GFMD 2014-2015 Fourth Meeting of the Friends of the Forum

Tuesday, 28 April 2015
15.00 to 18.00 hrs
La Salle II, R3 Level, ILO Building

Summary Report

Welcoming Remarks

1. Ambassador Mehmet Samsar, Director General for Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, chaired the fourth meeting of the GFMD 2014-2015 Friends of the Forum that was held in Geneva on 28 April 2015. The meeting brought together around 125 delegates representing 70 Member States and 15 GFMD Observers. Mrs. Esen Altuğ, Deputy Director General for Migration, Asylum and Visa of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, joined the Chair at the podium, together with co-Troika representatives, Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje (GFMD 2013-2014 Chair Sweden), Mr. Riaz Hamidullah, MFA Director General (GFMD 2016 Chair Bangladesh) and Mr. Gregory Maniatis, Special Adviser of the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative for International Migration (SRSG) and Ms. Estrella Lajom, Head of the GFMD Support Unit.

2. In his welcoming remarks, the Chair referred to the recent human tragedy in the Mediterranean and expressed the deep sadness and concern for the loss of many lives of those trying to cross the Mediterranean sea. He said it was evident that irregular migration is a global problem requiring a comprehensive approach.

Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Provisional Agenda of the meeting was adopted by all participating delegations.

Migration and Development in the United Nations

4. The Chair explained that the issue of “Migration and Development in the UN” was included in the agenda to heed the call of the UN Secretary General to the leadership of the GFMD, the GMG and the SRSG to promote coordination of dialogue and action and synergy of their thematic priorities. Moreover, it is a way to feed back to the Geneva migration community the key developments in New York. In this regard, the Chair invited the offices of the SRSG and the GMG Chair to inform the FOF about the state of play of the post-2015 development agenda and related processes. The Chair also invited the UNDESA to brief the FOF about the outcomes of the 13th UN Coordination meeting on International Migration, held in February in New York.

5. Mr. Gregory Maniatis pointed two opportunities for the GFMD to assert its relevance in solving problems and in advancing the goals that the Forum has set for itself. The first concerns the Mediterranean tragedy and the second is the post-2015 development agenda. He held the view that while the Forum is voluntary, non-binding and informal, it can become an important actor in the migration and development field. The Mediterranean tragedy has prompted the EU to take action and also resulted in coordinated efforts among key concerned agencies at the UN. The GFMD, he believed, could be a space to debate and come up with solutions to such a crisis of unprecedented proportions.

6. Similarly, the GFMD could seize the opportunity to embed migration in the Post-2015 Agenda in order to change the paradigm of development stakeholders who view migration as a failure and not as something that can be beneficial under the right conditions and policies. Currently, migration targets find their place in the Open Working Group report under the goals on a) economic growth, employment and decent work, b)
reducing inequality and c) the means of implementation. Running in parallel are preparations for the third international conference on Financing For Development in Addis Ababa in July. The outcome document in Addis will crucially spell out how to deliver on the post-2015 development agenda, and will be closely linked to its means of implementation.

7. Mr. Dilip Ratha, who joined the meeting by video, reported that progress has been achieved in various ways in working towards the inclusion of migration in the Post 2015 development goals and in the zero draft of the outcome document of the 3rd “Financing for Development” conference. The GMG will continue raising awareness about the importance of reducing labor migration costs, productive employment and decent work in all countries as important elements of financing for development using a three-pronged approach. The first is to develop indicators for the global monitoring of the implementation of the Post-2015 Agenda such as reducing the transfer cost of remittances; monitoring the conviction rate of human traffickers, reducing recruitment costs, monitoring the percentage of refugees and displaced persons benefiting from durable solutions, composite indicator of well-managed migration. The second approach is to disaggregate the composite indicators while the third approach is to develop dedicated capacity-building efforts to strengthen data collection, analysis and use of migration data from various sources.

8. A series of events will be organized by the GMG: a major International Conference on International Migration and Development on Post-2015 and Financing for Development on May 26-27 in New York, a G-20-GFMD-GMG joint event on leveraging migration, remittances and diasporas for development financing that will take place on June 3 in Izmir, Turkey and a side-event in mid-July at the margins of the 3rd International Conference for Financing for Development in Addis Ababa.

