

Statement for GCM Thematic Consultation Panel 3: Recognition of Skills and Qualifications and Relevant Measures

- Thank you for inviting me to speak on behalf of the Business Mechanism.
- I would like to start by providing a little background on the Business Mechanism. Chaired by the International Organization of Employers, the Business Mechanism consists of businesses and associations with global migration policy interests.
- The Business Mechanism serves as a platform for business to engage with governments and other stakeholders at GFMD and other migration initiatives.
- Our overarching goal is a regulatory environment where labor migration policies support business and economic development to create job opportunities and economic growth for all.
- We believe the Global Compact on Migration should present a non-binding framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migration and should encourage governments to create orderly pathways of migration through sound policies. It should also elevate the discourse around migration by highlighting how skills mobility promises opportunity.

- To this end, the Business Mechanism presented a number of recommendations and targeted actions for consideration in the Global Compact. Many of these align with recommendations made in the Sutherland report, the ILO resolution and by civil society.

- The private sector brings unique perspectives to this discussion. Employers are front-line experts, with practical and real time knowledge of skills needs. While we believe that Labour migration is one way of addressing skills needs, we are also working with governments on other policies such as
 - Education and training for all workers;
 - Flexible and family-friendly employment policies; and,
 - Bringing underrepresented groups into labor market

- We also encounter migrants in a variety of situations:
 - We send current employees across borders to attend meetings, meet with clients or build our business.
 - We hire new employees who are already in country as migrants – whether as students, as migrants working for another employer, as refugees or through family relationships; and, in irregular status.
 - Finally, sometimes we go abroad to find unique talents or skills which are simply in short supply.

- In all these situations we seek clarity, fairness and efficiency.

- So, how can the global compact on migration help us achieve these goals?

- Our paper submitted to the SRSB focused on five areas of opportunity; skills mobility; innovation for migrants and refugees; irregular migration; responsible recruitment and entrepreneurship.
- We developed 15 specific recommendations with 22 targeted action items. Today, I'd like to focus on our recommendations related to Skills Mobility and certification of qualifications.
- Seismic demographic shifts have created large skills gaps throughout the world, stunting business opportunities and economic growth. Inefficiencies in processing paperwork and credentialing migrants inhibit access to a talent pool which could help alleviate these gaps.
- With this in mind, the business mechanism calls on governments to
- Develop Timely, flexible transparent migration policies, with predictable processing timeframes, to help business plan and execute on operations.
- And, to develop platforms for working with employers to identify skills gaps and establish frameworks for assessing qualifications without creating rigid requirements and definitions.
- We firmly believe that employers are best positioned to identify changing labor market needs and to recruit migrants who have the skills to succeed.

The majority of companies and recruiters are ethical; and government must create a level playing field for them by enforcing labor laws.

- Trusted employers should not be removed from the migration process. Instead, employers that strive to comply with labor and migration laws should be recognized and rewarded with expedited processing.
- We also believe that workers, at all skill levels, are entitled to the full range of labor protections, should be able to change employers, and should not be separated from their families.
- We also strongly encourage the use of technology to improve processing, lower information barriers, and to screen qualifications and train migrants prior to their arrival in country. We must explore mechanisms to Harmonize certification processes and develop skills passports or other credentials mechanisms to help all employers more easily assess foreign education and experience.
- Finally, we must Provide legal pathways for workers at all skill levels and support responsible recruitment efforts.

- Ensuring that Migration Policies Work for Everyone – including migrants, employers and the local population -- will require ongoing consultations with all stakeholders, actionable items and continual improvements.
- The Business Mechanism action items provide concrete and measurable places to start and we hope that they will be included in the Global Compact.