



حوار أبوظبي بين الدول الآسيوية المرسلية والمستقبلة للعمالة  
Abu Dhabi Dialogue among the Asian Labor-Sending and Receiving Countries

# Joint Communiqué

Abu Dhabi Dialogue Senior Officials' Meeting  
Colombo, Sri Lanka: 09 May 2018

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We, the Senior Officials and Heads of Delegations from the ADD Member States of Bahrain, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam;

met in the presence of Observer Government Delegations from Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Switzerland;

and Observer Delegations from participating International Organisations, the International Organisation for Migration, the International Labour Organisation, the International Organisation of Employers, World Bank, UN Women and the Bali Process;

and civil society organizations – including Dubai Foundation for Women and Children, and the Migrant Forum Network and partner organizations – and a number of private sector organizations

to participate in the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 08 – 09 May 2018.

After the presentation of the Chair's Report, which updated participants on activities undertaken under the umbrella of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue since the 4<sup>th</sup> Senior Ministerial Meeting, in Colombo in January 2017;

taking into particular account the participation of the Chair and Permanent Secretariat in the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), and the drafting of the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration (GCM);

subsequent to discussion regarding proposed dates for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;



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and following a presentation of the new Abu Dhabi Dialogue website by the Permanent Secretariat of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue;

consideration was given to the progress that has been achieved in undertaking bilateral and multilateral initiatives of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, which included:

- a discussion led by the International Organisation for Migration on progress in implementing Phase II of the Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme, which pairs Member States, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates, the Philippines and Sri Lanka;
- a presentation by the UAE Government of a prototype online platform to pilot, with the Government of the Philippines, a programme to strengthen joint government oversight over recruitment practices; in addition to a presentation of the electronic platforms of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – including Musaned and Thawtheeq – for cooperating on recruitment with labour sending Member States of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue;
- an outline of the outcomes and results of the first phase of a pilot project on skilling, presented by the Head of the pilot's Scientific Committee, focused on the skilling of Indian workers destined for the UAE; as well as the second phase, based on cooperation between the governments of Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates; in addition to an outline of the congruence of interests required in order to implement a harmonised skills ecosystem in the Asia-GCC corridors;
- a report on the outcomes of a study on the future of domestic work in the context of the care economy in the GCC, and the UAE in particular, undertaken by IDWFED.

Based on the discussions of Member States and Observers over the course of the two days of the Senior Officials' Meeting, we:

- 1) express our thanks to the Government of Sri Lanka as Chair-in-Office, and the Government of the United Arab Emirates as Permanent Secretariat of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, for their efforts in coordinating activities undertaken under the umbrella of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue;



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- 2) welcome the participation of the African States of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, and representation from the Bali Process, in an observer capacity for the first time in an Abu Dhabi Dialogue Senior Officials' Meeting;
- 3) have agreed to propose to our Ministers that the next Senior Officials' Meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue be held during the week beginning 28 January 2019;
- 4) direct the Permanent Secretariat to coordinate with Member States to finalise the appointment of the next Chair-in-Office, who will host the next Senior Officials' Meeting and the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;
- 5) direct the Secretariat to share the draft agenda for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation with Member States once the next Chair has been identified;
- 6) express our joint commitment to sustain and further develop our bilateral and multilateral cooperation along the four work streams:
  - A) Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programming:
    - i) we extend our thanks to the governments of Switzerland and the UAE for funding the next stage of the project, including mapping and development of a governing framework, post arrival guide, and train-the-trainer programming for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates, the Philippines and Sri Lanka;
    - ii) we advise that steps be taken to expand the scope of the project, to ensure that information provided to workers includes advice on the social and financial implications of their decision to travel abroad for work, in order to enable them to make better informed decisions;
    - iii) we request that the project outcomes be presented to the next Senior Officials' Meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;
  - B) Strengthening Joint COO and COD Government Oversight and Monitoring of Recruitment Practices:



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- i) we propose that the recruitment platforms presented by the governments of the UAE and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia incorporate a mechanism for the promotion of early interaction between employer and employee, to improve transparency;
- ii) we request that thought be given to Civil Society being enabled to contribute to the realisation of the desired outcomes of the recruitment platform;
- iii) we recommend that the recruitment platform design takes into account the importance placed by employers on ensuring that the platform does not cause undue delay in the recruiting process;
- iv) we advise that incentives be identified that may encourage all stakeholders to make use of the recruitment platform;
- v) we suggest that any future efforts in the certification of recruitment agencies be guided by IOM's IRIS scheme;
- vi) we recommend that the further development, roll out and evaluation of the platform continue to be guided by the ILO's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment;
- vii) we advise that the platform be designed in such a way that it produces statistical information that is of benefit in developing labour market policies, including improving the participation of women in the workforce;
- viii) we recommend that the platform enables stakeholders to assess and provide feedback on the extent to which it improves transparency and recruitment efficiency;

#### C) Certification and Mutual Recognition of Skills:

- i) we extend our thanks to the Scientific Committee under the guidance of New York University Abu Dhabi for their oversight over the pilot projects on the benefits of training and certification, and request that further findings on Phases I and II of the pilot project be presented to the next Senior Officials' Meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;



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- ii) we welcome suggestions from delegations for additional variables to be included in Phase II of the pilot project on the benefits of training and certification;
- iii) we extend our congratulations to the Government of India on their current programme of investing in skilling and certification for overseas foreign workers;
- iv) we note that requirements for skilling must not translate into additional costs to workers, and commit to exploring mechanisms to mitigate such risks;
- v) we recommend that further studies be undertaken to understand the skills requirements of employers in countries of destination, to ensure that skilling and certification programmes in countries of origin render optimal benefits to potential migrants;

#### D) The Future of Domestic Work in the Gulf:

- i) we extend our thanks to IDWF for the in-depth study undertaken into the Future of Domestic Work in the Gulf;
- ii) we recommend that domestic worker competency standards be developed by countries of destination to inform the training of domestic workers in countries of origin;

we further recommend that all interested stakeholders be enabled to contribute to the progress of work along these four thematic work streams;

- 7) welcome the suggestion made by the Kenyan Delegation that a representative from the ADD Permanent Secretariat attend a symposium in Nairobi on July 10, 11 and 12 on labour mobility in African countries;
- 8) take note of and welcome the India-UAE partnership on skills, which aims to create a fully harmonised skills ecosystem between the two Member States, based on an alignment of interests, and request that the two governments report back on progress to the next Senior Officials' Meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation in January 2019.