



Manila, Philippines, 27-30 October 2008

**ROUNDTABLE 3: POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL COHERENCE
AND PARTNERSHIPS
(Coordinator – Dr. R.K. Jenny)**

<p style="text-align: center;">Roundtable Session 3.3 Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs), Inter-regional Consultative Fora and Regional Organizations and Economic Integration Processes at the Interface of Migration and Development¹ Co-chairs: Government of France Government of Brazil Thursday, 30 October 2008 14.00 – 16.30</p>

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The management of migration is a sovereign right of states and as such has traditionally been dealt with at the national level. However, states have increasingly recognized the important role of inter-state dialogue and cooperation in enhancing the prospects for successful and mutually-beneficial migration, including migration which contributes to development objectives.

Throughout the world, there are a number of regional and inter-regional fora for discussions on migration, many of which also address the links between migration and development. These can be grouped into three general categories:

- Regional Consultative Processes on migration (RCPs);
- Inter-regional consultative fora; and
- Regional organizations and economic integration processes.

The fora in the first category, RCPs, were created specifically to address migration issues and do not necessarily focus on the migration-development nexus. RCPs are state-led informal groups made up of representatives of states in a given region, or like-minded states in one or more regions

¹ This paper has been drafted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in consultation with the 3.3 Roundtable session co-chairs France and Brazil and the Roundtable coordinator. It also draws on comments and inputs from the 3.3 Roundtable session team member governments and from input and findings of international organizations. The aim of the paper is to inform and facilitate the discussion of Roundtable session 3.3 during the Manila GFMD meeting in October 2008. It is not exhaustive in its treatment of the RT 3.3 theme, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the GFMD organizers, or the governments or organizations involved in the GFMD process. Any reproduction, in part or whole, of this document, should cite the source.

with common migration interests. Participants in RCPs come together in pursuit of coordination and in some instances coherence on migration issues through informal and non-binding dialogue and information exchange. RCPs also provide a framework for capacity building and technical assistance.

The second category involves inter-regional consultative fora. Several significant such fora group together countries of origin, transit and destination in different parts of the world. They share information and experiences and seek to find common solutions in the area of migration and the migration-development context. They thus also offer useful good practices and “lessons learned”.

The third category involves regional and sub-regional organizations and economic integration processes that have in recent years added migration to their agendas, providing yet another venue for inter-state cooperation on migration.

This paper seeks to increase awareness of these various fora for inter-state dialogue on migration and development at the regional and inter-regional levels without promoting any one model or approach. Each forum is unique, with its own objectives and obstacles to realizing those objectives. Furthermore, it must be noted that all of these consultative mechanisms operate in the broader context of increasing inter-state cooperation on migration, including not only at the levels previously mentioned but also at the bilateral and global levels.

It is also important to recognize that many of the phenomena that are defining the contemporary world have implications for migration management and inter-state cooperation on migration. One such phenomenon is globalization and its impact on the movement of people, such as the increase in the number of multinational businesses and their desire to recruit and relocate their personnel around the world. Another is environmental degradation and climate change, which increasingly contribute to or directly cause the movement of populations. A further factor is demographic change.

The structure of this paper is as follows: Chapter 1 surveys forms of inter-state dialogue on migration and the regional and inter-regional levels, particularly those with the capacity to effect positive development outcomes. Specifically, Chapter 2 first provides an update of the activities of RCPs on migration and development-related matters following the discussion held on the subject at the first Global Forum on Migration and Development in Brussels in July 2007 (GFMD 2007), 2) looks at various inter-regional fora for consultations on migration and development, and 3) provides an overview of the consideration of migration in several regional organizations and economic integration processes, with an emphasis on migration and development issues. While recognizing that the objectives of the fora described in Chapter 2 vary, Chapter 3 identifies some common challenges faced by these fora. Finally, Chapter 4 proposes a series of questions to guide the discussion in Manila and offers several “possible ways forward” with a view towards facilitating the work of delegates participating in Session 3.3 to identify practical and action-oriented outcomes.

2. EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

The following outlines some forms of inter-state dialogue on migration at the regional and inter-regional levels, particularly those with the capacity to effect positive development outcomes

2.1 Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) on migration

Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) are informal, state-led fora created specifically to address migration issues, which are usually established outside any formal institutional setting. While their core participants are states, representatives of international organizations also frequently participate as members or observers, and international organizations are often tasked with a secretariat-type role. A few RCPs also involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs), generally on a limited basis.

RCPs perform a variety of functions, including promoting the sharing of information, experiences and good practices between states and fostering cooperation on migration matters at the regional level. They often have a capacity building function. At GFMD 2007, Session 3.4 on “Regional Migration Consultation Processes and Development: Advancing Cooperation” was dedicated to RCPs. Session 3.4 took place in the framework of Roundtable 3 on “Enhancing policy and institutional coherence and promoting partnerships.”

As discussed during GFMD 2007 Session 3.4, most RCPs are not specifically focused on the migration-development nexus. However, they can offer some good practices and “lessons learned” in international cooperation in areas such as capacity building, policy coherence and governance with respect to migration and development. For additional information on the major RCPs and their involvement in migration and development issues, readers are invited to consult the background document for GFMD 2007 Session 3.4 and the GFMD 2007 summary and final reports (available at www.gfmd-fmmd.org).

Participants in GFMD 2007 Session 3.4 recognized the role that RCPs could play to strengthen and support the contribution of migration to development objectives. A number of recommendations and proposed actions were put forward, focusing on greater integration of development considerations into the agendas of RCPs (where the focus and structure of RCPs allow it); promoting closer linkages and information exchange between RCPs and other regional and inter-regional fora (formal and informal), as appropriate; encouraging a more systematic evaluation of RCPs’ achievements and impacts; and ensuring sustainable two-way information flow between RCPs and the GFMD.²

2.1.1 Selected updates on activities of RCPs since GFMD 2007

The background document for GFMD 2007 Session 3.4 described the involvement of RCPs in migration and development issues. Rather than repeating that information, the following paragraphs provide an update; specifically, they describe three developments involving RCPs since GFMD 2007 that are directly relevant to the migration-development linkage. See also Annex A (“Major RCPs by Thematic Priority”) and Annex B (“RCPs’ Development-Related Initiatives and Policy Coherence”), which together with the background paper for GFMD 2007 Session 3.4 provide a more comprehensive overview of RCP coverage and engagement in migration and development.

3

Establishment of new RCPs

In Eastern Africa

In May 2008, the six East African states constituting the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) launched a new RCP (“IGAD-RCP”) at a workshop on “Inter-state and Intra-regional Cooperation on Migration Management” in Addis Ababa. Prior to IGAD-RCP, there was no RCP in this region. The core functions of IGAD-RCP are to promote the common position of the IGAD Member States and the African Union (AU) as provided in the Migration Policy Framework for Africa and to facilitate regional dialogue and cooperation on migration policy issues amongst the IGAD Member States.

Migration and development is explicitly part of the IGAD-RCP agenda. For example, IGAD-RCP’s responsibilities include (a) promoting dialogue on migration and development (in addition to other topics); (b) building capacity and facilitating implementation of the Migration Policy Framework for Africa, the African Common Position on Migration and Development, the Joint European Union (EU)–Africa Declaration on Migration and Development, the Ouagadougou Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings Especially Women and Children, and the

² See *Report of the first meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development*, pp. 130-138.

³ Annexes A and B are updated versions of the Annexes attached to the background document for GFMD 2007 Session 3.4.

Africa-EU Strategic Partnership; and (c) encouraging and assisting Member States to integrate migration issues into their national development plans, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), in order to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In Asia

Another major RCP development in 2008 was the establishment of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue between Asian countries of origin and destination. This is the first RCP engaging the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 on inter-regional dialogue below.

A workshop of the Inter-Governmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants (APC), entitled “Regional Consultative Process: Insights from the Global Forum on Migration and Development”, took place in Phnom Penh in August 2007. One subject was to examine the results of GFMD 2007 and how APC could be strengthened, drawing upon the recommendations of GFMD 2007. The workshop provided an opportunity to discuss the relevance of the work of the GFMD to the APC region, and practical ways in which the APC might contribute to future international dialogue on migration issues, including the GFMD.

