

GFMD 2014-2015 First Pledging Meeting

Wednesday, 22 October 2014
La Salle V, R3 Level, ILO

Summary Report

Welcoming Remarks

1. The first GFMD Pledging Meeting was convened by the Turkish Chair on 22 October, bringing together around 70 government delegates and 10 representatives from observer organizations. It was chaired by Ms. Esen Altug, Deputy Director General for Migration, Asylum and Visa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She was joined on the podium by the GFMD 2014-2015 co-Troika: Sweden (GFMD 2013-2014 Chair), represented by Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje and Bangladesh (incoming GFMD 2016 Chair), represented by Ambassador S.E.M. M. Shameem Ahsan, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UNOG. Mr. John Bingham, Head of Policy of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), coordinating office of the GFMD Civil Society process, joined the Troika at the podium.

2. In her welcoming remarks, Ms. Altug, on behalf of the Turkish GFMD Chair, underlined that the pledging meeting is a new mechanism aimed at promoting planning, funding sustainability and generating support -- both financial and in kind -- from all governments and observers.

Provisional Agenda

3. The Chair proposed a sub-item of “Membership in the Steering Group” under “Any Other Business.” There being no other suggestion from the floor, the Provisional Agenda was adopted.

Background information on the GFMD Pledging Meeting

4. The Chair recalled that given the informality and voluntary nature of the GFMD process, the lack of funding predictability presented a number of challenges for the past Chairs and for some governments that considered chairing the process. The assessment report completed in 2012 recommended the establishment of a more predictable funding structure, while maintaining the voluntary nature of the government-led process. Based on this recommendation and initiatives earlier taken by the Swiss Chair and the SGSR, the Swedish Chair led the development of a long-term financial framework for the GFMD, which was eventually endorsed at the 7th GFMD meeting in Stockholm.

5. The Chair outlined the objectives of the pledging meeting, namely: a) to facilitate planning for the new Chair-in-Office, Turkey; b) to offer all governments that attach great importance to GFMD process the opportunity to contribute, financially or in-kind; c) to promote sustainability of the overall GFMD process. She encouraged delegates to offer multiyear pledges, if feasible for their governments or organizations. Ambassador Åkerman Börje added that as indicated in the long term financing framework, it would be ideal to have about USD \$ 500,000 funding availability for every incoming GFMD Chair to ensure a start-up and make the process run smoothly.

Presentation of the GFMD 2014-2015 Chair’s Preliminary Budget

5. The Chair presented a preliminary budget of USD \$ 3,071,855 to cover the 18-month GFMD 2014-2015 work program, from 1 July 2014 to 31 Dec 2015. The budget has three components:

- a) Preparatory Costs, including preparatory meetings of the GFMD Troika, Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum, the proposed 3 GFMD Thematic Meetings and Research and Consultancy – USD 543,816 (18% of total budget)
- b) Final Meeting organizational costs in Istanbul – USD \$ 1,502,336 (50% of the total budget)
- c) GFMD Support Unit operational costs, including costs of hiring new staff to reinforce the office – USD 936,232 ((30% of the total budget)

6. The Chair stressed that the budget will be further revised to suit the requirements of the Turkish GFMD Chair. She stated that any amount of financial support will be appreciated in order to broaden the donor base and overall ownership by all member states of the GFMD process. The Chair then gave the floor to the ICMC for the presentation of the GFMD 2014-2015 Civil Society work plan and budget.

Presentation of GFMD 2014-2015 Civil Society Work Plan and Budget

7. Speaking on behalf of the ICMC, Mr. Bingham thanked the Chair for inviting the ICMC to the first GFMD pledging meeting. He clarified that the ICMC is the fifth biggest donor of the GFMD civil society process, having contributed around USD \$ 129,000 from 2011 onwards. He presented¹ a comparative overview of GFMD civil society budgets from 2011 to 2014, during which time the ICMC coordinated the civil society process. The proposed GFMD 2014-2015 civil society budget is USD \$ 893,000, almost the same as the actual GFMD 2013-2014 budget of USD \$ 886,642 for the same 18-month period.

8. In the past, contributions came from both private and public donors, plus a couple of UN agencies. According to Mr. Bingham, there are three forms of government contributions to the GFMD civil society: a) unrestricted grants, b) funding for the GFMD Civil Society Days itself, in particular for the travel and participation of delegates from developing countries, and c) grants within a specific focus, such as for specific thematic work (e.g., on diaspora issues or on governance) or at the request of the donors.

9. To date, a 60% funding gap (USD \$ 350,000) remains. Mr. Bingham thanked all past donors and expressed the hope that they and other new donors will offer contributions to cover the current deficit. He reminded them that contributions may be channeled directly to the ICMC or through the GFMD Support Unit.

