

## Introductory remarks by Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje

Good morning, Excellencies, dear GFMD participants,

It is now my turn to warmly welcome you to Stockholm. It is truly an honor to have so many distinguished guests and friends from all the different regions of the world assembled here today. We are some **550 delegates** from almost **150 countries** and some **30 GFMD observer organizations**. I am overwhelmed and humbled by the support that you have provided, not only by coming to Stockholm, but throughout the Swedish Chairmanship!

Yesterday's Common Space showed in many ways the important place that migration and development now has on the international agenda and the **crucial role** of the GFMD. Yesterday's discussions also showed the importance of **working together with all stakeholders** to develop a common vision in order to achieve real progress.

But the work did not start yesterday. The work has been carried out by many of you since the start of the Swedish Chairmanship in January 2013: in the Troika, the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum and not least in the **Government Teams**, which is where the heart of the GFMD lies and makes it a year round process.

During our Chairmanship we have had 48 countries and 18 observer organizations engaged in the six roundtables and one specific business roundtable. The meeting today is the culmination of these preparations and I very much look forward to you sharing experiences and policies and providing recommendations that can help reach our common goal of *unlocking the potential of migration for inclusive development*.

At the outset, the Swedish Chairmanship wanted to set out a bold and forward looking agenda aiming to move into the **second phase** of the Global Forum. The time was right. The assessment of the first phase of the work of the Global Forum had just taken place. In addition we had the second UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration during our Chairmanship and we are also in the midst of the preparations for a new UN development agenda post-2015.

We structured our agenda around three D:s – A more **Development** focused forum, a more **Dynamic** forum and a more **Durable** Forum.

A more Development focused forum has been the central starting point for our work. This is true in terms of the thematic focus but also for our efforts to engage more development actors. A key priority has been to include migration in the development agenda post-2015. We believe that this in an effective way can encourage governments and other development actors to analyse, plan for, act upon and monitor the opportunities and challenges that migration brings to development. In essence, to bring about more coherent and effective policies!

Throughout our Chairmanship, we have received very valuable support from key development agencies of the UN. A question still remains, however, to what extent the experiences shared in the GFMD are filtered through into the sectoral programmes of those agencies, or whether they remain the interest of dedicated migration units or some dedicated individual? We have also encouraged participating states to send development experts from their departments of planning, development or other relevant bodies. We have had some success, but the bulk of participants remain migration experts.

Secondly, a more Dynamic forum. This has been mainly about improving the GFMD as a process. While keeping the informality, which has been key to its success, we have strived to further strengthen the forum as a process. The assessment recommendations put the bar high for us. We have done our very best to meet the expectations and I believe we have come a long way in enhancing and clarifying the roles of the different supporting structures of the GFMD to have more effective working methods. Your support and constructive feedback has been invaluable.

We have introduced a **new format for the work in the government teams**. The aim has been to strengthen the **involvement and ownership by states**. This is crucial for a voluntary state-led process like the GFMD. The four thematic meetings have really added some important input to the work and made us not only focus on process but also on the **substantive** preparations and discussions. I have already mentioned the strong engagement by states in these government teams. But here I believe **we can do even better**.

We have also worked hard together with the GFMD Support Unit to **strengthen the evidence base** by the creation of the new **Policy and Practice Database** and the strengthening of the **Platform for Partnership**. The Support Unit has not only worked with this Database but is of course a key component of the Forum's supporting framework and helps assure continuity from one Chair to the next. The Swedish Chair has worked to **reinforce the SU** and hope that this work will continue – it will be crucial for the continued viability of the GFMD.

Thirdly, a more Durable forum. This is about creating the enabling conditions for a long-term process with a strong cooperation with different stakeholders.

We have been able, in cooperation with all of you, but specifically with the strong support from the Troika, to develop a **new long-term financing framework and a framework for a multi-annual work plan**. We have also aimed at improving the cooperation between the Global Forum and different stakeholders: the civil society, the Global Migration Group and the private sector. I will not have time to elaborate on all these point but let me say a few words about the **private sector**, which is somewhat a new work stream for the GFMD.

With increased globalisation of human resources, work and services that also impact national development goals, the private sector is an important stakeholder and negotiating partner within the area of migration and development. We have made some suggestion for how this cooperation between the GFMD and the private sector can be advanced in the future.

In sum - we feel that much has been achieved by all of us by working together during our Chairmanship: governments and international organisation in partnership with civil society. Collectively we have been able to start this second, upgraded phase of the Global Forum. That was the goal that we set out for ourselves almost 18 months ago.

Much work remains to be done and a strong continued commitment is necessary beyond the Swedish chair. Today is a working day – with a nice ending. Let me conclude these introductory remarks with some housekeeping reminders for the coming two days:

- Like the priorities for our Chairmanship we have set out a bold agenda for these days of meetings.
- We will have a full day of roundtable sessions today ending with a boat trip through Stockholm and the banquet dinner at the Vasa museum.
- Lunch will be served at Mälarsalen at the other part of the building. There will be side events taking place over lunch and there will be a buffet lunch so you can eat any time during the lunch breaks and still have time to attend the different interesting events.

I thank you once again for your support and look forward to working together with you these coming days.