

GFMD ATHENS – 4 AND 5 NOVEMBER 2009

SUMMARY REPORT TO PLENARY - ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS 3.1 AND 3.2

(by Mrs. Eva Haagenen, Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, Norway)

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,

I will report to you on the two sessions held in Roundtable 3:

3.1 Policy and Institutional Coherence – Latest Data and Research Findings

and

3.2 Regional and interregional processes and fora

Roundtable 3.1

Roundtable session 3.1 brought together GFMD participating governments, international organizations and non-governmental experts for an in-depth discussion of policy and institutional coherence, data and research, and the relationship between policy coherence and data and research. The session generated a very rich discussion, with country representatives outlining the wide variety of structures that have been put in place to encourage greater coherence in policy making in the field of migration and development, including institutional arrangements within government, and for integrating migration into development planning. It highlighted the importance placed on data and research, both in order to enable evidence-based policy making by governments, and to inform public debate. Participants also highlighted that the issue is not just the need for more and better data and research on migration and development, but also to make this comparable and accessible for policy makers, and to prioritize those areas that are of concrete policy relevance. In order to take these issues forward, the session discussed and suggested the following outcomes:

1. The GFMD should pursue its focus on policy and institutional coherence on migration and development, as well as on research and data that can underpin such coherence.
2. The 2010 GFMD to be held in Mexico should again include a Roundtable session to discuss these issues.

3. Sustained attention needs to be paid to mainstreaming and integrating migration into development planning processes, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and National Adaptation Plans of Action concerning climate change (NAPAs). This applies to destination, transit, and origin countries. Given the wide range of models being pursued for improving policy and institutional coherence, continual assessment and evaluation of approaches and policies will be important to help us learn the lessons of experience.
4. Migration Profiles can help us to take this forward. The European Commission, IOM and others committed to pursue their work on such migration profiles, and the EC announced its interest to report to the next GFMD meeting on progress made in this context. Profiles should be seen as a process rather than a product, templates need to be flexible and adapted to individual country needs, and the governments of concerned countries need to be fully involved in their preparation and implementation in order to create the ownership necessary for the profiles to provide an effective basis for policy making. Capacity building for government and civil society will also often be necessary to optimize this process.
5. The 2010 global census round will provide an important opportunity for all member States to include migration and development questions in order to advance our knowledge in this area. National statistical offices need to be included in this process, and the UN Statistical Commission should take this up as an issue at their upcoming meeting in February 2010. Furthermore, the May 2009 'Migrants Count' report of the Commission on International Migration Data for Development Research and Policy provides a valuable roadmap for governments and experts to improve data collection and analysis, and thus our understanding of the issues.
6. Finally, a number of governments and organizations strongly supported the continuation of the work of the GFMD ad-hoc Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data, and Research in order to: (1) continue to provide an appropriate interface between government policy makers and expert researchers, (2) to discuss ways to improve the utility and prioritization of policy-relevant evidence, (3) to ensure that the issue of policy and institutional coherence and data can also be discussed in between the annual GFMD meetings, and (4) also to contribute to preparations for future GFMD meetings. This working group is voluntary and open, and includes both interested GFMD participating governments, experts from civil society and academia, and international organizations.

I now proceed to

Roundtable 3.2

Roundtable session 3.2 addressed both the Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) and Interregional Fora that deal with migration, including migration's relationship with development and other priority issues that are of concern to specific regions and sub-regions.

Special presentations were made at the beginning of the session by

- Australia (session co-chair) on the June 2009 RCPs meeting in Bangkok

- Ecuador on the South American Conference on Migration and the Quito Declaration
- France on the Paris 2008 Euro-African Conference/Rabat Process, and the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM)
- Indonesia on the Bali Process
- Bangladesh on the Colombo Process
- the IOM Director General Swing on RCPs
- an expert on the current study on the impacts and outputs of RCPs.

These statements provided a useful overview of the many significant achievements made by such processes and fora, their focus and different approaches and by those processes and fora that include development considerations in their agendas.

This was followed by a very rich discussion where governments offered additional views on the practice and action related to the work of RCPs, i.e. that the level and scope of participation in RCPs vary in terms of geographic coverage and specific activity, that certain RCP agendas include development considerations and others not, that in some agendas issues such as social, economic, border management, employment, and capacity building are addressed, that questions related to non-discrimination and human rights are also dealt with in certain processes, and that the current network of RCPs has to some extent attained a global reach. The report on the June 2009 Bangkok meeting of all Heads of RCPs in Bangkok provided additional information on specific and different RCP approaches and activities and also stressed the mutually reinforcing role of RCPs and the GFMD. Comments offered on the current assessment of the impact and outputs of RCPs added further insights. In addition a number of participants commented on the practices of RCPs and interregional fora in translating non-binding dialogue into concrete action and implementation of outcomes.

We also heard a series of comments on key interregional fora that have from the outset included development considerations in their agendas, including the Euro-African Conference which pursue a comprehensive approach to specific interregional challenges, *inter alia* based on the EU's Global Approach to Migration that builds on partnerships between countries of origin, transit and destination in the area of legal migration, combating illegal migration and the link between migration and development, and progressively defines policy orientations shared by all countries. The three-year cooperation programme adopted at the conference includes more than 100 recommendations for specific action to be undertaken in this context.

While not all RCPs deal specifically with development issues, participants agreed on the mutually reinforcing role of the GFMD and interregional fora and certain RCPs and that the GFMD discussions on migration and development have usefully contributed to a number of regional and interregional processes and fora.

In terms of specific outcomes the session endorsed the following recommendations:

1. During its next three meetings until 2012, the GFMD should continue holding a roundtable session that offers space for interested governments and other actors to exchange views and share information on RCPs, interregional fora, and regional organizations and economic integration processes, including reporting on relevant achievements, with particular emphasis on the development implications of migration.

2. In between GFMD meetings, RCPs and interregional fora should on a voluntary basis exchange information, including by providing such information to the GFMD website and by creating a link between the GFMD website and the enhanced IOM RCP website section.
3. To further promote mutually enforcing discussions between the GFMD and RCPs and interregional fora, for the purpose of learning from each other and ensuring that interested RCPs and interregional fora take on board relevant findings and recommendations that result from GFMD discussions on migration and development.
4. Finally, referring to follow-up activities undertaken by RCPs and interregional fora, including by means of working groups of countries interested in specific follow-up action and implementation of concrete outcomes, a number of participants mentioned the positive experiences made with such mechanisms which could also usefully inspire the follow-up to outcomes and recommendations resulting from the discussions of the GFMD.

I thank you for your attention.