

**Statement for Opening of the 10th GFMD Summit
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Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

I begin by thanking the Federal Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel and the Government of Germany for hosting the 10th GFMD Summit. I am very pleased to represent today the Business Mechanism and to share our business perspective on migration for the second time at a GFMD Summit.

The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants makes an unequivocal case for the benefits and opportunities for safe, orderly and regular migration in furtherance of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Significantly, it invites the private sector and civil society to participate in multiple stakeholder alliances to support efforts to implement the migration commitments of this historic document through a global compact.

The business community is an important private sector stakeholder and is recognized as such through the establishment of the Business Mechanism by the Global Forum on Migration and Development. The Business Mechanism was established in 2016 by the GFMD to assure that the private employers of all sizes would have a seat at the table in presenting more effective, transparent and humane migration policies taking into account labor market needs and economic perspectives. This platform serves as a vehicle to channel the voice of business in the development of migration policy by articulating the priorities of the private sector and bringing its expertise to the shared goals of the UN member states and civil society.

The Business Mechanism presented a detailed report entitled “The Business Case for Migration” at the 9th Annual Meeting of the GFMD in Bangladesh. Moreover, the second annual Business Mechanism Thematic Meeting was held in Geneva in April with the theme of strengthening the public-private dialogue in achieving the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The goals of the global compact for safe, orderly, regular migration and the requirements of businesses which rely upon migrant workers must be aligned.

I would like to briefly outline how these goals affect the business community. To facilitate orderly migration, it is crucial to focus upon governance through a comprehensive migration plan that recognizes the needs of the workforce while safeguarding the welfare of migrants. Policy makers should recognize labor market needs and modern business practices. Migration policies should be predictable and coherent. These processes must be consistent and transparent. All elements of the process must be shielded from corruption and exploitation. These basic principles pertain to any immigration regime and should be set forth in the Compact.

Low skilled migration must be addressed as a source of employees, particularly for medium and small employers. Legal pathways must be established for low skilled migrants to provide services in short supply, lawfully. The practice of employing irregular migrants is pervasive and conducive to trafficking and other forms of human exploitation. Finally, addressing irregular migration is a political imperative given it is a major cause of the negative public perception of migration and belies security concerns.

Priorities of the Business Mechanism include encouraging circular migration beyond traditional seasonal work to include new sectors such as the introduction of job sharing schemes. Governments should support and encourage systems to promote and support entrepreneurial investment. Responsible recruitment is another high priority to assure that companies recruiting abroad and recruitment agencies assure transparency in their labor supply chain and ensure that all recruitment activities are performed in accordance with ethical recruitment principles and local legislation. Development of innovative systems to facilitate placement of migrant workers with employment opportunities is also an important topic for the GCM, including skills identification and matching, skills assessment, certification and recognition, and skills development and integration. The major role of the private sector is to provide jobs and this can be facilitated by electronic cutting edge solutions to allow for the matching of global talent to private sector demand across enterprises and size of employer. Global skills partnerships should be encouraged where a country in need of skills trains workers abroad to return and fill that need. Predictable legal and regulatory regimes with timely outcomes are necessary for migrants. Hopefully, the GCM will espouse these principles as well.

Finally, the private sector has a unique role to play in changing the public narrative about labor migrants and the need for their services. This advocacy

would include creating awareness of the causes of migration, the contribution of foreign talent to the economy, the realities of skills gaps, mismatches and demographics, the win-win that can be achieved for both the country of origin and the host country, and a condemnation of xenophobia and prejudiced anti-alien rhetoric.

The Business Mechanism is only one year old, yet the global business community has long advocated for policies that facilitate labour migration. We invite you to attend the business meeting tomorrow afternoon to discuss common priorities toward a global compact for migration that takes into account labour market needs. We look forward to engaging in constructive discussions in the next days. Thank you.