Consultation among RCPs

IOM will organize a two-day consultation among the secretariats and chairing governments of major RCPs, to be held in 2009.⁴ The consultation will further facilitate and deepen exchanges among RCPs and explore ways to harness future opportunities for greater cross-fertilization. It will also highlight the benefits of RCPs and explore ways that RCPs might be further strengthened. In addition, it will provide an opportunity for RCPs to share information about their respective activities and achievements (including in the area of migration and development). It will explore the participants’ views on what the GFMD could learn from RCPs, particularly in terms of those areas of activity that could have a significant impact on the capacity of migration to achieve positive development outcomes, and consider how opportunities for greater cross-fertilization of ideas between the GFMD and RCPs might be harnessed.

2.2 Inter-regional consultative fora

Several inter-regional consultative fora address the migration-development nexus and can offer good practices and “lessons learned” for inter-state cooperation on migration and development issues. Some of these fora are relatively new. While in some cases the fora discussed below act in an informal, non-binding context, some also involve more formal commitments and take place at high-level government level. Because it is not possible to survey all relevant fora, the objective of this section is to provide illustrative examples and highlight recent developments and good practices. One of the objectives of the second GFMD in Manila is also to promote more awareness of the activities and contributions of these inter-regional fora in the field of migration and development.

Abu Dhabi Dialogue

One recent practical example of inter-regional consultation is the groundbreaking January 2008 Ministerial gathering of the 11 Colombo Process⁵ Asian labour countries of origin together with 9 key countries of destination for their workers in the Gulf and elsewhere in Asia,⁶ referred to as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. The outcome is the Abu Dhabi Declaration, through which the participating

⁴ This consultation will be supported by funding provided by the Government of Australia, and IOM is currently seeking contributions from other interested donors.

⁵ The Colombo Process is formally known as the Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia. Its members are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, and Sri Lanka.

⁶ These were the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States, Yemen and two additional Asian countries of destination, namely Malaysia and Singapore.

states decided to launch a collaborative approach to address temporary labour mobility and maximize its benefits for development.

Four key areas were identified for partnership between these countries of origin and destination through which they wish to foster information sharing, promote capacity building, technical cooperation and interstate cooperation. These include partnerships in: (1) enhancing knowledge in the areas of: labour market trends, skills profiles, temporary contractual workers and remittances policies and flows and their interplay with development in the region; (2) building capacity for effective matching of labour demand and supply; (3) preventing illegal recruitment practices and promoting welfare and protection measures for contractual workers, supportive of their well being and preventing their exploitation at origin and destination; and (4) developing a framework for a comprehensive approach to managing the entire cycle of temporary contractual mobility that fosters the mutual interests of countries of origin and destination.

Since the dialogue, attention has been focused on undertaking concrete pilot activities to give effect to these partnerships and inform the development of a regional multilateral framework, with a next meeting of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue planned for 2010 to review progress in implementation.

Ibero-American Community

The 2005 Declaration of Salamanca established international migration as a primary topic of the Ibero-American Community. The Ibero-American Summit in 2006 focused on migration and development and resulted in the Commitment of Montevideo, which emphasizes the positive contribution of migration to development within the framework of principles of international human rights law, management of migration in the context of Ibero-American development and the promotion and strengthening of human rights. The Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development (FIBEMYD) held in Cuenca, Ecuador in April 2008 focused on exchange of good practices and joint actions in the field of migration and development, and the consolidation of cooperation initiatives to follow up and implement the various Ibero-American action points. It was charged with designing an action plan on migration that promotes the protection of the human rights of migrants. Further; it explored the linkages between migration, development and human rights; analyzed good practices in migration management and proposed ways to implement them in the Ibero-American area; and was intended to strengthen efficient coordination, cooperation and convergence modalities.

The Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) has become an observer organization of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM or “Puebla Process”), promoting dialogue between the two groups.

