

The GFMD Steering Group **- Manageable size and enhanced working methods**

Cover note

New Terms of Reference for endorsement

As of 2 May

Background

The GFMD final Assessment Report includes the recommendation to “ensure an appropriate regional balance and manageable size of the Steering Group”. The Swedish Chair has as one of its priorities to promote a more dynamic Forum and one of the priority actions is to enhance the working methods of the Steering Group (SG). The Swedish Chair has during 2013 taken several steps in this regard. In April the Chair asked SG members to give their views on the working methods and size of the SG. Members were also asked to propose ideas on how the work of the SG could be improved as well as re-confirm their interest in continuing as members of the SG. On the basis of those replies the issue of enhancing the working methods and reviewing the size of the SG has been discussed and proposals have been made during the SG meetings in 2013 and in 2014 also in the Friends of the Forum (FoF).

At the September 2013 meeting of the SG it was agreed that the Chair in cooperation with the Troika would propose new Terms of Reference (ToR) based on the following principle: i) aim to limit the size, ii) clarify expectations of SG members, iii) further define the roles and responsibilities, iv) set up a clear process for how interest from new countries to become members would be handled and v) explore the possibility of a rotating membership.

At the November meeting of the SG the Chair presented a draft new ToR including a proposal for a rotational system. Members welcomed the proposed ToR in general but found the suggested rotational system to be too complicated and formal. It was clear that the SG wanted a system that was flexible and informal which means that the ToRs would lay out the overall principles but the details would then be decided on once appearing. The SG also asked for ToRs to be developed also for the Troika and the Friends of the Forum (FoF). The SG also emphasized that it is still possible to remain active in the GFMD process without being part of the SG, through for example the different roundtables and the FoF.

Consequently the Chair has worked further on the ToRs and a new model that would allow for new members to join the SG without continuing enlarging the group. ToRs

for the Troika and the FoF have been developed. Please see attachments. These have been adjusted after discussions in the SG and the FoF in March 2014.

Current membership

As a consequence of the Chair's request for countries to reconfirm their interest in continuing as members of the SG, the following 29 countries have confirmed their willingness to continue as SG members as of 25 February 2014 according to the Chair's notes¹.

Europe (10): France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Belgium (former Chair), Greece (former Chair), Switzerland (former Chair), Sweden (Chair), Turkey (incoming Chair)

Americas (5): Argentina, Canada, United States of America, Ecuador, Mexico (former Chair)

Africa (5): Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Tunisia; Mauritius (former Chair)

Middle East (2): United Arab Emirates, Israel

Asia and the Pacific (6): Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Philippines (former Chair)

The idea would be that these countries constitute the SG starting from the May 2014 GFMD Forum meeting, and would then be subject to re-confirmation at the next pledging meeting under the Turkish Chairmanship in accordance with the proposal in the attached ToR.

Given the virtue of the its leadership of the GFMD process, the Troika has a role in the discussions of the composition of the SG in order to ensure a well-functioning and dynamic SG that also allows for new members to join.

Endorsement

The Chair's aim is to have the ToRs for the Troika, SG and FoF endorsed at the Future of the Forum meeting in Stockholm 16 May. Review of the ToRs and possible future revisions can be done after endorsement at the Future of the Forum sessions at upcoming GFMD Forum meetings.

¹ Japan and UK have announced they would like to rotate off the SG – No answer as of 24 February from the following: Senegal, South Africa, Norway, Brazil, Qatar, South Korea.

