



## **Second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**

### **Item 2. Review of progress and challenges with regard to implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Asia and the Pacific**

4 February 2025

Migration is an inevitable reality for the States in Asia and the Pacific and the millions of people who move in different ways and with varying motivations in and from the region.

We are seeing today across the region the urgent need to put in place predictable measures and mechanisms to protect the human rights of migrants and their families. Such pathways are a concrete demonstration of every State's sovereign responsibility to manage its borders in a way that upholds legal obligations and principles of solidarity. Expanding and diversifying human rights and humanitarian pathways is also fully in line with the GCM's objectives and guiding principles.

In this region, the UN Human Rights Office has mapped existing legal, policy or administrative mechanisms that enable regular travel, admission and stay, and found not only gaps but also promising practices. For example, every State in our study granted wide-ranging residual discretionary powers to government authorities to authorise entry and stay of certain groups of migrants. Such discretionary mechanisms can be an expression of compassion or international cooperation and solidarity and are able to render flexible responses to entry and stay needs. We recall however that discretionary decisions should be based on clear and transparent criteria in order to avoid discrimination and abuses of power.

Similarly, pathways that enable entry for medical treatment or to study, which are also available in many countries in the region, may permit migrants to realise human rights, such as the right to education or the right to health, particularly where the treatment or study is unavailable in the country of origin or where removal from the host country would cause a breach of these rights.

We know that insufficient pathways to regular migration, or prohibitive barriers to accessing those, do not prevent irregular migrations. What these restrictions do is make the migration cycle more dangerous for the migrant and create conditions of uncertainty for States. They fuel the growth of predatory industries, allow discrimination and abuse by actors at borders, and they make the situation of already vulnerable individuals more precarious.

We should also be concerned about what these pathways look like, what and whose needs they are responding to. More channels alone will not make a difference in the protection landscape if they are inaccessible or unresponsive or do not address the needs of those who need them. Instead, we urgently call for more and better pathways that underscore our collective commitment to uphold the dignity and human rights of every individual on the move.