The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP)

The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) also addresses migration and the migration-development nexus. The ACP Brussels Declaration on Asylum, Migration and Mobility, adopted in 2006, recognizes the relationship between migration and development, and implementation of the related Plan of Action will result in the establishment of an intra-ACP Migration Facility. The Facility aims at contributing to the integration of migration issues into economic and social development policies of the ACP countries, with three interdependent components: (i) the creation of an intra-ACP Migration Observatory for the collection, analysis and application of data on ACP migration through a network of research institutes in the six ACP regions; (ii) reinforcement of the institutional capacity of the six ACP areas and those of the Ministries of 12 ACP pilot countries in the field of migration (in relation to development); and (iii) reinforcement of the capacity of civil society in ACP countries to take part in dialogues on migration issues.

Furthermore, in May 2008, the second Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Asylum, Migration and Mobility of the ACP states adopted the Brussels Resolution on Migration and Development, which the Ministers have requested to be presented at GFMD 2008.

Europe / Africa

Consultations between the European and African regions on the migration and development linkage have been ongoing for many years. Just a few recent examples include the 5+5 Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean since 2002; the Euro-Africa Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development held in Rabat in July 2006 (resulting in the Euro-African Partnership for Migration and Development Rabat Declaration and related Action Plan); the EU-Africa Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development held in Tripoli in November 2006 (resulting in the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development, or “Tripoli Declaration”); and the EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon in December 2007 (resulting in the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, which identifies migration and development as a priority area and encompasses the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, which will aim to implement the Tripoli Declaration).

Preparations are currently underway for the second Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development, to be held in Paris on 21 October 2008. This Ministerial Conference is being prepared through three expert meetings, each of which focuses on one major component of the Rabat Action Plan, namely: legal migration; irregular migration; and migration and development. Each preparatory meeting is jointly prepared by one EU country and one country of origin and/or transit. The objective of the Paris Conference is to identify concrete proposals and operational responses to the migratory challenges identified in the Rabat Action Plan.

In July 2008, the “Union pour la Méditerranée”, a community of EU Member States and countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, was launched. While migration has not yet been specifically mentioned, it is expected that migration and development-related matters will be of interest in the framework of this initiative.

Europe / ACP

The EU and the ACP states signed a Partnership Agreement in Cotonou in 2000 which was revised in 2005 (Cotonou Agreement), linking the political dimension, trade and development and containing important provisions relating to the migration-development nexus.

Europe / Asia

Migration is a topic of political dialogues between Europe and Asia. For instance, the ASEM (the Asia-Europe Meeting), an informal dialogue process between EU Member States, the EC and certain Asian countries,⁷ has recognized the contribution of legal migration in enhancing development. The Chairman’s Conclusions of the first ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers Conference in 2006 underlined the importance of developing coordinated efforts towards effective management of migration processes as well as further investing in human capital in view of increasing labour mobility and integration of migrants, and called for enhanced regional cooperation on issues relating to labour migration, such as exchange of experiences, policy concepts and best practices (which it was recognized could offer a good basis for interregional dialogue).

In addition, the EU and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have agreed to promote closer cooperation in addressing and combating trafficking in human beings, among other areas, and at the 2007 ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit agreed to identify means and mechanisms to cooperate to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of migrant workers.

In a recent example of inter-state consultation involving these regions, in April 2008, senior labour migration officials from ten Colombo Process countries met with their counterparts in sixteen EU Member States that are currently experiencing significant migration flows or have interests in

⁷ Brunei, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam as well as India, Mongolia, Pakistan and the ASEAN Secretariat upon their completion of the necessary procedures.

labour migration from Asia.⁸ Organized under an EC-funded programme to facilitate labour migration between Asia and Europe, it aimed to further understanding of labour migration dynamics between the two regions. Participants assessed current and future labour market trends, challenges and opportunities in relation to these regions and considered how these developments will influence their migration policies and practices. Ultimately, the objective was to find ways to effectively manage labour migration between these regions to ensure that benefits accrue to migrants and countries of destination and origin. Participants have called for continued dialogue at the Ministerial level as a means to enhance mutual understanding and identify mutually-beneficial action points.

