I. **2016 Achievements: Highlights of Key Activities since 21st RCM**

The Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region, co-chaired by ESCWA, the League of Arab States and the International Organization for Migration, has been founded to coordinate the work programmes on international migration of regional actors in the Arab States region and to promote joint research on migration. Year 2016 saw the Food and Agriculture Organization joining the group as a new member, bringing the total membership to 16 participating organizations.¹

**Launch of the 2015 Situation Report**

In January 2016, the working group launched the first edition of a biennial report on international migration “The 2015 Situation Report on International Migration: Migration, Displacement and Development in a changing Arab Region”.²

Successful launch event and extensive media coverage generated wide interest in the report from a variety of stakeholders including Member States, policy makers and academicians with the report quickly becoming an essential knowledge resource and policy tool.

The launch was followed by extensive dissemination of the report which resulted in over 14,000 downloads from IOM’s website alone and further 1,000 downloads from ESCWA’s website. The findings were presented to wide audiences and fora including the European Parliament and the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration making the report an impactful tool in policy formulation and decision making in and outside the region alike. Most notably, the report was presented and featured in the following:

- Interview by the Spanish news agency EFE about the report which resulted in a news article [http://www.elconfidencial.com/ultima-hora-en-vivo/2016-01-20/paises-arabes-hospedan-el-mayor-numero-de-emigrantes-del-mundo-segun-oim_801463/] which was picked up by various Spanish speaking news portals in Spain and Latin America (January 2016)
- Presentation to the IOM International Dialogue on Migration 2016 (March 2016)
- Presentation of the finding of the report at a conference of the University of Southern Denmark and the University of Jordan “Migration and refugees in the Middle East: recent regional and international challenges and repercussions” (April 2016)

¹ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), the League of Arab States (LAS), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Entity for Gender Empowerment (UN-Women), and the World Health Organization (WHO)

2016 Progress Report for the RCM
Working Group on International Migration
Chair: LAS, IOM, and UN-ESCWA

- Presentation and distribution of copies at the Extraordinary meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration (ARPC) in preparation of the High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants (August 2016), attended by 18 Arab member States, Arab Organizations, Arab Parliament and UN agencies
- Presentation to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament (August 2016)
- Presentation at UN Habitat Expert Group Meeting “Migration and Inclusive Cities in the Arab World” (October 2016)
- And utilized in “Certificate on Migration Governance” training course for Egyptian government officials by IOM in cooperation with the Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies / American University in Cairo (November 2016)

2016 Mapping Report

In August 2016, the working group published a mapping survey of existing programmes and activities on international migration and displacement in the Arab region. This second mapping report of the working group, “Mapping Report of Programmes, Projects and Activities, 2016”, charts the endeavors of its member organizations in the field of migration.3

Other Activities, Meetings and Events

- Working Level Meeting of the members of the working group (January 2016)
- Telephone conference on 2017 Situation Report (August 2016)
- Expert Group Meeting on the 2017 Situation Report (November 2016)

II. Main Activities and Outputs Planned for 2017

Production and launch of the 2017 Situation Report

The 2017 Report will build on the 2015 edition and further work towards redressing the knowledge deficit on international migration in the Arab region by providing a multi-disciplinary and comprehensive overview of relevant contemporary migration trends and their economic and social consequences in the Arab region for policy makers, researchers and practitioners. The main objectives of the 2017 report are as follows:

- Provide an update on the 2015 Situation Report describing the principal migration trends and patterns in the Arab region (labour migration, forced displacement, mixed migration flows, and presentation of the latest data based on UN Population Division’s Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2015 Revision and complemented by other relevant data sources).

• Give an overview of developments in migration governance in the Arab region between 2015 and 2017. The report will outline national policy developments by thematic areas similarly to the 2015 edition (labour migration, human trafficking, irregular migration, expatriate engagement, forced displacement and other).

• Provide an in-depth examination of a topic of focus. The topic selected as a result of a mapping exercise of the activities of member agencies of the Working Group and in full consideration of the needs and knowledge gaps in the region will be centered around supporting the achievement of migration-related SDGs and commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Training workshop

Policy gaps mapped out in the 2015 situation report and inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda as well as the commitments in the New York Declaration (September 2016) indicate that countries will require support in developing national strategies to address challenges and opportunities linked to international migration and development including the development of national action plans and indicators. As such, the UN system at large is expecting to see an increase in Member Countries’ requests for technical assistance and advice in the field of international migration and displacement.

The working group is planning to build on the successful training workshop that took place in LAS HQ in Cairo, 15-18 September 2014 on the topic of International Migration and Development and attended by eight LAS member states and offer further training opportunities in the coming year. Following the first workshop, participating countries expressed interest in support with a number of migration related work including capacity assessments on country levels, assessment of existing policies, programmes, and national coordination mechanisms. They also expressed need for further training for officials of member countries on a range of topics such as labour migration, displacement and development, migrant rights, migration and development and human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

III. Decisions Requested from the Members of the RCM (if any)

n/a