



International Organisation of Employers
Organisation Internationale des Employeurs
Organización Internacional de Empleadores
The Global Voice of Business



Statement to the Special Session on the Forum

International Organization of Employers

Tenth Global Forum on Migration and Development

The IOE fully endorses the continuation of the GFMD, as an essential platform to engage in multi-stakeholder discussion and improve global migration management. Although the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (GCM) will be adopted in 2018, this does not mean that the work on migration will be complete. Migration is a phenomenon which will only increase over time and labour migration as a proportionate share. The phenomenon will continue far beyond the completion of the GCM and will grow as a factor in development. Therefore, after the adoption of the GCM, the GFMD should shift its function to support the outcomes of the GCM, and provide a platform for review and evaluation of policies.

In 2015, under the Turkish chair, GFMD participating States expressed support for the implementation of the Business Mechanism. After the 2016 summit in Bangladesh, the Business Mechanism was endorsed as a permanent feature of the GFMD. The Business Mechanism is an essential part of the GFMD, as it provides a platform for the private sector to express their concerns, interests, and recommendations in migration policy based upon substantial experience and expertise. It helps mobilize business around global migration issues and voice the many benefits of migration. As a key stakeholder, business must retain this key platform for contributing to the global conversation on migration.

The Business Mechanism supports a well-designed migration system that implements predictable, efficient, and transparent policies to facilitate labour migration. Skills mobility is an essential factor in the 21st century, where globalization and technology have created an environment of fast-paced international markets and evolving workplace opportunities. Businesses will continue to need access to talent in order to fill talent gaps in local labour markets, build innovative products and services, and remain competitive in global markets. Businesses are working with governments in a variety of forums to address the challenges presented by global skills gaps and the future of work and the GFMD must be a part of that discussion. This requires public-private partnerships that leverage technology and innovative tools to ensure that all workers are trained and welcomed into the workforce, that systems exist to efficiently identify and certify skills and that workers are able to move for opportunities whether across country or around the world.

Migrant entrepreneurship is another important topic of interest to the private sector which directly impacts upon development. Migrants are some of the most creative and innovative agents in society. However, there must be greater access to capital, entrepreneurial training and skills development programmes, so that migrants can realistically pursue their entrepreneurial goals. Expansion of circular migrations and new essential worker programmes can help facilitate the entry of new migrant entrepreneurs and provide opportunities to start and grow new businesses.

Abundant research shows that migration is an overall positive phenomenon that can contribute to economic growth and development. Migration, however, is not without costs. Business can assist governments in making the case for creating more legal pathways for migrant workers while streamlining cumbersome visa processes and protecting human rights through diminishing opportunities for abuse.



Better legal processes will encourage all stakeholders to work within legal systems -- rather than encouraging non-scrupulous actors to act outside the legal system. In addition, promoting safe, orderly and regular migration will help fight the xenophobic rhetoric that incites anti-alien sentiment.

While employers are invested in the need for a mobile workforce, this is not the only interest of business in regards to migration. Employers are also essential actors in helping to address the challenge of integration into the host society. Business plays a very constructive role in providing experience and structures which facilitate integration. Workplace training and pre-departure orientations are two examples of integration practices that businesses offer. Recognizing the expertise that the private sector can contribute is paramount to successful host society integration.

United Nations' member states are working toward a global framework on migration that should align with labour market needs, allowing for greater labour mobility. Recognizing that most migrants leave their countries in search of better jobs, the GCM must focus policies on key issues related to labour migration. After the adoption of the GCM in 2018, the GFMD should be dedicated to reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the GCM. As a voluntary, non-binding and informal process, the GFMD can continue to provide a platform to exchange best-practice examples and concrete experience, specifically on the implementation of the GCM. The GFMD has garnered a wealth of information in all aspects of migration and has proven to be a productive platform for various stakeholders to engage, including the private sector.

To move forward, the GFMD will need a deeper empirical base to advance the business case for migration. Pending available financial resources, the Business Mechanism could work on research projects dedicated to an analysis of best practices in migration policy (including enhanced pathways for labour migration and developing a methodology for identifying skills demands) and the identification of the challenges that will arise as nature of work evolves. The Business Mechanism is currently funded by the government of Switzerland, the European Union, The Coca Cola Company, the IOE and the Bertelsmann Stiftung. Additional funding will be needed to ensure the viability of the platform in the future, as well as a meaningful contribution of businesses to this State-led process.

Through the GFMD Business Mechanism, the IOE will continue to support the GFMD process, and engage in constructive dialogue for more safe, regular and orderly migration.

Sincerely,

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