Europe / Latin America and Caribbean (LAC)

Dialogue on migration between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) continued with the Lima Summit in May 2008, and preparatory meetings on migration in recent years produced conclusions and recommendations for follow-up activities and exchanges, endorsed by subsequent Summit Declarations. The third Expert Meeting in March 2008 focused and continued the dialogue on the four major themes identified in previous meetings: (1) treatment, rights and integration of migrants; (2) remittances; (3) irregular migration and the fight against trafficking and smuggling of human beings; and (4) new approaches to migration policies. Enhanced EU-LAC cooperation on migration was proposed, particularly in view of recent policy developments and trends in the two regions, and the root causes of migration are to be addressed. It was suggested that the EU-LAC dialogue on migration be continued in international fora, in particular, in the context of the GFMD. The final Declaration of the fifth EU-LAC Summit refers to migration and confirms the joint commitment of the two regions to jointly address migration issues, including migration and development.

Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries

The Council of Ministers of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), which was established in 1996 as a forum for friendship among Portuguese-speaking nations, adopted a Resolution on Migration and Development in July 2006. The Resolution encouraged CPLP host countries to implement policies that favour socio-economic integration of all migrants; encouraged CPLP countries of origin and destination to identify and implement strategies for the involvement of diaspora in development processes; recommended that migrants' remittances be invested and used productively in CPLP countries of origin, while recognizing the private nature of remittances; and encouraged the promotion of sustainable approaches to the migration of highly skilled nationals of CPLP countries, *inter alia*.

2.3 Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations and Economic Integration Processes

Many regional and sub-regional organizations and economic integration processes that were established to address matters other than migration are adding migration and specifically migration and development-related issues to their agendas, albeit to differing degrees and by way of different approaches. It is not possible to survey all relevant regional and sub-regional organizations and economic integration processes in this paper, and thus the objective is to provide illustrative examples and highlight recent developments and good practices. It should be noted that these fora have been less well-studied with respect to their treatment of migration, and could benefit from further analysis and more awareness through the GFMD.

2.3.1 Liberalized movement of persons within regions

A primary way in which regional economic integration processes address migration issues is with respect to liberalizing the movement of people within the region.⁹ Of course, economic integration processes vary significantly, including with respect to their objectives, elements covered, depth of integration, institutional structure and legal basis. Likewise, liberalization of the movement of

⁸ Namely Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom.

⁹ In this paper, the term "region" refers both to regions and sub-regions.

persons within the framework of these systems/regimes also varies significantly, and may be either a primary or secondary element. The overall objectives of the system/regime impact the extent to which the movement of people is liberalized and how the movement of people is addressed and implemented. As a general rule, the deeper the integration, the greater the likelihood of finding relatively more liberal freedom of movement. Annex C, attached, provides an overview of the liberalization of movement of persons provided for in certain regional integration agreements.¹⁰

Most regions pursuing some degree of liberalized movement have explicitly or implicitly linked this movement to objectives of increased economic growth and development. Labour mobility is of particular relevance to the topic of migration and development and as such was examined at GFMD 2007,¹¹ where it was acknowledged that the mobility of both highly skilled and lower skilled workers can bring benefits to both developing and developed countries, provided that their migration is properly managed. In addition, many of the ancillary measures taken to facilitate liberalized movement, such as recognition of qualifications, provision of social security and portability of pensions, are also development-related. However, it should be noted that liberalized movement is often not implemented to the extent intended due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, lack of capacity and political will.

2.3.2 Other migration and development-related initiatives

Certain regional and sub-regional organizations and regional integration processes have taken other types of migration and development-related initiatives.

The Americas

Migration has been a thematic priority of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) since its founding in 1991. A Specialized Forum on Migration focuses on strengthening cooperation, research and policy consultation to achieve harmonization on migration policy among MERCOSUR Member States. Achievements in the field of human rights are particularly noteworthy, including the Declaration of Santiago on Migratory Principles (2004) which requests Member States to enhance dialogue mechanisms with a view to strengthening a migration policy for MERCOSUR in full respect for human rights and the Agreement on Regularization of Internal Migration (2002) which enabled MERCOSUR Member and associated States to regularize the situations of migrants from each others' countries without the need for them to return to their countries of origin.

In late 2007, the Organization of American States (OAS) established a Special Committee on Migration Issues specifically charged with adopting an integral approach to migration issues. In that framework, a Forum on Migration Issues was held in April 2008, and the resulting recommendations included promoting a closer link between migration and development policies and incorporating migratory issues in national development plans; and strengthening information systems and databases, research and analytical work on flows of remittances, labour migration processes, and on migration and development in general. Of note was the recommendation that the OAS consider linking its migration-related efforts with those of RCPs in the region, such as the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM or "Puebla Process") and the South American Conference on Migration.

