



حوار أبوظبي بين الدول الآسيوية المرسلية والمستقبلة للعمالة  
Abu Dhabi Dialogue among the Asian Labor-Sending and Receiving Countries

# Joint Communiqué

Abu Dhabi Dialogue Senior Officials' Meeting  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates: 30 April 2019

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We, the Senior Officials and Heads of Delegations from the ADD Member States of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam;

met in the presence of Observer Government Delegations from Tajikistan and Switzerland;

and Observer Delegations from participating International Organisations, the International Organisation for Migration, the International Labour Organisation, the International Organisation of Employers, and UN Women;

and civil society organizations – including Dubai Foundation for Women and Children and the Migrant Forum Asia Network and partner organizations – and a number of private sector organizations

to participate in the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 30 April 2019.

After introductory remarks from the Chair and Secretariat, and the adoption of the day's agenda,

consideration was given to the progress that has been achieved in undertaking bilateral and multilateral initiatives of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, which included:

- a joint presentation given by the governments of India and the United Arab Emirates on the use of technology in managing the recruitment and deployment of workers, outlining the UAE and India's efforts to link labour migration IT systems;



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- a discussion led by the International Organisation for Migration on the progress to date in implementing Phase II of the Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme, which pairs Member States, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates, the Philippines and Sri Lanka;
- an outline of the progress made by the governments of the UAE and India to create a harmonised ecosystem for the training, certification and joint recognition of the skills of migrant workers, focused on further enhancing employment opportunities for skilled workers from India destined for the UAE by incentivising the recruitment of certified, skilled workers by UAE employers;
- a presentation by Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council on the development of demand-driven competency standards for four domestic work occupations;

in addition to a series of supplementary presentations and ADD deliberations, which included:

- a presentation by UN women of their Toolkit for Gender-Responsive Employment and Recruitment;
- a discussion among Member States reflecting on the outcomes of the High Level Symposium on the Future of Work on 29 April 2019, facilitated by the International Labour Organisation;
- a business meeting for consideration of the adoption of the agenda for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial consultation, and a review of ADD current structures to expand engagement by Member States.

Based on the discussions of Member States and Observers over the course of the Senior Officials' Meeting, we:

- 1) express our thanks to the Government of Sri Lanka as Chair-in-Office, and the Government of the United Arab Emirates as Permanent Secretariat of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, for their efforts in coordinating activities undertaken under the umbrella of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue;



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- 2) express our thanks to the International Labour Organisation for their efforts in facilitating the ADD High Level Symposium on the Future of Work on 29<sup>th</sup> April;
- 3) welcome the Government of the United Arab Emirates as the incoming Chair-in-office, who will host the next Senior Officials' Meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation, upon the hand-over from the government of Sri Lanka at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;
- 4) have agreed to propose to our Ministers that the next Senior Officials' Meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue be held in Dubai on 16 & 17 October 2019;
- 5) direct the Secretariat to finalise and share the draft agenda for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation with Member States and observers;
- 6) express our joint commitment to sustain and further develop our bilateral and multilateral cooperation along the four work streams, and encourage Member States to further participate in:
  - A) Use of Technology in Managing the Recruitment and Deployment of Workers:
    - i) we acknowledge the successful efforts of the UAE and India in their integration of their labour migration IT systems for the recruitment and deployment of workers;
    - ii) we request that the governments of India and the UAE continue to share the results of the programme with ADD Member States to enable further integration of labour migration IT systems between Countries of Origin and Destination;
    - iii) we request that the project outcomes be presented to the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;
  - B) Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programming:
    - i) we recognise and express our gratitude for the significant contributions being made to this programme by community-based and non-governmental organisations;



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- ii) we acknowledge the importance of the assessment frameworks that are in place and the relevance that those frameworks will have for similar projects within the region;
- iii) we propose that consideration be given to what additional efforts can be made to address the needs of migrant workers post-return and to support post arrival orientation;
- iv) we request that the project outcomes be presented to the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;

#### C) Certification and Mutual Recognition of Skills:

- i) we commend the programme for its capacity to address mismatches between workers' skills and employer requirements; improve the skills mix in COD labour markets, raise productivity; and positively impact wage structures for expatriate workers;
- ii) we recognise the potential to scale the programme to include additional occupations across a range of sectors;
- iii) we acknowledge the importance of anticipating resistance to policy, which may include incentives for payment for recruitment versus taking up skilling opportunities; and incentives by CODs for recruitment of certified workers, and developing responses to meet these challenges;
- iv) we note that requirements for skilling must not translate into additional costs to workers and commit to exploring mechanisms to mitigate such risks;
- v) we request that the project outcomes be presented to the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation;

#### D) Developing Demand-Driven Competency Standards for Four Domestic Occupations:

- i) we welcome the inclusion of domestic worker competency standards within the agenda of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue;



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- ii) we note that the domestic competency standards are scalable and that additional domestic occupations will be added, including within the care sector;
- iii) we recommend that options be developed for the formulation of domestic work competency standards for ADD corridors;

we further recommend that all interested stakeholders be enabled to contribute to progress of work along these four thematic work streams;

7) we express our thanks to UN Women for their presentation on their Toolkit for Gender Responsive Employment and Recruitment and invite them to participate in a discussion on women in domestic work at the next Senior Officials' Meeting;

8) we welcome the inclusion of the Future of Work in the agenda of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue and endorse immediate actions to be explored by the Secretariat, including:

- i) the development of a concept paper outlining a way ahead for discussion at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation, with a first draft to be shared with Member States and Observers for their further contributions in the interim;
- ii) ensuring that the Abu Dhabi Dialogue provides space for reflections on progress on Future of Work initiatives at a national, bilateral and regional level;

in addition to acknowledging a number of ideas proposed by Member States for consideration, including:

- iii) whether the concept paper should focus on a single theme, in order to keep the concept paper manageable;
- iv) inviting officials and experts from countries that are already in the process of implementing Future of Work initiatives to share their insights at ADD meetings;



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- v) the development of an online platform to highlight the main skills requirements in different countries;
  - vi) ensuring participation by and engagement with the private sector, in particular on a technical level;
  - vii) incorporating consideration of Future of Work challenges within the broader thematic programmes of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue;
  - viii) identifying mechanisms for the sharing of best practices and making the exchange of ideas an interactive process;
- 9) we take note of the proposal of the Secretariat to review ADD current structures to expand engagement by Member States and invite the Secretariat to circulate a survey to Member States to seek viewpoints and further develop recommendations for adoption at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation.