

**Global Compact for Migration Adoption Conference
Opening Ceremony
Marrakech, 10 December 2018**

**Statement delivered by
Mr. Erol Kiresepi, President of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE)**

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- Mr President of the conference, Secretary-General, Madam President of the General Assembly, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- I am honoured to represent the private sector at this intergovernmental conference to formally adopt a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (GCM).
- Je remercie particulièrement Sa Majesté le Roi du Maroc pour l'accueil et l'hospitalité qui nous sont réservés.
- I speak as President of the International Organisation of Employers. IOE members are 155 representative business organizations in 144 countries, which together represent more than 50 million companies of every size, the largest global business network. I also speak as the CEO of a leading company in the Turkish pharmaceutical industry.
- Allow me first to congratulate the governments for proving that intensive and coherent multi-stakeholder dialogue can result in concrete outcomes, even in the case of such sensitive and complex issues as migration.
- The private sector has a three-pronged stake in well-regulated migration frameworks: to fill skills shortages; ensure social stability; and contribute to the protection of the most vulnerable migrant workers. Let me turn to the economic aspect of this highly political issue.
- Almost everywhere, businesses face skills and talent shortages. By 2030, the shortage of around 85 million people could cost trillions of dollars in lost economic opportunity. The global manufacturing industry alone could experience a deficit of almost 8 million workers¹.
- Continued access to the right skills and experience is one of business's biggest concerns and investing in talent acquisition and skills development is a priority.
- Too restrictive migration policies hamper growth. If skills are not available locally and hiring talent from abroad becomes too costly, companies, particularly SMEs, cannot compete and create new jobs.
- The world of work is changing fast. We believe the GCM will help respond to the new realities.

¹ ["The Global Talent Crunch"](#), Korn Ferry Institute, May 2018

- Social and political instability engenders reluctance to invest in new capital or new markets and may encourage relocation. Nationalistic calls for simplistic approaches on migration raise concerns in the business community.
- Business is already sharing expertise with policy-makers in identifying long-term solutions and to facilitate transitions from the informal to the formal economy.
- Well-functioning legal pathways for workers can help to reduce irregular and unlawful recruitment practices. Companies alone cannot enforce regulations; but can support governments in promoting regulations and enforcement mechanisms to ensure responsible recruitment.
- Let me be clear: given the complexity and confusion surrounding this issue, the business community wants to commit in an organized manner, rather than individually. For almost 100 years, the IOE has taken the lead on effectively coordinating business. In 2016, we established a dynamic network of companies committed to well-functioning migration policies. But we can and must do more.
- I am proud to present today the Employers' Marrakech Declaration, which sets out the immediate needs of companies; ways of partnering with the private sector; and recommendations to governments.

Excellencies,

- Your very presence indicates that your government fully embraces the mutual benefits of cooperation.
- With multilateralism under increasing pressure, the reform envisioned by the UN Secretary-General offers an opportunity to make the United Nations more flexible, effective and better equipped to respond to current and emerging challenges. The success of this reform will re-build trust and confidence in multilateralism.
- Business needs more ambitious regulatory frameworks for skills mobility and governments need the private sector to better argue the business case for well-designed migration policies.
- Partnering with the right business groups will make the difference. The UN must engage with the most legitimate and representative business organizations, who alone understand the realities on the ground and can advise and act accordingly.
- The IOE and its member organisations are effective partners to fully implement the GCM. The IOE firmly commits to redoubling its efforts, with your help Mr. Secretary-General, to further mobilize the private sector to the benefit of the United Nations and its member states.
- We look forward to strengthening our partnership, starting here in Marrakech. Today marks only the beginning.
- I wish you a successful conference. Thank you.