**Statement by India**

**3rd Informal Thematic Session on the Global Compact on Migration**

**Panel-3: Return, Readmission, Integration and Reintegration, Geneva 20 June 2017**

 Let me start by complementing the panellists for their detailed explanation on the importance of return, readmission, integration and reintegration of migrants to their country of origin.

India, one of the largest migrant sending country, always welcomes its national who wish to return back, irrespective of the reasons for return. In order to facilitate this, special provisions have been put in place at our Missions and Consulates abroad.

I may like to flag that in certain cases stringent and loop-sided policies of the receiving States makes the migrants vulnerable, makes it difficult for the migrants to comply with obligations of retaining legal migratory status and in quite a number of cases migrants were forced to face criminal proceedings even for minor violations.

In addition, abusive employment conditions, lack of adequate and neutral redressal mechanisms for disputes settlement between employer and employee leaves little scope for the migrant to get timely assistance. There are also numerous cases where employers prefer to send back the economic migrants to their country of origin for no reason except to avoid payment of their unpaid dues, social and terminal benefits etc.

It has been found that many migrants remain out of job, mostly in vulnerable and exploitative situations to fight long legal battle to get their terminal benefits.

**My first suggestion to the co-facilitators is to take this aspect in consideration and come up with a solution, keeping the interest of all stakeholders, particularly of the migrants, at the core.**

**My second suggestion is to decriminalise minor visa/residency rules violations and delink it with harsh punishments like deportation, ban from re-entry and re-employment.**

**My third suggestion is to ensure that return, readmission, integration and re-integration of migrants should be dignified and during the whole cycle of circular migration. The human rights of all migrants need to be protected in compliance with international human rights standards. The countries of origin as well as destination should adopt and enforce human rights-based, coherent and comprehensive national migration policies to ensure regular, safe, affordable and accessible migration options for all migrants.**

We believe that ‘Assistant Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants’ forms a reasonably good basis for return and reintegration of migrants. Let me also confess that it is not a perfect process but only provides a basis to bargain and needs to be continuously improved upon in its methodology through field studies, research and policy analysis.

I once again thank the panellists and moderator for effectively moderating this rich and informative discussion.

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