

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

OPENING SPEECH

(14 May 2014)

Ms. Hillevi Engström

Minister for International Development Cooperation, Sweden

Your Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria,

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon,

Prime Minister Reinfeldt,

Honourable ministers,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear GFMD participants,

When Sweden took on the challenge of Chairing the Global Forum on Migration and Development, we did this with a clear agenda to enhance the development focus of the Forum. As explained by my colleague Minister Billström, this was one of the three "D:s" of our programme. A more Development focused Forum!

We have strived to further engage development actors in the Forum. We have focused on how coherent policies can enhance the social and economic development effects of migration. We have also looked at how the development outcomes of migrants can be enhanced. These issues are at the core of the three roundtables of our Chairmanship.

For over a decade, Sweden has had a Policy for Global Development that makes clear that all areas of policy have to contribute to the achievement of equitable and sustainable global development. As a government, we have made migration one of the priority areas in this regard. We have done so because we are convinced that the development potential of migration is far from being fully utilized.

Indeed, migration holds enormous potential for development. It reduces poverty for migrant households on an extraordinary scale. Most directly, this happens through higher income levels and hundreds of billions of dollars being remitted each year. These are often invested

in education, health and housing. Furthermore migration fills critical needs on the labour market, encourages trade and investment between countries and leads to the transfer of knowledge, skills and ideas.

At the same time, the current state of governance and policy development on migration exposes migrants to risks. Many potential gains are lost due to poor policies. Systems to match supply and demand for labour across borders are poor. Non-recognition of foreign qualifications poses another problem. Transaction costs deprive migrants, their families and countries of origin hundreds of billions of dollars.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will recall that the overall theme for our Chairmanship is “Unlocking the potential of migration for inclusive development” – We firmly believe that active, well-crafted and coherent policies hold the key to unlocking this potential.

By exchanging experiences, practices and lessons learnt, we can craft policies that fully realize the potential of mobility. This is the essence of the GFMD!

In closing, let me refer to the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development and the call by the Secretary General to include migration in the post-2015 development agenda. How migration is governed—the conditions under which migrants move, live, and work—will determine what kind of outcomes can be achieved.

What we are looking for is a cooperative international migration system that is less costly and more productive for all stakeholders. As the Chair of the GFMD, I would therefore encourage all stakeholders here today to send a clear and ambitious message on the importance of migration in the post-2015 development agenda.

Thank you and welcome to the Forum!