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Agenda item 8

Report of Civil Society Activities

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paragraphs 3 -5 and on private sector actually
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Ambassador Åckerman Börje, Deputy Director General Altuğ, organizing partners and colleagues,

One year ago today we opened the Civil Society Days of the most recent Global Forum in beautiful Port Louis Mauritius, determined to work better with states and other partners on the theme “Operationalizing Protection and Human Development in International Development.” With the GFMD in Africa for the first time, we were delighted to convene, among others, the largest number of delegates from African civil society in those first five years of the Forum; we welcomed 54 civil society organizations engaged in development, and 53 diaspora and migrant-led organizations bridging countries of destination, origin and heritage in practice and in policy-building. As in prior years, the full annual report of civil society’s activity last year, including the budget and expenditure as well as proceedings and recommendations, is available at www.gfmdcivilsociety.org.

6 weeks ago, we joined you with great enthusiasm in the High Level Dialogue at the UN in New York. As we reported to you last meeting, civil society’s approach was one of *straight streaming* on substance and possibilities directly from GFMD focus and work into the higher expectation that the HLD could both recognize and propel this activity forward.

On substance, we were not disappointed in the HLD. To the contrary, we were struck with the enormous convergence on many of the critical issues in migration and development today. The match-up is striking between UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s “8 point action agenda”, global civil society’s “8-point Plan” for collaboration with states¹, Peter Sutherland’s 10 points and IOM’s 6 points and the Mexican-facilitated milestone Declaration that UN Member States adopted unanimously at the HLD. A one-page matrix which presents that convergence in simple checklist form is on the table for your reference. We will be distributing it widely and posting it on the GFMD civil society website.

For purposes of this forward action, especially within this upcoming GFMD and beyond, we saw and heard widest convergence on 6 issues:

1. adding specific reference, targets and indicators regarding **migration and diaspora in the post-2015 development agenda** when the current “Millennium Development Goals” expire. Civil society very much greets Sweden’s emphasis on development of all kinds in this upcoming Global; Forum, as well as the growing leadership of Bangladesh, France, Germany, Mexico and

¹ The 5-year plan is also available in English, French and Spanish at <http://hldcivilsociety.org/five-year-action-agenda/>

- Switzerland together with Sweden on properly reflection migration and diaspora the post-2015 development agenda;
2. collecting and advancing existing principles and practices in an organized **operational framework for providing protection and assistance to migrants in crises**, beginning with conflict and disaster situations (though civil society continues to strongly push to encompass migrant victims of trauma and violence in *transit*). Civil society appreciates the leadership of the US and the Philippines on this issue, joined now by Australia and Bangladesh, in a careful but concrete process that includes *all* actors, especially migrants and civil society practitioners.
 3. reforming the **migrant worker recruitment industry**. Civil society noted repeated references by states at the HLD to the importance of this issue and looks for central engagement of the ILO and IOM as well as migrants and other civil society actors going forward.
 4. promoting the **ratification and effective implementation of the new ILO Domestic Workers Convention (C 189)**
 5. addressing the **needs of children in the context of migration**, and in particular the plight of unaccompanied children and structuring alternatives to detention of children.
 6. **reducing the costs of migration**

The challenge now moves from having achieved convergence to actually connecting in real follow-up. The international Civil Society Steering Committee for the *HLD* met for the last time last week. Together we debriefed and handed over the responsibility of turning convergence into connection to what will be a restructured Steering Committee for organizing civil society activity in the Global Forum going forward. Notable alongside the new structure will be a core group of civil society leaders from multiple sectors and regions that we will explicitly charge with deepening contact and collaboration, in particular with governments—with you, on both process and substance in migration and development. On Friday the Steering Committee began the process, as you do today, of considering with the Chair some first thoughts towards the Common Space at the Forum, as well as the initial outlines of the programme for the GFMD in May. With special appreciation for our shared time with governments in Common Space, we once again look forward to developing the possibilities together.

In these regards, allow me to refer again to our one-year anniversary of last year's GFMD. As you recall, last year saw the completion of not one but two formal assessments of the GFMD to date: your States' assessment and the independent assessment of civil society's work that was commissioned by the MacArthur Foundation. Assessments matter. As we work with the Chairs and with you to make appropriate connections in these GFMD and HLD processes, may I spend the rest of this time to report to you how seriously we take the recommendations from the two assessments and, in a few sentences each, what we are doing to follow up on four of their key recommendations.

1. **The States' assessment recommendation to improve the financial sustainability of the GFMD.** In 2011, when we stepped up to the challenge of building a continuity and partner to you with this civil society Coordinating Office, we understood and accepted that we would work with each year's Chair and the Friends of the Forum on together nailing down an achievable approach to funding. We are happy to have done that each of the past two years with the Swiss and Mauritian Chairs, with particular appreciation for their inclusion of civil society as a line in the overall budget targets of the Chair each year. In the mix of public-private funding that we have raised for civil society's budget these past two years, we then raised close to 2/3 of civil society's own funding outside of that line in the Chair's budget, with about half of our funding last year coming from private foundations and donors.

In this direction, we welcome the energy and intelligence that Sweden is bringing to other approaches to longer-term sustainability, including joint pledging presentations and to the extent possible multi-year funding possibilities. We are happy to report that, with particular

gratitude to the European Union, Sweden and Switzerland, we have already raised nearly half of the funding of civil society's anticipated costs for both this next GFMD and the 2015 GFMD in Turkey. We will be circulating our budget to you shortly, with great appreciation for your support especially for the participation in GFMD activities of civil society delegates of organizations with low budgets and from developing countries.

2. **The State's assessment recommendation to identify new ways of engaging the private sector.** We have been happy to work honestly and openly with the Chair and others to try to figure out how to better engage business and other private sector actors in these processes. As the background paper indicates, like past Chairs civil society has had only limited success at this within the regular format of GFMD meetings. The success that civil society has had—and that we will continue actively to pursue—has been in identifying specific sectors and actors for issue-specific focus, notably migrant and diaspora-owned initiatives and on issues of reforming the migrant worker recruitment industry and in regularization of immigration status. Civil society is concerned however that new efforts by the Chair or others do not make the mistake of building new silos or groups and events that are separate and actually run backwards from the kinds of convergence we have all been building together. There has been so much real progress on trust-building and convergence across stakeholder groups; now is the time to further emphasize connection, and bridges.
3. On point with the above, **the States' assessment recommendation to strengthen interaction with civil society in these processes.** Beyond the common space, and building on positive experience in the HLD roundtables, civil society is eager to explore with you possibilities for civil society roundtable chairs to participate in your roundtables at the GFMD. In turn, we are also looking at how to open space for meaningful government participation within civil society's own Civil Society Days programme. For the most important interaction however, we are raising the profile of how civil society can better connect with states and authorities in this work on the ground: at home, at local, national and regional levels. In this we wholeheartedly embrace Sweden's vision of more consultation between government and civil society at national levels, and the support of the European Union in multi-year funding of migration and development network building and engagement at regional levels, beginning January.
4. Finally, and directly related, from the **independent assessment of civil society** that the MacArthur Foundation commissioned last year. The principal recommendation was that civil society needed to clearly articulate, and then follow, what the assessors called a "theory of change": a **specific approach that civil society would take to all its engagement in the GFMD and related activity.** Here in one sentence is that theory of change: global civil society's decision this past year to center our work in these processes on an approach of collaboration with governments, before during and after these GFMD and HLD processes, on the ground and nationally as well as regionally and in international settings. Where is that approach most visible? In civil society's 5-year 8-point Plan, which is indeed, expressly for collaboration with governments. I have noted the strong convergence with your own Declaration and the positions of so many other actors, and underscore the need now for connecting on that convergence. I will close only by noting that civil society elaborated the 5-year plan not just for the HLD but for beyond; and that civil society is indeed taking it forward towards this GFMD, and beyond.

Thank you.

/Copies of this report will be circulated with the record of the meeting.