

India's Statement at the Abu Dhabi Dialogue 2026

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Chair, the Sultanate of Oman, the host Government of the United Arab Emirates, and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue Secretariat for convening this important meeting and for their warm hospitality.

India values the Abu Dhabi Dialogue as a practical, results-oriented platform that strengthens trust and cooperation between countries of origin and destination. Over the years, it has promoted worker-centric, transparent, and ethical mobility pathways, moving beyond dialogue to deliver concrete solutions in recruitment processes, worker welfare, skills development, and institutional coordination.

For India, labour mobility is fundamentally about people. As international demand for talent and skills increases across professions, we are obviously today in the forefront to meet it. Millions of Indian workers and professionals contribute meaningfully to destination economies while supporting families and communities at home. With over 35 million Indians overseas, ours is the world's largest diaspora. In the year 2024-25, remittances reached approximately US\$135 billion, supporting education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and sustainable development. Yet we remain clear that remittances are an outcome of migration, not its purpose. The real measure of effective governance is whether a worker migrates safely, works with dignity, and receives timely support.

The discussions over the past two days have provided valuable insights. They highlighted how green transitions and technological change are reshaping migration patterns and skills needs, while underscoring the importance of stronger protection for vulnerable groups. These

deliberations have helped translate knowledge into actionable policy directions and have contributed to preparations for global processes such as IMRF.

The outcomes of the last Abu Dhabi Dialogue Ministerial Consultation provide valuable guidance. They emphasise stronger international cooperation, fair recruitment, financial inclusion of migrant workers, and portability of social benefits. These priorities align closely with the objectives of the Dialogue and offer practical pathways to strengthen governance, enhance skills recognition, and ensure balanced benefits for countries of origin and destination, as well as for migrant workers.

Excellencies,

We meet at a time of profound change. Demographic shifts, evolving skill demands, technological disruption and digitalisation are reshaping labour markets. India believes that achieving smarter and fairer labour mobility outcomes requires two essential elements: shared responsibility and credible, regular pathways. India has initiated wide-ranging skill training, vocational education, and professional preparation programmes to make its workforce more productive in the contemporary era. In coming years, our talent and skills will not only be a resource, but will be very much part of our branding and of our reputation.

Allow me to briefly outline India's approach.

India is steadily modernising its emigration framework, moving towards a more welfare-centric system that facilitates safe, legal, and orderly migration while strengthening safeguards. We are placing growing emphasis on transparency and accountability across the migration cycle.

In October 2024, India launched e-Migrate 2.0, a digital platform providing end-to-end visibility in overseas employment processes, verification of employment offers, simplified payments, and multilingual assistance. This is supported by a wider welfare ecosystem, including the Indian Community Welfare Fund, grievance redressal through the MADAD portal, pre-departure orientation programmes, and targeted skilling initiatives.

India is also strengthening ethical recruitment and structured mobility pathways through partnership-based and G2G frameworks that reduce exploitative intermediaries, improving skills recognition, and enhancing social protection for migrant workers. As the world's top recipient of remittances, India is working to reduce remittance costs through Digital Public Infrastructure. The integration of India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) with Real-Time Payment systems of partner countries, has the potential to reduce remittance costs by 30–40 percent. India has already signed MoUs with UAE and Qatar in GCC region.

Our approach is aligned with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. India remains committed to cooperative, rights-based migration governance. We have concluded diverse agreements, including Migration and Mobility Partnerships and Labour Mobility and Welfare MoUs, to strengthen regular migration pathways, streamline procedures, prevent irregular migration, promote skilled mobility, and deepen people-to-people ties. A new and modernised Emigration legislation is also in the pipeline to strengthen facilitation while ensuring necessary safeguards.

At the same time, we must collectively address emerging gaps. This requires stronger bilateral labour mobility

agreements with clear standards on wages, contracts, social security portability, and grievance redressal. Greater investment in skills forecasting and mutual recognition of qualifications is essential to align training systems with future labour market needs. Regular dialogue with digital platforms, combined with data-sharing and ethical recruitment safeguards, can ensure that innovation translates into decent and protected work.

Excellencies,

India remains deeply committed to regional cooperation on labour mobility. We believe platforms such as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue can deliver practical improvements in contract transparency, ethical recruitment, skills matching, grievance redressal, and welfare protection. Our success shall be judged not by declarations but by outcomes, by whether workers experience safer journeys, fair recruitment, decent work, and dignified return.

Let me once again congratulate the Government of UAE for hosting this meeting and for their leadership. India looks forward to continuing cooperation with all Member States in the spirit of partnership and mutual benefit.

Thank you.