9. During the open discussion, a number of delegates representing governments and organizations drew attention to the urgent humanitarian crisis happening in the Mediterranean. As quoted by one delegate, “risks to migrants are risks to human and economic development”. Another pointed out that the crisis impacts the international community as a whole, and links different systems on protection of peoples. On this note, another delegate mentioned that there were also similar situations in the Asian Sea, in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. They called on the GFMD to play a role, including by organizing a thematic meeting, by addressing the root causes of crossings at sea and, more importantly, by summoning the political will of countries to deal collectively with the problem. There was consensus that the immediate priority is to prevent more people from dying at sea. In this regard, it was reported that the EU Council has taken some decisions to strengthen protection at sea, to find the traffickers and prevent irregular migration flows. The EU Commission was scheduled to release a communications policy paper on the issue by May 13 and will organize a meeting in Brussels on 25-26 June 2015.

10. Some delegates believed that the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda will require more accountable and inclusive global partnerships and sharing of responsibility by all countries and stakeholders at all levels. It was also suggested to broaden the discussion by going beyond reducing the costs of remittances and by linking remittances more to issues of financial inclusion. They also saw the role that the GFMD should play in terms of follow up and thematic review, including by bringing the private sector to the table. The need to look at migration-related targets, apart from migration-specific targets and goals was likewise reiterated. In this regard, it would be critical to develop national indicators in coordination with national planning and statistical commissions among other relevant bodies at the country level. This should also be done at the regional level and thematic level (e.g., in the framework of the Commission on Population and Development). This was seconded by another delegate who suggested also the Khartoum process which is dealing with the countries of Africa and the EU.

11. Mr. Bela Hovy, who also participated by video, welcomed the first invitation to brief the FOF about the results of the 13th UN Coordination Meeting. A report of the meeting was circulated in advance. He recounted that the meeting considered the progress in integrating migration into the post-2015 United Nations development agenda, including ways to leverage migration within the renewed framework on financing for development, through financial inclusion, diaspora savings, technology transfer and the role of diaspora. In this regard, the need to promote financial literacy programs and trainings to allow for more productive investments of remittances by migrants and their families was underlined. The meeting also discussed follow up activities to the Declaration of the 2013 HLD on International Migration and Development (A/68/4) as well as the eight-point agenda for action of the Secretary-General presented in his report to the 2013 HLD (A/68/190). He
informed the FOF about the decision of the General Assembly in December 2014 to hold a third High-level Dialogue no later than 2019.

12. The 13th UN Coordination meeting looked at the follow-up to the High-level Dialogue of 2013 and stressed, *inter alia*, the importance of disaggregating data by migratory status. Participants noted the major challenges in protecting the economic, social and cultural integration of migrants in countries, including the lack of recourse for justice particularly for undocumented migrants, lack of access to decent work, barriers to portability of social benefits. References were also made to the large gains that can be made by reducing the costs of labor migration both in human and economic terms, as well as by reducing the recruitment costs. The meeting also touched on the issue of protection at sea and crisis-related migration, and identified the need to improve migration governance and international cooperation to prevent human tragedies at sea and to address the root causes of migration, including development issues.

13. Concerning the 5 indicators being proposed by the GMG, Mr. Bela stressed the need to disaggregate targets especially to monitor the access of international migrants to basic services such as health, education and decent work. He also underlined the need for capacity building for migration data collection. He shared about the recent activities in New York. After the coordination meeting in February, the IOM and UNDESA, as co-chairs of the Working Group on Data and Research, organized a side event during the UN Statistical Commission meeting, which focused on illustrative indicators and means of implementation. Aside from the GFMD-GMG side event on "Migration, Labor Mobility and Renewed Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development" held on 16 April, another side event on "Displacement solutions and the Post-2015 Agenda" was organized by OCHA, UNHCR and UNDESA on 13 April.

