

## Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: Sixth Informal Thematic Session

### Panel 3: Recognition of Skills and Labour Mobility

#### **Statement by the UAE**

We are grateful to the Moderators of this session for providing the United Arab Emirates with the opportunity to contribute to this valuable discussion.

The issue of skills development and matching is one that the UAE, and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue more broadly, has worked in some detail. There is broad consensus among both countries of origin and destination that skills development across the migration cycle is one of the keys to improving labour mobility, both across and within borders, and can improve migrant earning potential and productivity.

For countries of destination in the Gulf, the transition to knowledge economies is increasing the demand for higher skilled workers. Meanwhile, for countries of origin, investment in training and certification of workers leads not only improved remittance flows, but also increases the talent pool of workers on their return home.

The Abu Dhabi Dialogue is therefore currently developing a programme aimed at cooperation to jointly certify and recognise skills, issuing skills passports to migrants that are recognised in multiple jurisdictions. We can envisage a situation in which the acquisition of a skills passport becomes one of the first steps in the migration cycle for pre-employment migrants.

The UAE welcomes calls for a Global Skills Partnership, aimed at promoting partnership between countries of origin and destination to link skills creation and skill mobility in a mutually beneficial and equitable way. Much of that work is already underway in the Asia-GCC Corridors.

We would add, however, that unless both employers and migrants see the value proposition for skilling, it is difficult to move forward. Our experience to date has been that the right incentives and state interventions need to be in place if upskilling is to be seen by employers and migrants as a worthwhile investment.

The policy levers available to countries of destination to achieve upskilling include differentiated work permit fees, sector-level quotas, and improved confidence in occupational standards. In countries of origin, they include lower

barriers to entry for training, and minimising taxation on training and certification businesses, to minimise the costs to the migrant worker.

These policy levers were the subject of discussion during a recent Special Workshop of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, in Dubai, in July 2017, and are highlighted in the resulting report, which was circulated to the co-facilitators of the Global Compact. We would encourage Member States to look at these recommendations, with a view to their inclusion and adoption in the zero draft as recommended approaches for clarifying the value proposition of upskilling.

Thank you.