

# **Chair's Remarks: Senior Officials' Meeting**

## **1. Introductory Remarks**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you. Allow me to begin by welcoming you all to this Senior Officials' Meeting of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, which is taking place in advance of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation. The Ministerial Consultation will begin at 6 pm this evening.

I would like to start by thanking the Government of the UAE for hosting us here in Dubai. The UAE will, of course, be taking over this afternoon as Chair of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, after two years during which the Government of Sri Lanka has had the Chair.

The primary purpose of this SOM is to ensure that we are sufficiently prepared for the Ministerial Consultation. But allow me to briefly reflect on Sri Lanka's Chairmanship over the last two years.

Sri Lanka took over the Chairmanship in 2017, following on from a successful Chairmanship under the Government of Kuwait. During these last two years, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue's reputation as one of the world's most active regional consultative processes has continued to develop.

Under our Chairmanship, we have overseen a number of key developments. The four programmatic tracks, focused on the use of technology, skilling, domestic workers and information and orientation programmes, have been successfully implemented, with significant cooperation between a number of Member States on these programmes.

Moreover, all Member States have benefited from understanding, in greater detail, the purpose and outcomes of these programmatic tracks, shaping thinking across the region about policy development.

Sri Lanka's Chairmanship has also seen the development of the ADD as a forum, with a new website launched, and new thinking developed on how the ADD can be strengthened to the benefit of Member States, the results of which will be discussed at the Ministerial Consultation tomorrow.

The last two years have seen significant changes in terms of the global landscape relating to the governance of human mobility. The Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration will no doubt play a big part in how Member States think about policy development in the years to come. We have successfully

advocated for an active role for RCPs as the key state-led, multilateral fora for regional review of the GCM.

I wish the UAE the best of luck in their Chairmanship and am confident that they will continue to foster the ADD as a highly respected and valuable forum for regional cooperation.

Turning, briefly, to today's agenda.

I will ask the Secretariat, in a moment, to present an overview of the Report to the Excellencies the Ministers by the Chair-in-Office on developments between the fourth and fifth consultations. You should all have received copies of the Report. That will be followed by a review and the adoption of the draft agenda for the Fifth Ministerial Consultation, and discussion of any pertinent logistical issues.

If there are no comments, let me ask Dr Omar Al Nuaimi, Head of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue Secretariat, to present the report to their Excellencies the Ministers.

Thank you.

## **2. Review of Ministerial Agenda**

I'm grateful for Dr Al Nuaimi for his overview. I would welcome any comments on the Report to their Excellencies the Ministers.

If there are no *[further]* comments, perhaps we can turn to the draft Agenda for the Fifth Ministerial Consultation.

The Opening of the Fifth Ministerial Consultation will be preceded by two events this afternoon, starting at 14.15 after lunch.

The first will be a Panel Discussion on Improving Financial Literacy Among Domestic Workers. This will include presentations on financial awareness in pre-departure and post-arrival orientation programming, and a UAE-based online tool that facilitates access to banking and financial services for domestic workers. This panel will be open to all ADD participants, and I would encourage you all to attend. It finishes at 4.15 PM.

The second will be a special meeting of RCPs. In advance of tomorrow's High Level Panel Discussion on Inter-Regional Cooperation, representatives of RCPs from around the world will meet to discuss inter-regional cooperation among

RCPs and their collective input to global dialogues. A report on outcomes from the meeting will be presented to the High Level Panel Discussion tomorrow.

As I mentioned earlier, the official opening of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation will begin this evening at 6 PM. The session will include remarks by Ministers from Sri Lanka, the UAE and Kuwait as the Troika, and be followed by a handover ceremony between Sri Lanka and the UAE and keynote addresses by the Director General of IOM, the Chair of GFMD and the African Union's Commissioner for Social Affairs.

After a short presentation on fair recruitment and decent work at the forthcoming Dubai Expo, we will adjourn for a Gala Dinner.

Tomorrow's opening session will start at 9 AM with a High Level Panel Discussion on the Future of Work, which follows on from the ILO-facilitated Symposium during the April SOM. You will all, I believe, have received the background reports from the ILO and Steffen Hertog, which successfully encapsulate some of the key issues relating to the Future of Work.

At 10.30, there will be a second High Level Panel Discussion, on Inter-Regional Cooperation, with input from this afternoon's discussion amongst RCPs.

After a coffee break at 12 noon, we will reconvene for a Ministerial Discussion on ADD programmes, with a further presentation of the Report to their Excellencies by the Secretariat, and opportunities for Ministers to consider how these programmes can be further developed. We would encourage Member States interested in developing partnerships on these programmatic items to consider in advance how they might wish to signal their intention to participate.

After lunch at 2 PM, the Business Meeting will begin at 3.15 PM, with a presentation on the Recommendation on Strengthening Member State Participation in ADD, which has arisen from a discussion at the last SOM meeting.

The ADD will then conclude with a discussion and approval of the Ministerial Declaration.

We certainly have a very packed agenda ahead of us over the next 48 hours.

I would like to open the floor to any comments from Member States.

### **3. Closing Remarks**

If there are no [further] comments from Member States, I will proceed to declare the Draft Agenda for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Consultation adopted and proceed to

close this meeting. I'm grateful to you all for your participation and look forward to seeing you over lunch and in this afternoon's sessions.

Thank you.