

**Statement by H.E Amira Elfadil, Commissioner for Social Affairs,  
African Union Commission on the occasion of the International  
Labour Day, 18 December 2018**

Commemoration of International Migrants Day brings to bear a tapestry of elements that shape the global migratory discourse that has come to be one of the highly contentious and contested global agenda and subject of intergovernmental debate. Congruently, the African Union (AU) Migration Policy Framework recognizes that migration will be a major topic in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The African Union subscribes to the universal principles safe, orderly and regular as well as shared responsibility and global solidarity in migration. The nexus between migration and development will be showcased best by the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), will boost intra-African trade and promote economic growth in Africa. In 2018, Africa moved closer to the vision of being an integrated continent, the African leaders adopted the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in Africa.

The discourse on the migration and its associated developmental policy issues is arguably one the upper most topical issue across the globe. The geopolitics, trade and cultural exchange are interwoven with migration, and provides tremendous opportunities for states, businesses and communities to explore. This is epitomized the recent specter on the perilous Libya-Mediterranean path. The African Union Commission, on behalf of Africa is seized with this matter in order to provide durable solutions and sustainable reintegration. Thus the AU-EU-UN Tripartite was established as novel approach to vigorously combat the migratory challenges in Libya and transit nation states. The coordination and collaborative efforts of the tripartite Task Force comprising of the AU-EU-UN to resolve the situation in Libya has cumulated since November 2017 into the facilitated return or resettlement and evacuation of 20,138 migrants and refugees to their origin countries and other countries respectively. This figure includes 1,334 persons that the UNHCR evacuated from Libya to Niger in order to fast-track the processing of their resettlement claim. Engagements with the Libyan authorities have resulted in the dismantling of 24 detention centers.

On the margins of the Global Compact in the Kingdom of Morocco represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hon. Nasser Bourita and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat co-signed host agreement for Africa Observatory of Migration to facilitate concerted effort for migration policy research, data generation and exchange of strategic information. The African Union Commission cannot stress enough the importance of partnerships, international cooperation, and governance for coordinated and concerted migration management. This will further incentivize the regular migration channels, reduction of barriers and severe restrictions on visa arrangements, conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements in favour of students exchange programmes, circular migration and entrepreneurship initiatives and promote labour mobility

The year 2018 shall go down as the momentous period for highlighting migration management in Africa. The Valletta Summit on migration and Global Compact for migration took place in 2018, Ethiopia and Morocco respectively. This symbolizes acknowledgement by the international community that migration is a global issue, no individual state or continent can succeed if their working alone. It is in this context that the AUC firmly believes that the African approaches to migration should incorporate a global vision with clear understanding of the multidimensional exigencies associated with migration.

“Unless, African countries place high priority to addressing the root causes of migration by meeting the communities’ demographic transition, supporting the demographic dividend, promoting the inclusive and sustainable economic development and responding to the impact of climate change, the irregular migration will remain an African vexing challenge”, said H.E. Mrs. Amira Elfadil, the Commissioner for Social Affairs of the African Union Commission. We have an opportunity to expand safe channels for regular migration, including for family reunification, labour mobility at all skill levels, greater resettlement opportunities, and education opportunities for children and adults.

African Agenda for Migration should be the fulcrum of the common African position on migration. Africa owes to its citizenry to dispel prejudices against migrants and to raise awareness and build public opinion on migrants’ contributions in the economic, social and cultural spheres. The Agenda 2063, in its aspiration No. 6 addresses questions related to mobility of youth, expressing the wish to see an Africa, “whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially women and youth, and caring for its children”.

Like never before, AU Commission in collaboration with the AU nation states is spearheading an Africa Agenda on Migration that is meant to be Africa-centred, humanistic, aims to turning migration into a lever for co-development, launching pad for economic spin-offs, a pillar of South-South cooperation and vector of solidarity at continental and global levels.