

**Statement by the African Group**  
**Item 6 - Economic Development in Africa**  
**For the 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Trade and Development Board**  
**(04 to 12 June 2018, Geneva)**

**Mr. President,**  
**Secretary General,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Distinguished Delegates,**

The African Group aligns itself with the statement of G77 and China and welcomes the 2018 Economic Development in Africa Report: Migration and Structural Transformation which timely come in a year that offers the international community a historic opportunity to realize the first Global Compact for Migration.

The Group appreciates the report's professional analysis on how can enable African countries to yield further benefits from migration and achieve their development objectives as well as how intra-African migration can be a catalyst for economic growth and structural transformation on the continent.

**Mr. President,**

Africa is projected to have the largest population growth of any geographical regional globally by 2050, which will have important consequences for international migration and major implications for the continent's economic development.

Migration, which cuts across three sustainable development goals, is found both in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Africa's transformative development plan, Agenda 2063, where issues of equity, poverty eradication and inclusion have been given prominence.

Thus, intra-African migration dominates migration flows in the African continent with a small proportion of Africans migrating to Europe. In 2017, more than half (53 per cent) of Africa's international migrants remained on the continent.

The Group believes that Migration benefits both origin and destination countries across Africa and that African migration can play a key role in the structural transformation of the continent's economies. Well-managed migration also provides an important means for helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, both in Africa and beyond.

In this connection, the Group is of the view that immigration flows could lead to a substantial increase in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita for Africa by 2030. In economic terms, this implies reaching a GDP per capita of \$3,249 in 2030, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent from 2016.

**Mr. President,**

In 2016 the African Union revised its Migration Policy Framework in order to reflect current migration dynamics in Africa to guide member States and regional economic communities in migration management.

The revised Framework includes a 10-year (2018–2027) action plan for its implementation, as well as guidelines that address labour migration, diaspora engagement, border management, irregular migration, forced displacement, internal migration and migration and trade. In addition, the revised Framework recommends strategies for consideration by member States and regional economic communities under each of these pillars.

While an increasing number of African countries are developing national migration policies, more needs to be done to situate these within the context of regional integration. Unfortunately, very few of them explicitly integrate this status in their migration policy framework. The Group concurs with the report's finding that intra-African migration is an essential ingredient for deeper regional and continental integration.

As highlighted in the report, the experience of Morocco features prominently among such exceptions and provides insights for many countries to learn from. Thus, in the lead up to the global compact for migration, the African Union designated King Mohamed VI to champion migration for the continent, in light of the best practices of Morocco in the design and implementation of a rights-based, progressive migration strategy.

**Mr. President,**

Encouraging investment in infrastructure is fundamental to stimulating economic growth in African countries. Energy access remains a bottleneck and critical barrier to Africa's industrial development. For Africa to become a world leader in commodity-based industrial value chains as is highlighted in the report, significant investment in energy infrastructure and ancillary services can address underlying barriers that hinder the development of sectors with potential for industrial growth in Africa.

Africa needs investment in sectors with potential for economic growth. Investing in these sectors could stimulate growth that, in turn, could absorb extra labor, nationally and from Africa's regional markets.

Therefore, a managed migration policy requires a good understanding of how irregular migration interferes with the optimization of the development impact of migration. To this end, African countries need to align migration, trade and investment policies with their long-term development objectives.

Furthermore, supporting well-managed migration could boost intra-African and extra-continental trade. The report finds that migration has strong pro-trade effects. In African countries, food imports from within the continent have increased for main receiving countries, often at much faster rates than the rate of immigration from other African countries. Moreover, creating the conditions that deepen regional integration and job creation in Africa's regional markets, besides boosting intra-African trade, could also stimulate extra-continent trade as incomes in Africa rise and demand for international products increases.

**Mr. President,**

Finally, the African Group welcomes the recommendations on the report, and stresses the importance of:

- Fostering inclusive growth and poverty reduction, through remittances and diaspora investment in countries of origin, and through taxes and consumption in destination countries
- Supporting countries of origin and destination to develop online labour market information systems that link migrants to labour market opportunities in regional labour markets;
- Strengthen its education systems to be able to integrate into the global economy easily, that can produce right labor to help reduce its brain drain and increase self-sustainability of the continent through innovation and job creation.
- Support development of R&D institutes and education institutes that can be ready or embark on digital and support for open source softwares that can easily and be readily available to support for African innovation in the new industrial revolution.
- Support Africa led or companies that can help to produce low energy ,cost computer related gadgets that can be available for the masses to support integration.
- Supporting the development of online job search mechanisms;
- Supporting countries to collect better data and on a frequent basis;
- Deepening regional integration is a reality for the continent, as is evidenced by progress on the conclusion of the AfCFTA negotiations.

To conclude, we believe that the report's findings will substantially contribute to filling the information gap on migration and structural transformation on the continent and at supporting the implementation of the 2063 Agenda for a more regionally integrated and politically united Africa as well as reaching inclusive global growth.