GFMD 2014-2015; on Concept Note and Work Plan

14. The Chair informed the meeting that the final concept note of GFMD 2014-2015 was circulated to all Friends of the Forum on 3 March 2015. The French and Spanish translations of this final version have also been distributed and posted on the GFMD web portal (www.gfmd.org).

   a) *Preparatory Work of GFMD 2014-2015 Government RT Teams*

15. As stated by the Chair, the preparatory work of the GFMD 2014-2015 government Roundtables (RT) is underway. Since the last preparatory meetings in February, more representatives and non-state partners have offered their assistance to the government roundtable teams now comprised of 49 governments from all regions of the world, with support from 16 organizations including GMG members. The Chair has appointed RT coordinators from the Turkish national task force to assist the RT co-chairs. He invited the co-chairs of the 6 roundtable sessions to inform the Steering Group about the respective state of preparations of the sessions.

16. El Salvador reported on behalf of co-chair Philippines and members of RT session 1.1, "Partnerships to promote inclusion and protect human rights of all migrants in order to achieve full benefits of migration". At the first RT preparatory meeting on February 6, the government team noted that past GFMD discussions on human rights have mainly addressed labor and social rights. Thus, it was agreed that the session will focus on the vulnerable situation of certain migrant groups, particularly unaccompanied minors and women. RT session 1.1 also discusses the principle of shared responsibility among countries of origin, transit, and destination, and aims to identify and promote effective partnerships amongst states and all relevant stakeholders, such as regional and international organizations, business sector, civil society in fostering voluntary, regularly and orderly migration. The RT 1.1 background paper has been drafted by the GMG Working Group on Migration, Human Rights and Gender, led by the OHCHR. The paper has been circulated to all team members for comments and inputs and will be discussed at the next meeting on April 30.

17. The progress of RT 1.2 session, “Reducing the human and financial costs of international migration, particularly labor migration: Cooperative approaches to fair recruitment practices and lower remittance fees,” was reported by the United Arab Emirates on behalf of co-chair Russia. The IOM has been tasked with the preparation of the background paper in consultation with the RT co-chairs. After the circulation of the first draft of the paper in March, a number of governments (India, Sweden, the Netherlands) and international
organizations (ILO and IFAD) submitted insightful comments which were incorporated in a second version of the paper that was distributed on 26 April. The co-chairs just received inputs from Belgium and looked forward to hearing more comments during the 30 April meeting. They anticipate finalizing the background paper prior to, or at the next meeting of the RT session team on 5 September.

18. Speaking on behalf of co-chair Morocco, Ecuador reported that the background paper for RT 2.1 session on “Mainstreaming Migration into Planning at the Sectorial Level” is being elaborated, with contributions so far from Morocco, Jamaica, Switzerland, and Costa Rica. The lack of a session coordinator presented some difficulties in terms of organization. Thus, the recent appointment of a coordinator from the Turkish GFMD Team was welcomed. The discussion on the draft background paper will continue on 30 April. The co-chairs aim is to submit a draft paper to the Turkish Chair as soon as possible.

19. Mexico took the floor on behalf of co-chair Bangladesh and Greece of RT 2.2 on “Making migration work post-2015: implementing the SDGs.” Before presenting the state of play of RT 2.2, however, Mexico first thanked the Chair for the Spanish translation of the final concept note, and reiterated their support for the objectives and the central theme of GFMD 2014-2015, which is to strengthen partnerships for sustainable development. However, Mexico expressed some concern about certain terms in the concept note, particularly “forced migration,” which was deemed as ambiguous and requiring further definition by the international community. Another was the use of the term “mobility” instead of “migration” in the document. Mexico highlighted the complexity of the challenges and opportunities at the nexus of migration and development which should be the focus of GFMD, and cautioned against duplicating efforts of other mandated organizations.

20. On RT session 2.2, Mexico reported that during their first meeting in February, the team looked at the varied activities to be carried out in preparation for the RT discussions in Istanbul. Taking into account the specific nature and subject of the RT, as well as the negotiation process taking place in New York on the sustainable development goals, it was decided that the team will prepare two supporting documents. The first paper aims at sharing about the status of GFMD discussions on migration within the post-2015 development agenda. The team tasked the IOM to prepare the draft which was distributed to the team members for their comments in February and March, and then circulated to all the Friends of the Forum in April as an information note for consideration of interested countries. At the 30 April preparatory meeting, the RT team will discuss the development of the second document which will be the basis of the RT discussions in Istanbul.