The Central American Integration System (SICA) addresses migration and led to the creation of the Central American Commission of Migration Directors (OCAM) in 1990, serving as a mechanism for coordination among migration authorities to facilitate the free movement of people in Central America. OCAM formally interacts with RCM through different means (for example,

¹⁰ This annex was originally prepared in connection with an IOM workshop on Free Movement of Persons in Regional Integration Processes and is available on the IOM website at http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/microsites/IDM/workshops/free_movement_of_persons_18190607/idm2007_overviewchart.pdf.

¹¹ Roundtable 1 of GFMD 2007 focused on "Human capital development and labour mobility: maximizing opportunities and minimizing risks."

interventions of its Pro Tempore Presidency during the Vice Ministerial meetings). It is also closely linked to the Central America-4 Process,¹² in charge of implementing presidential decisions on regional integration matters related to migration (e.g. passport, border control, visa regimes, among others). Also in the SICA framework, a special commission for Ministers of Tourism and Migration Directors was created to facilitate migration procedures (e.g. integrated border controls) to attract more tourists while promoting the region as a multi-destination tourism package.

Asia-Pacific

In early 2007, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted a Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. It commits ASEAN Member Countries to recognize the rights of migrant workers; promote decent, humane, productive, dignified and remunerative employment for migrant workers; and take concrete measures to protect foreign workers from all forms of abuse including illegal recruitment, trafficking and prostitution.

Africa

In 2006, the African Union adopted the AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa and the AU Common Position on Migration and Development. The Policy Framework calls for a comprehensive set of migration policies for the continent. One of its priority areas is migration and development, with policy recommendations including collaboration with African diasporas, countering brain drain and mitigating its effects on development, maximizing the development effects of remittances and improving remittance transfer mechanisms. For its part, the Common Position contains a set of recommendations at national, regional and inter-regional levels on a number of areas including migration and development generally, human resources and brain drain, remittances, trade, migration and peace, security and stability, migration and human rights, gender, regional initiatives and access to social services.

At the African sub-regional level, a recent development is the Common Approach on Migration adopted by ECOWAS in January 2008. The Common Approach is a multi-sectoral regional mechanism to address the challenges of intra-community mobility and migration to third countries. It underlines the importance of free movement of persons within ECOWAS, and takes account of the development dimension of the migration phenomenon and its cross-cutting nature.

Middle East

Traditionally the countries in this region have dealt with human mobility issues primarily on a bilateral level. In a noteworthy development, the League of Arab States addressed the issue of migration for the first time in 2006 and adopted the “Arab Declaration on International Migration: Activating the Role of Migration in National Development and Arab Regional Integration,” calling on its Member States – countries of origin and destination alike – to strengthen policies to maximize the contribution of migration to development. In February 2008, the Arab Ministers discussed Arab diasporas and adopted Recommendations for Ministers of Immigration and Expatriates Affairs.

Europe¹³

In recent years, the EU has been moving towards a holistic approach to migration taking the relationship of migration and development into full consideration. Perhaps more than any other region, the EU has taken significant steps to include migration issues in its external relations and development policy. The “Global Approach to Migration” pursued by the EU brings together migration, external relations and development policy to address migration in an integrated, comprehensive and balanced way in partnership with third countries, including those in Africa and the Mediterranean region as well as countries to the east of the EU. For example, the European

¹² Comprised of migration authorities of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

¹³ For the purposes of this paper, Europe includes Western and Central Europe as well as Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Commission (EC) is assisting countries of origin in developing “migration profiles” in order to collect information needed to form the basis of practical migration management measures.

The EC is also exploring mobility partnerships – whereby the EU would work more closely with third countries on controlling irregular migration while those countries would benefit from greater cooperation on priority matters potentially including enhanced possibilities of mobility between their countries and the EU – with pilot schemes beginning soon. In addition, the EC is exploring ways in which circular migration can be encouraged, as it is widely believed to benefit both countries of origin (by fostering transfers of skills and other resources of returning migrants) and countries of destination (by helping meet labour market needs across a broad range of skill levels).

