His Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres
Secretary General of the United Nations
U.N. Headquarters, New York, NY 10017

2 February 2018

Joint business statement toward the negotiations of the global compact for migration

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

We are writing on behalf of the world's largest business organisations[1], which together form the most representative voice of global business, to express our support for the State-led initiative aiming at the adoption of a non-binding global framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migration.

We read with great interest your report "Making migration work for all" that recognized the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) as "an opportunity for Member States to reinforce the benefits of migration, and to bring the challenges it creates under control". Your report also highlights the necessity for partnerships, including with the private sector, to ensure successful implementation and that the GCM will deliver real benefits for nations, communities and migrants. The global business community has engaged at the highest levels with the consultation process for the GCM, and we hope to see our constructive ideas and perspectives reflected in the final document.

The GCM presents a timely opportunity to advance concrete actions that address barriers to skills mobility and integration through job opportunities. The global business community regards positive conditions for voluntary migration as constructive and necessary. Voluntary migration can be a vehicle for fulfilling personal aspirations, for balancing labour supply and demand, for supporting competitiveness and sparking innovation, and for transferring and spreading skills.

While United Nations member states prepare to negotiate the GCM, our organisations support principles of sound governance for international migration. The overarching goal should be a regulatory environment where labour migration policies support doing business and economic development to create sustainable, ongoing job opportunities and economic growth in both sending and receiving countries. Predictable and practical frameworks for international skills mobility are increasingly essential for business and economic growth. Companies are frequent and important users of national migration systems. To remain successful and competitive in the global economy, they require clear and consistent migration policies, national laws and procedures in both sending and receiving countries.

Migrant labour provides a very important avenue to fill hiring needs, complementing national labour markets and skills development systems. Employers are essential partners in identifying skills gap. Developing solutions to support the domestic labour market in providing workers with the necessary spectrum of skills that employers need, now and in the foreseeable future, are crucial to address the problem of brain drain in developing countries. Our organizations reaffirm their longstanding commitment to respect human rights and look forward to future opportunities to work on the prevention of forced labour and the protection of rights of migrant workers.

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[1] International Organisation of Employers (IOE), Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) to the OECD, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

We look forward to the leadership of governments, with the continuing support of your team, to ensure that the GCM provides concrete policy frameworks conducive to voluntary migration. Approaching migration through the prism of opportunity will also lead to a more nuanced, and ultimately valuable debate.

Linda Kromjong
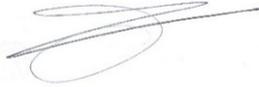
Secretary General

International Organisation
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