**9 July 2018**

**Draft Statement by Comoros on behalf of the African Group at the 6th Round of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**

***Co-Facilitators,***

I would like to start by thanking the Co-Facilitators for the revised draft text. The African Group would like to commend once again, the Co-Facilitators and your teams for the excellent work you have done in reflecting the various points raised by delegations in previous rounds of negotiations and for providing us with the draft Rev.3 The African Group would like to assure you of our full support and collaboration and our readiness to continue our constructive engagement with you and all delegations during this last round of our negotiations.

***Co-Facilitators,***

The Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular Migration is a historical opportunity for the international community to set up a global migration governance guided by the principles of solidarity, shared responsibility, human rights and partnership, and react decisively, manage collectively and responsibly migratory issues in a holistic manner, taking into account its complex nature and the need for new dynamics.

Throughout the course of negotiations, the position of the African Group has been informed by the following elements:

 \*the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration should build upon the New York Declaration on Migration and Development and should be consistent with other existing migration related framework documents.

\*The GCM must reaffirm and catalyze the achievement of the sustainable development Goals contained in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and address the roots causes of migration movements, strengthening development-oriented solutions and international cooperation so that migration become a choice and no longer a necessity or act of desperation.

\*Address existing gaps in migration governance frameworks, including fragmented international normative regimes in the protection of migrant rights, by developing guidelines as well as linking existing migrant protection conventions

\*As well as the need to strengthen international cooperation for the implementation of all objectives on the GCM, including efforts to address the vulnerabilities of migration and migrants, regularization of irregular migrants, and ensuring voluntary, safe and sustainable return of migrants. It should further address the protection gap in relation to disaster induced migration, our preference was, of course, a separate objective on the issue.

***Co-Facilitators,***

It is within this context that the African Group welcomes the Revised draft text of the GCM and the changes integrated into it. The African Group recognizes the Co-facilitators efforts to maintain a delicate balance between divergent views and could form a good basis for compromise.

The changes integrated into the text are a step in the right direction that needs to be maintained and further strengthened.

The African Group would like to highlight the following eight areas that should be integrated into the final draft of the GCM:

1. We continue to note with concern the emphasis given to the non-legally binding nature of the GCM under paragraph 7 and the principle on international cooperation. The African Group continues to call for the removal of the references for the non-legally binding nature of the compact. On one hand, these references are completely unnecessary, since the Compact is not a Convention or a legal instrument that puts legal obligations on ratifying States. On the other hand, these references send a negative signal to the outside world, which should be avoided.
2. The African Group, throughout the negotiations, has advocated for the need to address the protection gap in both the GCM and the GCR and made proposals for the inclusion of a separate objective on disaster/climate change induced migration in the compact. The Group has also noted some of the concerns raised by delegations in the previous rounds of the negotiations in relation to a possible separate objective on the issue. While the Group still considers the possibility of integrating a separate objective on disaster induced migration achievable in this round, as a compromise, we would suggest the consolidation of the disaster induced commitments under objective 2 in a separate sub-heading.
3. In relation to objective 13, the African Group reiterates its previous proposals for the administrative, not criminal nature of sanctions for irregular entry and stay which formed part of previous text to be reconsidered and also reiterates to end the practice of child detention that is harmful and not in the best interest of the child, and explore alternatives to detention such as access to education and healthcare and their right to family life and family unity for children.
4. We would reiterate our previous proposal to add on Objective 1 sub-paragraph 16( i), the following at the end of the sentence after data. “and avoiding negative profiling, discrimination and potential human rights violations”, which aims to collect data on evidence based policies, additionally the sentence contributes to GCM’s objective of eliminating discrimination, racism, xenophobia and intolerance against migrants.
5. Regarding the implementation of the GCM, it is to be recalled that the Deputy Secretary-General in her briefing indicated the establishment of working groups which are led by specific agencies. Accordingly, the Group proposes on para 45 sub para (B), the inclusion of these working groups with the specific lead agencies such as ILO, UNODC, UNDP etc.
6. Additionally, on the implementation, We reiterate our position to add the following sentence anywhere on the implementation section:

Establish an implementation matrix, for voluntary use, to assist countries on implementation of the GCM, which may include policy frameworks needed at national, regional and international levels; Identification of partnerships; as well as existing resources, best practices and initiatives for utilization.

We believe the incorporation of this paragraph can make an important contribution to strengthen the implementation of specific objectives in the GCM.

7.In references to National Human Rights Institutions mentioned on Objectives 2 (para 18. C) Objective 11 (Para 27. D) and Objective 12(Para 28. E) We reiterate our position, which is a standard reference, to include “Where they Exist” after National Human Rights Institutions.

8. Finally, the African Group is pleased to announce that Africa has just established, last week, its own observatory on migration, in conformity with paragraph 17.f. of the draft GCM. In this regard, the Group would highly appreciate if a specific reference to this newly established centre is added in this paragraph, by adding the sentence “such as the African Observatory for Migration and Development”.

 We are hopeful and trust that these proposals of the African Group will be integrated into the final version of the draft GCM.

**I thank you.**