africa into the final Global Compact dossier.

He concluded by saying that AU has taken the conscious decision of playing a prominent role in the implementation of the GCM in cooperation with all stakeholders to enhance migration governance on the continent.

Speakers during the opening ceremony emphasized the need for concerted efforts to foster dialogue and mutual cooperation between and among regions of Africa in order to manage these movements in an orderly manner.

Ms. Marianne Lane, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Zambia Chief of Mission noted that much attention is placed on irregular migration and we must put in place strategies to address these challenges. However, a substantial portion of migratory movements are undertaken in a regular fashion, with significant contributions to social, cultural and economic development of countries of origin, transit and destination. “The potential for harnessing such development possibilities within Africa cannot be underestimated,” she said.

Representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) in their opening remarks said that the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is a “non-legally binding” framework that fosters international cooperation among all relevant actors working on migration. They further added that the GCM aligns with the AU Revised Migration Policy Framework and carries forward the priority actions of the AU Employment Creation, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development Declaration and Plan of Action (2018-2023).

Participants at the meeting are from the African Union Commission; senior officials in charge of migration, labour and national statistics in government departments and agencies of the AU Member States, relevant continental workers unions, civil societies, and academia, among others.

For information related to the meeting please contact:

Mr. Geoffrey Wafula Kundu | Program Coordinator (Migration), Social Affairs Department, African Union Commission | E- mail: GeoffreyK@africa-union.org

For media inquiries, please contact:

Mr. Gamal Ahmed A. Karrar | Communications Officer, Directorate of Information and Communication, African Union Commission | E- mail: GamalK@africa-union.org

For further information: Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@africa-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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