

STATEMENT

BY

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**STATE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA**

AT

**THE REGIONAL MEETING OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR
SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION**

26 OCTOBER 2017

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Excellencies Ministers,
Honorable Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief
Economist of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa,
Distinguished Representatives of Member States to the United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa,
Distinguished Partners and Representatives of International Organizations;
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, I would like to start by welcoming all of you to Ethiopia. It is an honor for me to address the Regional Meeting on the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration which is expected to feed into the discussions in New York on the Global Compact.

Migration is an issue which, in recent times and for different reasons, has conquered regional and international discourses. Migration is a complex issue which involves broad political, economic, social and legal issues that must be fully appreciated and understood by both policymakers and practitioners. We note with serious concern that the protection of the human rights of migrants in the transit and destination countries remains a challenge. They are disproportionately affected by multiple forms of discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia and negative misperception. They also find themselves in a situation that makes them vulnerable to illegal or violent acts. It is high time that the global vision on migration is appropriately leveraged in a well-sorted and suitably articulated road map and implementation matrix. I have no doubt that this meeting will be a significant milestone in that regard.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ethiopia recognizes the significant positive contribution of migrants to countries of origin, transit and destination. For instance, in 2016 global remittances to developing countries reached \$429 billion, three times more than Official Development Assistance (ODA). The remittances from migrants were more stable than other forms of private capital flows into developing countries.

It is in this context that the Government of Ethiopia has taken various policy, legislative and institutional measures to create a framework for regular migration. In doing so, it has established a national task force led by the Deputy Prime Minister. This in turn brought up the culmination into reality of the first ever migration framework that creates a mechanism for safe, orderly and regular migration by identifying the major migration hotspots across the country as well as the push and pull factors. It has also enacted legislations to define the role of the private sector in overseas employment exchange services and follow-up and monitoring of such services; prevent and suppress trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. It has also signed bilateral labor agreements with some of the destination countries aimed at establishing a framework for lawful overseas employment and preventing human trafficking. It has assigned labor attaches in Ethiopian embassies accredited to the destination countries for Ethiopian migrants.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When world leaders adopted the 2030 Development Agenda in New York, in September 2015, their vision was one which placed people at the Centre of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 119 targets where “...no one will be left behind...” The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges the positive contributions of migrants and diaspora to development

in both countries of origin and destination. SDG Target 10.7 expresses the need to “facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well managed migration policies” as well as Target 8.8 expressly calls for the protection of labor rights and the promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment. These targets, in our view, could form one of the basis of our discussion on the Global Compact at this regional meeting and in the coming months.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ethiopia has contributed to the regional as well as continental consultation that culminated into the ongoing Common African Position on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration that is going to be submitted during successive discussions at the global fora. In the process leading toward the Global Compact, developing a human rights and evidence based governance framework on migration that puts the protection and promotion of the human rights of migrants at the center would be critical. In this regard, we consider the following elements to be of utmost importance deserving proper consideration in the process leading towards the Global Compact:

1. addressing the root causes of migration such as economic and social inequalities and climate change;
2. Adoption of a rights based approach to ensure the protection of migrants in transit and destination countries irrespective of their status;
3. Addressing the protection gaps, including at the international level, the absence of a comprehensive framework to address;

4. Ensuring the protection and promotion of the human rights of migrants, including their labour rights irrespective of their status by adopting a rights based approach;
5. Integration of the broader decent work agenda and occupational safety and health standards;
6. constructing an agenda for fair migration which not only respects the fundamental rights of migrants but also offers them real opportunities for decent work and integration in the society they find themselves; and
7. Reducing the cost of remittance.

I am confident that these seven points would form central to our deliberation at this regional meeting. I would like to conclude my remark by affirming the firm commitment of Ethiopia to this process.

I thank you very much for your kind attention and wish you a fruitful deliberation.