

Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development

GFMD 2014-2015 Fourth Meeting of the Steering Group

Tuesday, 28 April 2015
La Salle XI, R2 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 Steering Group that was held in Geneva on 28 April 2015. The meeting brought together 82 delegates representing 28 GFMD Steering Group (SG) members. 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 Chair invited comments on the agenda and also announced that he would not discuss the agenda item on GFMD Observers. No comments were made from the floor. The Chair thus declared the Provisional Agenda of the meeting as adopted.

GFMD 2014-2015 Concept Note and Work Plan

4. 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

5. 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 which are 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.
6. The Philippines reported on behalf of co-chair El Salvador 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 addressed introductory

and procedural matters. Noting that past GFMD discussions on human rights have mainly addressed labor and social rights, the team agreed to focus the session 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.

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.

12. On behalf of co-chairs Eritrea and Moldova, Ms. Kathleen Newland, Turkish GFMD Chair adviser, reported on 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.
13. 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

14. 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.
15. 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.

16. 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.
17. The Chair also reminded the Steering Group 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 participation of Steering Group members to lead the discussions and sharing of experiences -- national programs, policies and practices aimed at improving public perceptions of migrants and migration.

c) 8th GFMD Summit Meeting in Istanbul

18. 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 Kırdar 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.
19. 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.

Address by Mr. Gregory Maniatis, Special Adviser of the SRSG

20. The Chair then invited Mr. Gregory Maniatis, Special Adviser of the SRSG to briefly address the Steering Group. Referring to the developments in the Mediterranean over the past ten days, Mr. Maniatis held the view that the Forum -- now in its 9th year -- has a significant role to play in light of disturbing events in the Mediterranean. He has observed an unprecedented and intensified level of cooperation of UN agencies under the aegis of the UN Secretary General in response to this crisis, which has now become a global concern. He expressed the hope that the GFMD will also be able to contribute in a more nimble way in trying to generate solutions.
21. Many delegates reacted to Mr. Maniatis's statement. All of them shared the concern about the unnecessary loss of lives of peoples trying to cross the Mediterranean, and agreed that cooperation between countries is of crucial importance to address these transnational challenges. Several delegates saw the need for the GFMD to discuss the root causes of the tragedy and to try to find development-based solutions to prevent peoples from attempting to cross the seas.
22. The past GFMD Chair Sweden drew attention to the encouraging [joint statements](#) made by the SRSG, UNHCR, IOM and OHCHR on the Mediterranean crossings. Ambassador Eva Akerman Borje believed that the GFMD can play a role to facilitate constructive debate on more long-term solutions to the Mediterranean problem. As well, she thought the GFMD network could be useful for the affected countries as they try to address the challenges in the Mediterranean.

23. A concrete suggestion was made to organize an ad hoc GFMD meeting in order to address the Mediterranean problem and to strengthen the international solidarity around the issue. This was supported by many speakers. One delegate reminded the Steering Group that the UN High Level Dialogue in 2013 was greeted by the news of several hundreds of migrants drowning in the Mediterranean. The UNSG then called upon member states to take the HLD as an opportunity to jump-start the process of addressing emergencies, as well as the root causes behind the tragic losses in the Mediterranean and the issue of forced migration in general. Over the next two years, over 40,000 lives were reported to have perished in the Mediterranean seas. It was thus strongly urged that the GFMD should leave no stone unturned to try to help in seeking solutions. It was anticipated that the GFMD initiative will be a springboard for the World Humanitarian Summit which Turkey will also be hosting in 2016.
24. On the other hand, there was some concern about the GFMD taking on the issue of forced migration. While acknowledging the need to respond to the Mediterranean emergency, one delegate emphasized that this should be done in the right spaces. It was underlined that the GFMD's focus is on migration and development and that it should not duplicate the work that is already being carried out in other fora. Mr. Maniatis replied that it is difficult to distinguish between emergency and regular processes. According to him, emergencies arise because the regular processes have failed. In the face of such a big scale crisis, the question of what can be done better should be addressed also by the GFMD, in order for it to remain relevant.
25. After the open discussions, the Chair proposed to look into the possibility of organizing an ad hoc GFMD meeting. He promised to send the modalities to the Steering Group for their consideration as soon as possible.

GFMD 2013- 2014 Follow-up

a) Reinforcing the GFMD Support Unit

26. The Chair reported that the reinforcement of the Support Unit continues to be a work in progress. The recruitment process for the Administrative and Finance Assistant position was just completed. Out of over 60 local candidates, a shortlist of 8 candidates had been drawn, out of which 3 candidates were selected for an interview. Miss Laurence Bron, a Swiss National, was chosen for the job. She has been working at the Support Unit on short-term contracts since March 2014. Meanwhile, the recruitment of the Support Unit Programme Officer, P2, is still underway.

b) Update from the ad hoc Working Group on Communications:

27. The Chair invited the representative of Australia to update the Steering Group on the progress of the work of the ad hoc WG on Communications, comprised of Australia as its chair, and Bangladesh, Mexico, Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia and Turkey. The ad hoc team was established in February 2015 and has begun its work in cooperation with the GFMD Support Unit.
28. Australia reported that since February, the WG has met three times and will operate until the 8th Meeting of the GFMD to be held in Istanbul, on 14-16 October 2015. In terms of focus, the group will consider the GFMD's current communications requirements and how to share information on the GFMD's processes and outcomes to enhance the impact of the GFMD on the global migration and development agenda. Importantly, the group will also consider who the GFMD's relevant stakeholders are, how the GFMD is currently communicating with them, and whether or not the GFMD's current methods of communication are working, and how communicating across a wide arrange of media could enable the GFMD to reach a wider constituency.
29. Inasmuch as the members of the group are not technically experts in communication, the group will seek technical advice outside the GFMD, including from (an) expert communications agency(ies) and international organizations on the planning that is required for a successful communication strategy. Information will be collected by way of an upcoming brief survey involving the SG and FoF members. This will inform the group's recommendations to the GFMD Steering Group in advance of the Istanbul summit.
30. Ahead of the meeting, the draft Terms of Reference (TOR), including a work plan, was circulated to the Steering Group for their comments. During the open discussion, Ghana offered to join the group to promote the representation from sub-Sahara. A question was also asked by one delegate if the planned survey intends to

capture the relevant audiences for the GFMD and their thematic priorities. In reply, Australia explained that the survey currently aims to look at governments' experiences in terms of the current communications systems of the GFMD. Nonetheless, it is possible to build the thematic priorities into the survey.

c) GFMD Multi Annual Work Plan

31. The Chair indicated to the Steering Group that certain sections of the GFMD Multi-Annual Work Plan (MWP), particularly its annex, will be updated in coordination with incoming GFMD 2016 Chair Bangladesh. The MWP, developed by the Swedish GFMD Chair and then incoming Chair Turkey in consultation with GFMD 2012 Chair Mauritius, was endorsed at the GFMD Stockholm in 2014. It is one of the recommendations from the assessment report, with the objective to contribute to sustainability and consistency across GFMD Chairmanship and help to increase, transparency and visibility.

GFMD 2014-2015 Civil Society Process

32. 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.
33. Thailand asked for the floor to stress the point that contribution to the GFMD process also comes in non-financial forms, such as by being active in thematic and roundtable preparations. The delegate informed the Steering Group that Thailand is planning to organize a GFMD activity in Asia, which will be a further contribution from their government to the GFMD.

Any Other Business

34. The Chair thanked the SG members for their active participation and adjourned the meeting at 12h30.