

**Intergovernmental Conference  
to adopt  
Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**

**INDIA STATEMENT**

**By**

**Shri A. Gitesh Sarma, Vice Minister**

**Mr. President,**

**Distinguished Heads of State, Heads of Government, Ministers, delegates,  
Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to commend the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for warm and generous hospitality and excellent arrangements for this global conference.

**Mr. President,**

Most states and societies have been built upon waves of migration over several centuries. Regular international migration is a positive phenomenon that is primarily voluntary and economic in nature and is essential for achieving sustainable development in line with goal 10.7 of the SDGs.

The Global Compact on Migration is an aspirational document that seeks to facilitate legal pathways for migration. It does not deal with refugees. What it does is to promote migration by legal means for economic opportunity, decent work for decent

pay, preservation of labour and human rights and new pathways for regular migration. The principle of non-refoulement does not apply to migrants.

It recognizes the sovereign right of each state in determining its migration policy. Individual states can distinguish between regular and irregular migrants and determine the conditions of entry and stay of non-nationals in their jurisdiction and need not follow a prescriptive approach.

The effort has been to strike a balance between the international cooperation framework for migration management and the salience of national realities, policies and priorities in migration policies of individual States.

**Mr. President,**

International migrants are said to contribute nearly 10% of the global GDP even as they form only 3% of global population. International migration is an important dimension of integration of economies and global supply chains where specific labour or skill shortages tend to drive migration.

There is a legitimate purpose to legal migration as the means of global economic development as opposed to illegal migration. Legal migration should, therefore, be treated as an engine of economic growth.

Migration of workers, nurses, doctors, engineers, students, teachers, researchers, scientists and others forms an integral aspect of today's global economy and business models. Infrastructure in a number of countries has been built and is being re-built utilising the diligence and skills of millions of construction workers from across the world.

Today's knowledge and innovation-driven economies require mobility of persons quite like capital, goods and services across crossing borders.

Closer international cooperation can help manage irregular migration and address genuine socio-political or security concerns. While humane treatment of irregular migrants is absolutely essential, we must also enhance cooperation to combat

smuggling and trafficking in persons, reduce irregular migration and open new avenues for safe, orderly and regular migration.

**Mr. President,**

Mahatma Gandhi studied, worked and lived in South Africa and England for considerable periods of time and is among the most well-known international migrants who contributed hugely to the collective progress of mankind.

While India is widely considered to be among the top countries of origin for migrants globally, the rate of emigration from India is less than half the world's average. India is also among the major destination countries, as also a transit country, for migrants largely from our neighbourhood.

In recent times, Indian migrants, including a broad cross-section of professionals, small entrepreneurs and skilled and less-skilled workers, have migrated to various countries around the world. Today India, with one-sixth of the world's population, has over 30 million strong Diaspora contributing to the economies and societies in various ways in their host countries.

The Indian Government focuses attention on the entire range of issues relating to Indian emigrants over the complete migration cycle, especially those with lesser skills. These are primarily welfare oriented issues that include their ethical recruitment; safer working and living conditions; non-discrimination; preventing xenophobic or racist attacks on them; preventing trafficking; facilitating remittances and providing assistance to those in distress abroad. India has made considerable investment in skilling and training workers prior to their departure for employment abroad.

**Mr. President,**

The Compact recognizes the complexity of the migration issue and that every country may be impacted differently and has acknowledged national sovereignty as the main guiding principle for the compact.

Migration is a complex phenomenon and requires global cooperation for its proper management. All countries will reap developmental benefits from safe, orderly and regular migration.

The Compact has addressed such issues as faster, safer and cheaper remittances; portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits; mutual recognition of educational qualifications and skills; ensuring non-discrimination against migrant workers; consular protection and assistance as well as enhancing pathways for regular migration, form part of this compact.

**Mr. President,**

The follow up processes should continue to be based on dialogue among states for forging consensus on outstanding issues and to address new challenges.

India looks forward to continuing our engagement with partners to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration.

Thank you.