



Special Session on the Future of the Forum – Summary Report

GFMD – Dhaka, 12 December 2016

The session was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque and Mr. Francois Fouinat, on behalf of SRSO Sutherland.

In his opening statement the GFMD chair reminded the participants of the various events that had been taking place during the preparatory phase under the Bangladesh chairmanship. He mentioned in particular the three Thematic Workshops: Connectivity and Migration, in Bangkok; Migration and Harmonious Societies, in Geneva; and, Migration for Peace, Stability and Growth, in New York. Apart from the usual GFMD preparatory meetings, the chair also organized various side events, notably with GMG and CMW, as well as a GFMD Dialogue on the Global Migration Compact in Geneva.

Mr. Fouinat recalled the continuing interest and support of the SRSO for maintaining the relevance of the GFMD and praised its flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances. This ability was particularly welcome in view of current developments linked to the implementation of the New York Declaration. He expressed the hope that GFMD play a determining role in the elaboration of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. He mentioned the forthcoming presentation of the Sutherland Report that should also contribute to a favorable evolution of the dialogue on migration and development.

An outline of the recommendations included in this Report were presented by Mr. Justin MacDermott, Adviser to the SRSO.

Ad-hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda

Mr. Pietro Mona presented the report of the Working Group on behalf of the co-chairs, Bangladesh and Switzerland. This Working Group was established at the 2015 GFMD annual meeting and met five times during the year. Its main initial recommendations are to:

- 1) Provide a platform for voluntary sharing of experience, progress and evidence on migration aspects of the 2030 agenda.
- 2) Facilitate voluntary action by building partnerships on migration related aspects of the 2030 agenda
- 3) Inform member states, observers and relevant organizations of migration-related aspects of the 2030 agenda and provide inputs to the formal follow-up and review mechanisms of the United Nations.

The meeting approved the Report and endorsed its recommendations. It also agreed to extend the duration of the Working Group and expand its mandate in relation with the interest and role of GFMD for the elaboration of the Global Compact on Migration. Its ToRs will be revised and amended accordingly.

In view of its Co-Facilitator role in the GCM, Switzerland announced its decision to step down from the Working Group co-chairmanship, while remaining member of the group. Germany accepted to replace Switzerland as co-chair of the group, together with Bangladesh.

Ad-hoc Working Group on Communication

Ambassador Julia Niblett, from Australia, presented the report of the Working Group. After its creation by the GFMD Steering Group, The Group met during 2015-2016 on nine occasions. Its main recommendations, based on the results of a wide survey, are aiming at:

- 1) Developing a positioning and communication strategy for GFMD, particularly in the perspective of the 2018 Migration event and of the 3rd High-Level Dialogue of the UN General Assembly.
- 2) Consider establishing a new Ad-hoc Working Group to support the above recommended positioning and communication strategy.

More specifically, the Group suggested to the GFMD Support Unit:

- a) To re-structure the GFMD website, in particular the Platform for Partnership (PfP).
- b) To increase the use of social media.
- c) To raise the visibility of the Policy and Practice Database (PPD).

The meeting approved the report of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Communication.

The meeting took note of the suggestion made by the Group to discontinue its existence and agreed to leave it to the GFMD Troika and Steering Group to decide on its future.

In the general debate, twenty three delegations took the floor. An overwhelming majority re-affirmed their attachment to the state-led, informal character of the GFMD, making it particularly suited to accompany and adapt to the rapidly evolving nature of the international debate on migration. In this respect, the meeting emphasized its support for a determined GFMD contribution to the Global Compact on Migration. They underlined in this respect the importance of a close cooperation with IOM.

A number of delegations insisted on the need to maintain a development perspective as well as involving as much as possible the regional entities, with their respective contributions in the gradual building of global understandings. Concerns for respect of human rights and gender related aspects were registered by several delegations.

Delegations expressed their satisfaction for the consolidation of the GFMD Business Mechanism which was, for the first time, an integral part of the annual meeting. This appreciation extended to the Civil Society and its contributions to GFMD as a whole.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Germany, the in-coming co-chair-in-office, announced its vision for GFMD 2017 that will concentrate on 1) Domestic Policies; Multilateral and Bilateral Partnerships; and, 3) Strategies beyond the State. The next GFMD Annual Meeting will take place in Berlin, June 28th to 30th, 2017.

Morocco, the co-chair with Germany for the period 2017-2018, confirmed its commitment to host the 2018 GFMD and advanced the theme of their chairmanship, to be: "From Rhetoric to Action".

In its conclusion, referring to the wealth of initiatives and activities in the period leading to the elaboration of the Global Compact of Migration, the chair, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque stressed the need for clear objectives and coherence and expressed its support for the incoming co-chairs, Germany and Morocco.

F. Fouinat

14 December 2016