



18 February 2026

H. E. Ekitela Lokaale
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations
866 UN Plaza, Suite 304 New York, NY 10017

RE: Urgent Measures to Ensure Safe and Inclusive Access, Participation and Protections of Migrants, Migrant CSOs and Stakeholders Engaging in the GCM 2nd International Migration Review Forum

Your Excellency,

We write to you as representatives of regional civil society organizations and trade unions from Asia, Pacific and the Middle East regions. As the international community prepares to engage in Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) Second International Migration Review Forum (2nd IMRF), we raise urgent concerns about safety risks for migrants' rights organizations and migrant workers amidst the climate of shrinking space for civil society.

The GCM is grounded in the principles of human rights, international cooperation, whole-of-society approach, and the meaningful participation of stakeholders. And yet today a few months before the GCM 2nd IMRF, we see the strong erosion of migrants' rights, normalization of racism and xenophobia and continuing criminalization of undocumented migrant workers and criminalization of solidarity. We see governments pushing for border externalization and opting out of its responsibility in order to avoid their legal, financial, and ethical obligations toward individuals seeking protection. We continue to witness the shrinking regular pathways, commodification of labour and exploitation of workers into forced labour.

Civil society organizations working on migration and human rights are also facing an increasingly hostile and dangerous environment. Escalating anti-migrant policies, racism and xenophobia, and the growing criminalization of solidarity have created conditions that put migrants' rights organizations and migrants at risk. Migrant leaders and advocates face credible risks to their physical safety, security and well-being.

These risks are especially acute in the context of participation in the upcoming GCM 2nd IMRF in New York where travel and physical presence is required. Migrants' rights advocates and migrants face real risks of visa denial, invasive screening, monitoring and surveillance, blacklisting, detention or immigration enforcement. Even the perception of participation in UN processes can expose individuals and organizations to surveillance and punitive action.



These conditions represent a serious erosion of civic space and directly undermine the principles of safe, inclusive, and meaningful engagement that the GCM calls for and United Nations is obligated to uphold. When civil society cannot engage freely and safely with UN Mechanisms for the upcoming GCM 2nd IMRF, its legitimacy and effectiveness is compromised.

We collectively call on the United Nations, the UN Network on Migrations and the IMRF Co-facilitators to take immediate and concrete actions to:

- **Proactively facilitate visa issuance and entry** for migrants, migrant workers, and migrant rights advocates participating in the GCM 2nd IMRF GCM, without discrimination based on migration status, nationality, and/or advocacy work;
- **Ensure the safety and security** of migrants' and migrants' rights advocates participating in the GCM 2nd IMRF;
- **Ensure that the UN and its grounds implement measures to be a protective and enabling space for all delegates**, particularly human and migrant rights defenders who may face targeting and profiling;
- **Ensure in the future GCM processes can held in a different venue beyond the UN office in New York**

We urge your office to reflect on the above concerns and recommendations. We thank you for your attention and stand ready to work with your office, the UNNM, and the IMRF co-facilitators to safeguard the integrity and the inclusivity of the 2026 IMRF.

In Solidarity,

Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM)

Building and Wood Workers International (BWI)

International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)

Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)

Pacific Migration Partners

Pacific Youth Platform