Pledging

10. The Chair then explained that out of the proposed USD 3,071,855, the amount of USD \$ 1.3 Million remains unsecured. She thanked all governments that already made their pledges and facilitated their contribution to the GFMD Turkish Chair, namely: Canada, Israel, Mexico, Norway and the USA. She then opened the floor for the formal pledging.

11. Ambassador Ahsan, on behalf of incoming GFMD 2016 Chair, announced that Bangladesh would contribute USD \$ 20,000 to the Chair's preliminary budget and USD \$ 5,000 to the civil society budget. He reaffirmed the continued support of Bangladesh to the GFMD government and civil society processes.

12. The following pledges were made during the meeting:
- a. *Switzerland* gave assurance of its full support to the Chair and the civil society, and indicated that it will communicate its contributions later;
 - b. *Mexico* confirmed that its USD \$ 50,000 contribution to the GFMD 2014-2015 Chair's budget is underway; it stands ready to offer in-kind support as well;
 - c. *USA* announced that it has contributed recently an amount of USD \$ 210,000 earmarked for the GFMD Support Unit; it reaffirmed its intent to continue its membership in the Steering Group;
 - d. *Australia* in response to the Swedish Chair's written request confirmed that the left-over balance (USD \$ 118,000) from GFMD 2013-2014 could be realigned towards the GFMD 2014-2015 budget; in addition, it will offer USD 75,000 to the Turkish Chair;
 - e. *Netherlands* pledged EUR 50,000 to the Turkish Chair; it expressed full support for the civil society and ICMC's work, and will consider offering financial contribution once again to the civil society;

¹ See www.gfmd.org for Mr. Bingham's complete presentation.

- f. *United Kingdom* has earmarked BGP 20,000 to support participation of delegates from developing countries;
- g. *Sweden* was unable to indicate the amount of financial contributions to GFMD 2014-2015 due to recent political developments, but assured the Turkish Chair of its support; also reiterated that the Swedish Chair is leaving at the disposal of the Turkish Chair some unspent GFMD contributions amounting to USD \$ 900,000.
- h. *ILO* pledged in-kind support, for example by facilitating a special session with workers and employers to share experiences and practices from the field with governments and other GFMD stakeholders; in its current capacity as GMG Chair, ILO also reiterated the GMG's commitment to support the substantive and technical needs of the Turkish GFMD Chair through the GMG's thematic working groups and task forces.

13. The Chair expressed her appreciation for the pledges made, which she believed will ensure that the inception work for the GFMD 2014-2015 will run smoothly, and that the proposed preparatory and thematic activities will be implemented. She invited other governments and organizations to consider the possibility of offering similar support in the coming months.

Any Other Business

14. As mentioned at the start of the meeting, the Chair opened the discussion on the membership of the Steering Group. As background information, she reminded the meeting that pursuant to the endorsed Terms of Reference of the GFMD Steering Group and the discussions on how to improve the SG working methods, the Steering Group composition was to be maintained at no more than 30 members at any given time. Additionally, the Steering Group members are requested to reconfirm their interest and commitment in the group by announcing during the pledging meetings their intended contributions, financial and/or in-kind. This system would allow for a soft rotation of membership in the Steering Group by making room for new countries that have the capacity to enrich the process, both financially and intellectually.

15. When the Chair invited the floor for comments, the United States and Ghana reaffirmed their intention to remain in the group. One delegate asked which countries outside of the current Steering Group membership have indicated their interest to join the group. This information, he believed, would help the incumbent members in deciding whether or not to step down to make room for others. To this, Ambassador Åkerman Börje replied that the Swedish Chair received expressions of interest to join the Steering Group from two member states; however, she could not confirm because they were not represented during the pledging meeting.

16. Some delegates held the view that the pledging meeting was not the proper venue for a discussion on the membership of the Steering Group². Others underlined that the matter was too important to be discussed under "Any Other Business." They urged the Chair to revisit this issue at the next Steering Group meeting and/or the Friends of the Forum.

17. The Chair then reminded the meeting that the Updated Terms of Reference of the GFMD Steering Group endorsed in Stockholm expressly states that "*in connection with the annual pledging meeting to be convened by the Chair-in-Office, countries are asked to reconfirm their interest and commitment to continue as members of the SG the following year. xxx*" The Chair also gave assurance that the matter will be discussed again at the next Steering Group meeting. She encouraged others to give feedback. She thanked everyone for their affirmation of interests, cooperation and commitment to the GFMD process.

18. The Chair adjourned the first pledging meeting at 16h00.

Prepared by the GFMD Support Unit
5 November 2014

² Only 21 current Steering Group members were present during the first pledging meeting.