21. Eritrea reported on behalf of co-chair Moldova, regarding RT session 3.1, "Enhancing human development and human security for migrants who are compelled to cross international borders, forced migrants through international cooperation and burden sharing." The first government team meeting on February 6 tried to address some concerns about the scope and focus of the session. A good portion of the discussion was devoted to clarifying the use of the term "forced migration" as a purely descriptive term for people who have been compelled to cross international borders as a result of manmade or natural disasters, such as armed conflict or climate change. It was explained that forced migrants do not comprise a new legal category, and that this roundtable is focused on migrants’ own human development, as well as their potential to contribute to development in their host and origin countries. A first draft of the background paper was circulated to team members at the end of March, which included suggested elements from some members. It focused on how channels of international migration, such as labor migration, opportunities for education and training, and cooperative efforts to facilitate family reunion, might contribute to the human security and human development of people compelled to move. The 30 April meeting will discuss the draft and solicit further comments from team members.

22. On behalf of co-chair France, Canada gave an update on the status of preparations of RT session 3.2, "Private sector government partnerships to support migrant and diaspora entrepreneurship and job creation, with a focus on small and medium sized enterprises". This session benefits from a solid participation by a number of states from both the developing and developed world, as well as a diverse group of international organizations. The team decided to explore two distinct dimensions of the topic – first, the economic participation of migrants within diaspora communities and second, the contribution that diaspora communities can make to the development of sending countries. A particular focus was on the role of migrants as entrepreneurs and job creators both in destination and sending countries. Other themes of interest that have emerged include the role of small and medium sized enterprises, issues relating to women entrepreneurs, the role of diaspora-led
businesses as drivers of trade and investment between countries of origin and destination. Building on the discussion that took place at the first meeting of the government team in February, the co-chairs solicited and received inputs on these two dimensions from a number of participating states and organizations. They convened an inter-sessional meeting on April 8. A first draft of the background paper will be prepared after the 30 April meeting.

23. Ambassador Samsar appreciated all the status reports on the RT session preparations. He was optimistic that the preparatory work leading to the Istanbul RT discussions is on track. He also affirmed the support for each session from the newly appointed RT Coordinators from the Turkish national taskforce. He requested all session co-chairs and coordinators to keep the Turkish chair and the GFMD Support Unit in copy for future communications, in order to keep track of developments.

b) Updated Calendar of Activities of GFMD 2014–2015

24. On April 16, a side-event was co-organized by the GFMD Troika in partnership with the Global Migration Group and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General from international migration in New York. The theme was "From Cairo to Addis: migration labor mobility and strengthened global partnership for sustainable development". Ambassador Samsar represented the Turkish Chair at this side event, which was also attended by the GFMD co-Troika Bangladesh and Sweden and nearly 70 delegates from governments, international organizations and the civil society. The meeting explored how migration, including expanded avenues for regular labour mobility, reduction in related costs, portability of earned social security benefits and recognition of skills, can generate substantial additional resources for development. The outcome of the side event will inform the intergovernmental negotiations for the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in New York in September.

25. On 15-16 May 2015, an ad hoc GFMD Private Sector meeting will be co-hosted by the Turkish Chair and the Government of Switzerland in Istanbul. The Chair invited Switzerland, which has provided financial and technical contributions, to explain the concept and objectives of the GFMD business meeting. Switzerland highlighted the essential role that the business world plays in the lives of migrants around the world such as through job creation, financial services and investment solutions. Engaging the private sector is thus critical for policy-makers. In light of the recommendation of the GFMD assessment report in 2012 to establish a regular consultation mechanism with business leaders, Turkey and Switzerland aim to build on the efforts of previous GFMD Chairs to bring the private sector at the GFMD table. Focusing on the economic impact of mobility of skills and its implications for migration policies, the meeting will discuss the challenges and opportunities of innovative policy-making on skills matching, recruitment mechanisms and labour migration regulations from the perspective of two sectors, namely information and communication technologies as well as the food, beverage and hospitality industry. To promote a focused, interactive and action-oriented exchange, the GFMD business meeting will gather a select number of decision makers of these two business sectors, relevant government policy makers, and a few other key stakeholders. The outcomes of the meeting will serve as a basis for the development of a future public-private sector interaction mechanism in the framework of the GFMD. Background documents for the meeting will be posted on the GFMD web portal in early May, and a summary report will be made available after the meeting.