At the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Summit which took place in October 2007, Heads of the CIS Member States agreed to establish the Council of the Heads of Migration Bodies of the CIS Member States.¹⁴ The purpose of the new Council is to coordinate the CIS Member States’ cooperation in the field of migration. The Council’s key priorities include realizing the key principles of the Declaration on the Coordinated Migration Policy of the CIS Member States and of the CIS Further Development Concept and its implementation plan. To further these objectives, the Council has adopted an Action Plan for the period 2008-2010, which includes *inter alia* working towards improving the consistency and coherence of the legal provisions underpinning migration policies in the CIS Member States; achieving mutual recognition of medical insurance and other labour migrant documents in the CIS Member States; and better preparing labour migrants for their migration experience, including through pre-departure and post-arrival orientation.

3. POLICY CHALLENGES

While the objectives of these various regional and inter-regional processes and fora for migration-related dialogue and cooperation vary, including with respect to whether they seek to have concrete outputs or rather focus on dialogue and information exchange, some common challenges can be identified. A key challenge certainly relates to the need to raise increased awareness of the role and impact which regional and inter-regional fora and processes have in the field of migration and development.

3.1 Achieving coherence

With the proliferation of fora at all levels addressing various aspects of migration, including migration and development, achieving coherence, and raising awareness of the role and impact of regional and inter-regional fora and processes, is a growing challenge. Specifically, the proliferation of fora presents the challenge of ensuring that the objectives and outcomes of the different regional, inter-regional and global fora are complementary rather than contradictory, competitive or duplicative. Because many of the initiatives have developed informally to meet specific regional and inter-regional circumstances and needs, the implications for governance of and coherence on migration and development are not obvious. It may be premature to suggest an emerging consensus in favor of a particular regional, inter-regional and/or related global approach and interaction format. However, at a minimum, it seems clear that there is an inevitable need for productive information exchange among the different fora.

Furthermore, most states are involved in multiple regional, inter-regional and global fora which touch on migration issues, including migration and development. This presents states with the question of how to be represented in each of the fora (e.g. which ministry or ministries should participate, given that responsibility for migration and development issues is often divided among various ministries and given the inter-related nature of migration, development, trade, human

¹⁴ The Council currently includes heads of migration bodies of the following countries: the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

rights, and other areas), and how to ensure that the positions taken by its representatives are consistent across all of the fora in which it participates.¹⁵

3.2 Effective implementation of outcomes

Several decisions regarding migration and development-related initiatives have been taken at the political level, but have lacked an effective framework for implementation.

This presents challenges to effective implementation of the action-oriented recommendations that have been put forward in the framework of many (but not all) of these initiatives. In an attempt to address this, in some cases a special body or *ad hoc* committee has been established and tasked with ensuring implementation. However, an implementation mechanism has not been established in all cases, and even where mechanisms exist, implementation has been uneven.

3.3 Impact assessment

It is often difficult to assess the impacts that these various regional and inter-regional processes and fora have on migration policies, practices, legislation, etc. For example, ascertaining the extent to which these fora are influencing changes in migration and development policies at the national level can be difficult. Furthermore, in the case of informal and non-binding processes such as RCPs, a normative impact is often not intended; rather, the immediate objectives may be limited to information sharing, building the confidence of states in the feasibility of inter-State cooperation on migration issues, and capacity building. Additionally, consistent with their flexible and informal nature, the priorities and objectives of RCPs tend to change over time in order to address the evolving needs of the participating states.

Yet despite the difficulties that these factors can pose for impact assessment, it is worth noting the interest of the participating states in keeping such informal, flexible and non-binding processes alive, which can be taken as at least some degree of evidence that the states view them as useful fora.

3.4 Cross-cutting challenges

While not specific to regional and inter-regional cooperation on migration and development and thus technically beyond the scope of this paper, a number of challenges cut-across many migration and development-related areas and are worth mentioning briefly in the context of regional processes and initiatives. One is a lack of data on migration generally and more specifically on the complex linkages between migration and development.¹⁶ Another is lack of capacity in areas such as administrative infrastructure, operational systems, data-collection and analysis capabilities, legal/regulatory frameworks and human resources. While lack of capacity is often a particular challenge for less developed states, it is not restricted to them, especially given the need repeatedly to revise policies to address frequently changing circumstances. A third cross-cutting challenge is the complicated relationship between migration, development and other areas, especially those which are rapidly developing – such as climate change and the increasingly globalized labour market – which can pose difficulties for understanding the inter-relations and identifying coherent and effective policy responses.

4. QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE DISCUSSION – POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD

4.1 Questions

¹⁵ Roundtable Session 3.2 of the GFMD Manila will focus on “Policy and institutional coherence on migration and development within Government” and provide an opportunity to discuss these coherence challenges in more detail.

¹⁶ Roundtable Session 3.1 of the GFMD Manila will provide an update on efforts within and between countries to better collect data and measure the development impacts of migration towards more synergistic policy-making and cooperation on migration and development.

The following questions, which flow from the various challenges described in the previous section, are proposed to guide the discussion.

4.1.1 Achieving coherence

- a) As a starting point, to what extent are RCPs and other regional and inter-regional fora for consultation on migration influencing changes in migration and development policies at the national level?
- b) Where appropriate, how should development considerations be mainstreamed into the work of RCPs and the migration-related agendas of other regional and inter-regional fora and processes? How could this be encouraged and how could greater policy coherence be achieved among concerned fora and processes, including by ensuring that the positions taken by government representatives are consistent across all of the fora in which they participate?
- c) How can more sustained information about the work of regional and inter-regional fora and processes be made available, and how can regular information exchange between the various regional and inter-regional consultation fora which deal with migration best be achieved, specifically with respect to furthering migration and development-related objectives where appropriate
- d) Are there any common themes/objectives found in the various declarations, action plans etc. of these various regional and inter-regional fora and processes that could usefully be taken forward for the purpose of achieving greater coherence?
- e) How can it be ensured that inter-regional dialogues on migration are balanced and equally beneficial for each of the participating regions?
- f) What mutually-reinforcing roles could be found between the GFMD and these fora? For example, what role could and should the GFMD play in increasing awareness of and promoting regional and inter-regional fora dealing with migration and development? What role could and should the GFMD play in developing linkages between them? What can the GFMD learn from the experiences of regional and inter-regional fora regarding informal dialogue on migration?

4.1.2 Effective implementation of outcomes

- a) Could linkages between these fora help to address implementation challenges that some of them have identified? What other measures would be necessary to achieve better implementation of outcomes?

4.1.3 Impact assessment

- a) Would the states participating in informal regional and inter-regional fora and processes find it useful to undertake a review of any given process/forum, for their own purposes but also with a view to informing other RCPs/fora on effective practices and lessons learned in the area of inter-state dialogue and cooperation?

4.2 Possible ways forward

The “possible ways forward” that follow are offered for consideration and discussion. They build on the questions posed above and are offered with a view towards facilitating the work of delegates participating in Session 3.3 to identify practical and action-oriented outcomes. They are not intended to preclude different or additional outcomes.

4.2.1 Achieving coherence

- a) A linkage could be established between the GFMD and one or more regional or inter-regional fora on a pilot basis: For instance, the chairing governments of those fora could be invited to speak in their chairing capacity at GFMD Friends of the Forum meetings and the GFMD itself, in addition to speaking in their national capacity. Furthermore, where appropriate, GFMD representatives could be invited to observe meetings of selected regional/inter-regional fora.
- b) Interested governments could make renewed efforts to ensure that their representatives participating in regional and inter-regional fora and processes take consistent and coherent positions on migration and development across all of the fora in which they participate.

4.2.2 Effective implementation of outcomes

The chairing governments and/or secretariats of an RCP and an inter-regional political dialogue, respectively, could agree on a pilot basis to pursue and ensure technical follow-up and implementation of political level recommendations and commitments.

4.2.3 Impact assessment

A regional process/forum that has been operating for some time could decide to undergo an internal or external assessment of its activities, focus and impact to date, with a view to taking into account global and other developments, including on migration and development issues. Such an assessment could measure the process/forum against its own objectives and goals – which include in many cases information sharing and building of confidence and capacity – rather than externally-imposed notions of what they should achieve.