

## **GFMD Summit – Business Mechanism meeting**

**29 June 2017, Berlin**

**Ms. Linda Kromjong, Secretary-General, International Organisation of Employers**

- I am very pleased to co-host today this second Business Mechanism meeting in a GFMD Summit and would like to thank the GFMD co-chairs, the Government of Germany and Morocco, for making space in the busy GFMD Summit's agenda to host us for an afternoon of interaction between the private sector and governments.
- Ambassador Schmidt-Bremme, we thank you for your opening remarks. You enabled a trustful environment for the business engagement in this Summit and we are therefore very grateful.
- The Business Mechanism was endorsed last year as a permanent feature of the GFMD at the Summit in Dhaka. Its aim is to facilitate sustained interaction between migration policy makers and business leaders. Last year we presented The Business case for migration, in line with the SDGs.
- Since last Summit in December, we continued to refine our positions toward a global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration. A GCM that would take into account labour market needs and, I would add, employers' needs. Employers, as main employment providers, can help governments define migration strategies and systems that can benefit governments, the economic sector and migrant workers themselves.
- The challenge for governments is to negotiate an international document based on facts and evidence, not on misperceptions. The private sector can therefore be a valuable partner to ensure that migration is an engine for increased economic efficiency and national competitiveness. Interventions to build and deploy skills that are executed without private sector buy-in and involvement risk poor outcomes.
- Businesses are frequent users of national migration systems. Their experience with the practical workings of immigration laws, procedures, and policies, as well as knowledge of emerging market and staffing trends, can supply important information to governments.

- In addition, governments are increasingly faced with the challenge of doing more with limited resources. There are many opportunities to alleviate pressures and deliver sound governance through public-private-partnerships
- Today, Austin Fragomen, the chair of the Business Advisory Group, will set forth recommendations elaborated by the Business community of the GFMD. Over the past year, thanks to the power of our networks, we have built a community of engaged business leaders. These leaders represent various sectors, across all regions of the world and of all sizes.
- Together we launched four business committees of experts that address:
  1. The need for international skills mobility
  2. Fair recruitment and decent work opportunities,
  3. Innovations for the integration of migrants and refugees to the labour markets
  4. The role of entrepreneurship and circular migration for development
- In each of the committees, we worked towards building a constructive positive narrative on migration and its benefits – a strong positive case for migration.
- We also started working on a sensitive political issue: irregular migration.
- The report that Austin Fragomen will present sets forth a set of recommendations that will be further discussed in the break-out sessions. The recommendations should help governments better understand our common interests. (There are printed copies available in the room, it can be also downloaded on our website: [www.gfmdbusinessmechanism.org](http://www.gfmdbusinessmechanism.org)).
- In terms of process, we have to admit that the working methods of international conferences differ from the one of the private sector. We need to work together to find the best way to engage the business community in the GCM process. In this regard, our partner the WEF Future Council for migration, has shared with the SRSG and the co-facilitators interesting input on how to engage. We believe that the creation of the Business Mechanism and hence the Business Advisory Board to the GFMD is a good starting point. Its network and expertise should be used to its full potential toward the GCM.
- In this regard, we were delighted to bring the expertise of the Business Mechanism to the Colombo Process last May. We led consultations with

employers of the Colombo Process member states, which served to input our business report. Employers in the regions can bring valuable input in inter-governmental dialogues. This collaboration proved to be very useful for all stakeholders engaged. We strongly encourage national and regional dialogue between employers' federations and their governments on migration issues.

- When talking about partnership, we need to acknowledge the important contribution of the civil society to the GFMD process. We are pleased today to welcome civil society representatives in the break out sessions, and to share best practices on good collaboration on the ground.
- Before giving the floor to our first distinguished speaker, I would like to thank the donor that enable this platform to exist, namely the Swiss Government, the European Union, The Coca-Cola Company and the Bertelsmann Stiftung, that add to the IOE contribution. The Business Mechanism will need to strengthen and develop new partnerships with governments, as well as with private corporations, to ensure fixed income and thereby the viability of the platform.
- Step by step, the Business Mechanism builds its foundation to serve the purposes of the GFMD Chairs, but also of the UN membership. Today, we humbly try to bring the private sector's voice to the table. We trust this voice will be heard and we look forward to continuing the close collaboration with Morocco over the next year.