26. On 3 June, a side event at G-20 Development Working Group will be organized jointly by the G-20, the GFMD Chair and the GMG Chair (World Bank) in Izmir, Turkey. As the GFMD Chair-in Office and the concurrent Chair of the G-20 in 2015, Turkey would like to seize the opportunity of engaging the G-20 member states to discuss the implications of policies relating to financial inclusion, remittances and diaspora investments – included in the priority areas of the G-20 Working Group on Development. This is in pursuit of the Turkish Chair’s objective to take the results of GFMD discussions to relevant agenda setting processes such as the G-20, while promoting thematic synergy and coordination of programs and activities between the GFMD and GMG.
27. The Chair also reminded the Friends of the Forum about the scheduled thematic meeting on 29 April on “The role of communications in promoting widespread recognition of the benefits of migration, improving public perceptions of migrants, combating discrimination, and promoting integration.” The Chair thanked Greece and Mexico for co-convening this meeting and looked forward to the active participation of the Friends of the Forum.

Program of GFMD 2014-2015 Summit Meeting

28. Ms Esen Altuğ, Deputy Director General for Migration, Asylum and Visa shared about the proposed format of the 8th GFMD summit meeting to be held at the Lütfi Kirdar Istanbul Convention Center on 14-16 October 2015. It will be preceded by the Civil Society Days on 12-13 October. The official opening of the Summit Meeting will be held on 14 October, to be followed by the Common Space. Roundtable sessions will be organized on 15 October, and the special sessions and the closing session on 16 October. The meeting is being planned to end by mid-day of 16 October. More information about the Istanbul Summit will be disseminated in due time.

29. As set out in the GFMD multi-annual work program, improved interaction with the civil society, including arrangements for more interactive common space scenarios and discussions is a key priority. To ensure coherence and continuity from one GFMD Common Space to the next, the Troika will be coordinating with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) on the format and substance of the Common Space at the summit meeting. The Chair’s aim is to endorse the proposed Common Space concept and programme at the next preparatory meetings in September. The Chair would welcome proposals from governments on suitable themes for the Common Space.

GFMD Platform for Partnerships

30. To inform the FOF about the status of the GFMD Platform for Partnerships (PfP), Ms. Estrella Lajom, Head of the GFMD Support Unit, made a brief presentation. She reminded the FOF that the PfP was launched in 2010 under the Mexican Chairmanship as a space for discussing and presenting concrete projects, programmes, initiatives and ideas of relevance to GFMD outcomes and recommendations, or to the GFMD Chair’s thematic programme. Since then, it has been further refined, thanks in large part to the consistent funding support from Switzerland. It has two components – the online PfP and the so-called off-line or face-to-face PfP. She then did a live navigation of the PfP online (www.gfmd.org) while explaining its different components -- M&D Policy and Practice Database, M&D Policy Tools, M&D Call for Action and M&D Networking.

31. The face-to-face PfP, Ms Lajom explained, refers to to the actual meeting of policy-makers and partner organizations during GFMD activities, such as the FOF meeting and the special PfP session at the summit meetings. On this note, she turned over the floor to IOM and UNDP for a joint presentation on the ongoing “Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning (MMDP)” project funded by Switzerland, which was introduced in the context of the GFMD in 2010. The 2nd phase of the project was launched as a call for action during the special Platform for Partnerships session in Mauritius in 2012. There is also an MMDP policy tool on the online PfP (http://www.gfmd.org/pfp/policy-tools/mainstreaming-migration).

32. In their joint presentation, IOM and UNDP explained the objectives of the MMDP project which follows a 5-step cycle: comprehensive analysis of migration and development links at the national and local level; identification of policy objectives and promoting coherence among relevant policy areas and interventions; coordination and cooperation through a whole-of-government approach; institutionalization of consultations within government and between government and non-government stakeholders, and capacity development. The first phase had 4 pilot countries -- Bangladesh, Jamaica, Moldova and Tunisia while the second phase includes Ecuador, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco and Serbia.

