

Republic of Korea

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Thank you, Mr. Moderator

First of all, the Republic of Korea would like to recall the importance of migration in a planned and well-managed manner, which will be a potential benefit for all.

Over the last decade, Korea has become a major migration destination. Migrant population in the country now accounts for more than 17% of the entire migrant population in the Eastern Asia¹.

In order to support a social and humane life of the growing migrant population, Korea endeavors to ensure all migrants to fully enjoy their human rights. It also strives to counter all forms of discrimination against all migrants and clearly sees the importance of protection of human rights for all types of migrants, including migrant workers dispatched by the government of country of origin.

The Korean government has taken comprehensive approach to protect the human rights of migrants in the country and help their integration into societies. Taking this opportunity, my delegation would like to share with the panel the efforts Korea has made so far in the area of protecting human rights of migrants.

We have paid special attention to specific needs of migrants in vulnerable situations.

First, the Korean government has introduced a legal measure to oblige the authorities to provide special protection for migrants with diseases, pregnant women, old persons, and children.²

Also, the Korean government has established shelters to protect migrant women and their children who are often the victims of various forms of violence, which was exemplified by the earlier remark by Ms. Paola Cyment from CAREF.

These shelters provide them with psychological counseling, medical care and legal assistance.

Furthermore, the government has set up a vocational training center not only to address their protection needs but to promote their empowerment in the longer term. we will continue these measures to promote inclusion of migrants, in particular, those in vulnerable situations.

Thank you.

¹ UN International Migration Report 2015

² Article 56.3 of the Immigration Control Act

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Thank you, Ambassador for giving me the floor in the first place.

I will be brief and will touch upon Korea's three initiatives on the issues related to yesterday's discussions as well as this morning in advance.

The Korean government also recognizes the right to education³ of migrant children and believes that access to education is fundamentally protective for children and youth on the move.

To ensure the right to education to all migrant children, the government provides primary and secondary education to migrant students regardless of their parents' immigration status⁴.

As already stressed by several speakers yesterday, in cases where the immigrant parents of young school students face immediate, the parents are granted temporary release from deportation, which effectively allows them to take time to prepare for their departure and therefore in order to avoid abrupt discontinuation of education for the children.

The Korean government will continue to take necessary measures to improve access to education of migrant children, including expansion of Korean language courses and tailored vocational consulting services.

Right to health is fundamental to all individuals including migrants. To help fulfill the right of migrants to health, the Korean government has provided medical care to migrants who are not covered by existing health care systems since 2005. The beneficiaries of the program include migrant workers and their children as well as immigrants and their children before acquisition of citizenship.

The scope of beneficiaries and participating medical agencies has been expanding since the launch of the program in 2005.

Lastly, to ensure sufficient and effective access to justice for all migrants, the Korean government introduced the pilot program of 'community lawyers for migrants' in October 2015.

The program provides all migrants with free legal counseling in 20 languages on a range of issues including civil, criminal, family and labour matters.

The program is designed to establish "firewalls" between immigration enforcement and public services. Based on our reflection on the lessons learned, we will expand the coverage on a progressive basis.

³ Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights; Article 28 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child

⁴ Enforcement Decree of the Primary and Secondary Education Act(revised in February 2008 and December 2010)

In a nutshell, Korea has opened the door for “undocumented migrants” to access to health care, education and justice system and will continue to do so. Thank you.

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I will be brief, just to register a few observations.

Korea remains assured that this meeting has served as a good starting point in our discussion on enhancing governance on migration and building a framework on cooperation in the coming months. We now see where we stand.

To further facilitate the process, it is suggested that the future efforts also need to address the issue of lack of data, and compile concrete and convincing evidence that speaks to the benefits of migration.

Lastly, as stated by a number of speakers, there will be the practical benefits of seeking clarification on migration terminology, as more common and agreed definition will help us make our job easier. Thank you.

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