

**Opening Remarks by Ambassador Mehmet Samsar,
Director General for Consular Affairs of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Chair of the GFMD 2014-2015**

**From Cairo to Addis: Migration, labour mobility and the renewed global
partnership for sustainable development**

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1.15pm – 2.45pm, Conference room 7

Introduction

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I warmly welcome you to this side-event on “Migration, labour mobility and the renewed global partnership for sustainable development.”

I am Mehmet Samsar, Director General for Consular Affairs of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development – the GFMD – 2014-2015.

I am honoured to host this event jointly with the other members of the GFMD Troika represented by the Permanent Representatives of Bangladesh and Sweden, in partnership with the Global Migration Group (GMG), represented by Special Representative of the ILO to the United Nations, as well as the Senior Advisor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. They will all join the discussion in the panel together with the Permanent Representative of Turkey.

We are also fortunate to have with us Mr. Michael Clemens, Senior Fellow at the Centre for Global Development, who will deliver a keynote address and present to us the crucial role of labour mobility for human prosperity. His remarks will illustrate why labour mobility needs to be included in the post-2015 development agenda.

We are joined here by delegates attending the 48th session of the Commission on Population and Development, as well as the drafting session for the outcome document of the International Conference on Financing for Development. This document will be finalized in Addis Ababa in July this year.

Today’s presentations by the panelists and our keynote speaker should be of highest concern for delegates of these two important meetings.

Migration in the Post-2015

More than 2 decades have lapsed since Member States met at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and recognized the contribution of international migration to economic and social development, both for countries of origin and destination, as well as for migrants and their families.

While a commitment made at that conference by UN member states to enhance the development impacts of migration, migration is yet to be integrated in the global sustainable development agenda. Debate about whether and how to include migration among the post-2015 “sustainable development goals” and their associated targets and indicators has developed in the past four years or so, and the GFMD has been an important platform for that debate.

The recommendations of the GFMD have been reflected in the outcomes of some of the processes at the United Nations that are leading up to the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, including the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations' Synthesis Report on the post-2015 development agenda, and the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

Let me highlight some of the key points that have been discussed in GFMD meetings about the links between migration and development, and which are the subject of strong consensus among the participating states.

Migration is a key driver of human development. It expands the disposable incomes of individual migrants and their families. It matches demand and supply in the global labour market which, in turn, increases overall labour productivity, income and development.

Transnational networks formed by migrants and diasporas give rise to trade, exchanges of knowledge and investments between countries of origin and destination.

The hundreds of billions of dollars remitted every year raise the standard of living for the receivers, and are invested in education, health and housing in countries of migrant origin.

Migrant-receiving countries also benefit in many ways. Migrant workers bring with them skills, talents, and energy that contribute to economic, social and cultural development of host societies. Many migrants perform jobs that enable the native-born residents to enter the workforce or to take on higher skilled jobs.

In short, the resources generated through migration are of such a magnitude that we cannot afford to neglect them, either in the Financing for Development Outcome or in the work of the Commission on Population and Development.

Priorities of the Turkish GFMD Chairmanship

This is why including migration in the post-2015 development agenda is one of the key priorities of the Turkish Chairmanship of the GFMD. And the theme of our Chairmanship speaks exactly to this point; Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development.

We have suggested that migration should be mainstreamed into a wide range of policy fields; not only immigration policies but also into development policies and into employment policies to address labour market needs.

Recently we circulated a background paper for a roundtable dedicated to the issue of including migration in the post-2015 agenda.

As the current GFMD Chair and concurrent Chair of the G-20 process, Turkey is committed to promoting the outcomes of GFMD debates to the international community, and linking up the GFMD with related agenda-setting processes, inside the United Nations and at the regional level.

Today's side event

Today's side event aims to promote a broader understanding of migration in the context of financing for development. It is high time that we moved beyond a narrow focus on reducing costs of remittances, but also embraced labour mobility as a key source of financing for development, inasmuch as it increases migrants' productivity and disposable incomes as well as their ability to send money home.

This we can do while remaining focused and committed to promoting higher labour productivity and greater protection of migrants rights, inter alia, by expanding avenues for regular migration, reducing costs of recruitment, and recognizing skills.

Our challenge is partly one of policy coherence within our governments, and partly one of political will. As we participate as governments in the final negotiation of the post-2015 development agenda and such related processes as financing for development and the ICPD, we need to insist that migration has a place in the global sustainable development agenda that reflects its vital importance in realizing human rights and enabling progress toward greater equality and prosperity for all.

We have now the next two months to pave the road to Addis Ababa. We hope that the efforts in the GFMD and the discussions in today's side event will assist our governments to arrive at commitments in Addis Ababa in July and at the Post-2015 Summit here in New York in September that will truly unlock the potential of migration for sustainable development.

I would like to thank my co-conveners for this session and our speakers, and I look forward to interesting exchanges to follow. I encourage everyone to give their perspectives on the issues or to ask questions. Thank you to all.