

Thematic Workshop on GFMD's Contribution to the GCM
9h00 – 18h00, Hotel Savoyen, Vienna

Opening Plenary Speech by Dr. Götz Schmidt-Bremme
German GFMD Ambassador

Greetings!

First of all, my esteemed Moroccan colleague and GFMD-Co-Chair, Mr. El Habib Nadir and I wish to thank all of you for being with us today here in Vienna. We just met two months ago at the GFMD summit in Berlin, and knowing very well how busy the migration community is particularly this year, allow me to express how much we appreciate your dedication to the Forum.

In particular, Germany and Morocco would like to thank our partners, Ms. Sarah Arriola and Mr. Ola Henrikson, for their commitment in supporting us with the Thematic Workshop on GFMD's contribution to the GCM. It has been a pleasure to prepare the program together with you and your colleagues from the Philippines and from Sweden, and it will be an honor to engage in the discussions together with you today.

The international migration landscape is changing quickly. I think this is a very timely moment to pause for a moment and look around where we stand now. The High Level Dialogue 2006 gave birth to GFMD as a voluntary, informal and government-led platform for dialogue on international migration and development outside of the UN system. Ten years later, migration is reflected in the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Most recently, in September 2016, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants called for a Global Compact on Migration, constituting a framework for agreements on the ever burning issues: mixed flows of people are increasingly leaving their homes in search of safety or a better future, while states, institutions and multi-partner initiatives are strengthening their efforts to best facilitate – and I underline: facilitate – safe, regular and orderly migration.

The New York Declaration recognized GFMD's valuable role in promoting a better understanding of international migration and development issues, and envisaged a contribution from the GFMD to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The GCM Modalities Resolution re-confirmed this invitation at the beginning of this year.

I wish to congratulate the 2016 GFMD Chair, our esteemed colleagues from Bangladesh, for initiating, at a very early stage, on 14 November 2016 in New York, a first GFMD dialogue on the Global Compact on Migration. Germany and Morocco have continued this exchange of thoughts with two dialogue events in collaboration with Mexico and Switzerland, back to back with the Preparatory Meetings in February and April 2017, in Geneva. The GCM Co-Facilitators personally shared their insights on April 6 with the GFMD Friends of the Forum.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact on Migration, under the Co-Chairmanship of Bangladesh and Germany, has been mandated to lead GFMD's efforts in preparing its contribution to the GCM. With this Thematic Workshop we would like to give your more insight on where GFMD stands with its preparations.

The report is based on main political and practical recommendations from previous GFMD Summits including Common Space and Business Mechanism. It gives particular emphasis to the policy directions contained in the 2016 Dhaka Chair's Summary and the 2017 Berlin Summit which was particularly geared towards defining recommendations for the Global Compact, for example by inviting a Special GCM Rapporteur Team.

When in convergence with GFMD recommendations from the member states, recommendations from the Civil Society Days and the GFMD Business Mechanism will be taken up as important reference points.

A selection of more than 800 best practices from GFMD's Policy and Practice Database illustrates the report's political and practical recommendations. As I just mentioned, GFMD has organized three Dialogues on the Global Compact on Migration since November 2016. The results of these dialogue events have inspired the report. Last, but not least, today's Thematic Workshop will further substantiate GFMD's contribution to the GCM.

It would be amiss to analyze a decade of GFMD discussions without recognizing the work of former SRSG Peter Sutherland. In his capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary General for International Migration, Peter has been the institutional link between GFMD and the UN system. Such links are essential for GFMD as an independent, but not isolated platform maintaining close ties with the framework that surrounds it.

I believe there is more to this than the formal dimension. Peter has mainly contributed to the fact that GFMD helped to address some of the previously difficult subjects which are today at the center of the debate and created an atmosphere of trust between stakeholders, within and beyond GFMD. Several UN documents, such as the Sutherland Report, the New York Declaration and the latest Report of the Secretary General on Migration affirm what GFMD has recommended over the last years. This illustrates GFMD's capacity to lead to more constructive global dialogue.

The present report will contain proposals on GFMD's continued purpose, as suggested by the Sutherland Report and in detail discussed at the Future of the Forum session at the Berlin summit. The discussion in Berlin has clearly shown that GFMD wishes to remain instrumental in the international migration landscape. There has been consensus that GFMD should safeguard and further develop its strengths and essential characteristics as an informal platform for open and profound dialogue between governments and other critical stakeholders, including international organizations, civil society and the private sector. There has also been consensus that GFMD could possibly complement this traditional mandate with other tasks.

We have heard during the Future of the Forum session from many of you that you would like to see the Forum become even more implementation-oriented. I believe it is essential that we continue our reflections on how we can strengthen GFMD's ability to do so, and how the Forum can closely collaborate with its key partners in order to offer tailored services to its members. But I think we can start right now: Let me invite you to be very practical and hands-on in your recommendations today.

Additionally, many of you emphasized at the Future of the Forum session in Berlin how crucial it is that GFMD intensifies its efforts to not only advance debates within the Forum, but also to ensure that the outcomes of its discussions feed more systematically into related international processes. To give you an example: GFMD submitted this year, for the first time, a report to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

For me, this is only a starting point. The Agenda 2030 is the universal frame for sustainable development and I think it is a great achievement that there is – beside the many goals dealing with migration indirectly – a separate subgoal 10.7 calling for facilitating orderly, safe and responsible migration and mobility. I am convinced that if in the spirit of the Agenda 2030 we want to make sure that no one is left behind, migration will be a pivotal issue to deal with. As a cross-cutting issue, migration is addressed every year by the HLPF's agenda: Be it explicit, as in 2019, when SDG 10.7 will be reviewed, or more implicit, as it has been the case this year with poverty eradication as the overall topic.

Talking about alignment with related international processes, I am very happy to see that the GFMD community is so eager to bring the Forum's substance to the shaping of the Global Compact on Migration. The Ad Hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM has undertaken a stocktaking of a decade of GFMD discussions. We will build on and analyze, together with you, the report's recommendations. The report uses the same cluster structure as used for the GCM stocktaking process according to the Modalities Resolution. Our aim for today is to identify specific action areas for the GCM for the topics covered by the six thematic clusters.

A quick outlook to our next steps: The GFMD Ad Hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM will include the results of our discussions today to the report. We will share the final version of the document for endorsement by the GFMD Steering Group and the GFMD Friends of the Forum in November 2017.

After endorsement, we will hand over the report over to the GCM Co-Facilitators as well as to SRSG Arbour in her capacity as Secretary General to the International Conference, in time for the GCM stocktaking conference in Mexico in December 2017.

I wish all of us fruitful discussions today.