33. The outcomes of the MMDP project have been feeding into national and international processes. At the national level, it has fostered evidence-based policy-making, integration of migration in national policies and strategies, and inter-ministerial coordination and capacity development. At the international level, it has provided support to global migration and development processes such as the GMG and the GFMD, served as a
guidance on migration and mobility, promoted capacity-building for the UN country team, encouraged peer-to-peer exchanges, as well as collection and dissemination of lessons learned.

34. The Chair thanked the presenters and gave assurance that there will be a special session on the PfP at the summit meeting in Istanbul. He also announced that the Government of Bangladesh offered to co-chair this special session together with the Government of Morocco. He stressed the fact that the development of the PfP as a tool was made at the initiative of governments with the purpose of serving governments, policy makers and practitioners. Its continued improvement can only be ensured if governments actually make use of it and give their feedback and suggestions. He thus invited the FOF to signal their interest to present new policies or programs during the special PfP session in Istanbul by contacting the GFMD Support Unit (supportunit@gfmd.org).

GFMD 2014-2015 Budget Situation

35. By way of an update, the Chair informed the FOF that the GFMD 2014-2015 budget remains at USD $3,071,855. More contributions have been received since the last FOF meeting from France, Sweden, Swiss development cooperation Agency and UAE. He encouraged other governments to step forward and offer financial support regardless of the amount in order to broaden the ownership of the GFMD process. So far, the budget gap was about USD 726,000, including the minimum USD 400,000 budget to be handed over to incoming GFMD 2016 Chair, as provided under the Long Term financing framework of the GFMD.

The GFMD 2014-2015 Civil Society Process

36. The Chair expressed appreciation for the work that the ICMC has done in coordinating the CS process since April 2011. A fruitful partnership and interaction with the Civil Society is a priority for the Turkish Chairmanship. Turkey has thus offered a contribution of USD 125,000 towards the GFMD 2014-2015 civil society process. In addition, the Turkish Chair will cover the cost of venue of the Civil Society Days on October 12-13, and the GFMD Common Space on October 14. The Chair was pleased to note that other governments have pledged support to the CS process, including the incoming Chair Bangladesh, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates. The Chair encouraged other countries to offer financial support to defray the existing gap of around USD 300,000 in the CS budget.

37. According to Mr. Bingham’s report, civil society around the world has been deeply engaged on three migration and development activities in recent months: a) on incorporating migrants and migration in the post-2015 global development agenda; b) on labour migration and c) migrants in peril on the move. To prepare for the Civil Society Days (CSD), the International Civil society steering committee have been grouped into two: one will develop the CSD program and the other will organize “global calls” of civil society that focus in two-hour online meetings, on progress and strategies of civil society’s “5-year 8-point plan.” Civil society will also try to measure progress made on the “5-year 8-point plan” by conducting a global survey of civil society action on migration and development both within and beyond the 8 points, between March and September. Also, there will be a formal global policy report that measures movements on these issues, to be prepared by an external consultant.

38. The ICMC will work in cooperation with the Turkish Chair in preparing the Common Space in Istanbul. Possible issues of focus could be city governments and civil society partnerships, as well as private sector actors in migration and development. Meanwhile, the application process for the Civil Society Days on 12-13 October will be announced through a global call to the 2,600 names in the database of MADE (Migration and Development) project in May. As in past years, invitations to all governments, international and regional agencies to participate during the CSD and smaller breakfast meetings will be coursed through the Support Unit.

39. During the open discussion, the representative of Switzerland offered to give CHF 100,000 to the ICMC to support its work. He also announced that a new coordination platform for civil society working on migration

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and development in Switzerland will be launched during summer to enhance coordination among civil society actors, including unions and academic institutions working on migration issues, and also to improve coordination between civil society and the Swiss government. The representative of the Netherlands also indicated their intent to offer a yet undetermined amount soon. The representative of the Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI) meanwhile shared about their proposal to the Turkish Chair to organize a side-event in Istanbul that will focus on the role of local authorities in the field of migration and development.

**Any Other Business**

40. Before closing, the Support Unit provided logistical reminders about the 2nd thematic meeting to be held the following day 29 April, and the RT prep meetings to be held on April 30.

41. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 18h00.