



REGERINGSKANSLIET

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR EVA ÅKERMAN-BÖRJE, SWEDEN, AT THE GFMD
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Unlocking the potential of migration for inclusive development

Dear colleagues, allow me to begin by **thanking Ali Mansoor** for successfully chairing this year's Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). We are all indebted to the excellent work his team has done to prepare a constructive and stimulating GFMD summit meeting, generously hosted by the Government of **Mauritius**. I would also like to **thank the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Peter Sutherland**, for his relentless efforts in propelling the Forum and for encouraging all participants to engage.

This Forum has contributed greatly to the **global policy debate**. It has provided space for governments to share their experiences in the area of migration and development. Thanks to its **state-led, informal and non-binding character**, it has facilitated comprehensive and frank discussions on good practice – policies, programmes and projects. I believe that it has helped to **build trust** among states and stakeholders.

Neither the GFMD nor any other global platform on migration existed before the **High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2006**. Since then, the Forum has successfully been moved forward by **six consecutive Chairs**. Each host has contributed with **important innovations**. About 160 governments regularly come together in a unique interactive process – a process that is so much more than merely an annual summit meeting. We work together throughout the year, **consulting in Government Teams**. This working method is indeed a **defining feature** of the Forum.

Thanks to the Forum, more and more governments are realizing how migration has become an essential facet of development, in particular when adequate

policies and programmes facilitate it. The Forum has **inspired initiatives and reforms** in this direction, as well as **cooperation and partnerships**.

A thorough **assessment process** has concluded **the first phase** of the Forum's existence. It has highlighted a **general sense of satisfaction** with the process among states and other stakeholders. An overwhelming majority of you are of the view that **the Forum adds real value** to your work as policymakers.

Nonetheless, there are many ways in which we can keep improving the Forum. We need to make reality out of the **common vision** of the future of the Forum as suggested in the Assessment report: **consolidating** the Forum; **enhancing its impact** on the global migration and development agenda; and **ensuring its sustainability**. Sweden truly believes in this process and we hope to take it forward together with you. We consider it of the utmost importance that it is reinforced and continues in the long-term.

It will be a great honour for Sweden to launch a **new, upgraded phase** of this Forum. Sweden will have **three mutually reinforcing key objectives**: **Firstly on substance**, we want to redouble our efforts to strengthen the development perspective. **Secondly, on the process**, we would like to reenergize the involvement and ownership by states and seek better outreach to other stakeholders. **Thirdly, we hope that the Forum's sustainable impact** on the global debate can be achieved by more stable and predictable funding, and by ensuring that the accumulated knowledge and good practice is shared and implemented more broadly.

Let me focus on the **first key objective** for a few minutes. Sweden will endeavor to give fresh impetus to the development part of the migration and development nexus. We see a need to **focus more on identifying the concrete synergies between development and migration**. The GFMD has a **unique opportunity** to contribute to the ongoing global debate on how migration can be integrated into the **post-2015 UN development agenda**. Let us seize this opportunity.

Policy coherence is key when **mainstreaming** migration into development policy and vice versa. We would like to build on the progress already made in this regard in the Forum. Sweden will also seek to **strengthen the development focus** of GFMD discussions by setting an agenda that could **encourage more development practitioners to become engaged**.

Migration can be an **enabling factor for inclusive, human development**.

Migration can contribute to poverty reduction and better access to education and health services. Migration can diversify household risks, it can contribute to job creation and steady incomes for more people, and it can increase gender equality by enabling women to enter the labour market and become more self-reliant. All of these are positive development outcomes.

However, such **positive outcomes are *not* automatic**. There remain many **downsides to migration**, including social tensions within families and within societies. Migrants can be denied their rights. They can be abused and exploited by migrant smugglers, traffickers and unscrupulous employers, and exorbitant fees can reduce their potential savings and investments. Households can become dependent on foreign sources of income and less motivated to seek or prepare domestic opportunities. Policy frameworks may not be adapted to take full advantage of the potential of migrants to contribute to development.

Governments, therefore, need to **unlock the potential of migration for inclusive development**. This is what we would like the Forum to focus on during the Swedish Chairmanship. **Coherent development policies** that fully incorporate migration as an **enabling factor** are better equipped to maximise the benefits and minimise the downsides of migration. Governments that ensure the **protection and empowerment** of migrants can help them seek safe and gainful opportunities that also bring valuable development outcomes.

As the Swedish Chair of the Forum, we hope that discussions can further clarify how progress can be made on **inclusive *economic* development**. Remittances, labour migration and circular forms of mobility, labour market matching, and the diaspora networks that stimulate entrepreneurship, trade and investments, can all contribute to positive development outcomes.

We also hope to shed light on how progress can be made on **inclusive *social* development** by improvements in the contribution of migration and remittances to education, health, job creation and gender relations. The empowerment of migrants, social protection and insurance are key issues in this regard that can unlock the positive effects on development.

Ladies and gentlemen, regarding our **second key objective**, it is clear that this Forum is and will become what we all make of it. From January 2013 to June

2014, the Swedish Chair of the GFMD will work with all of you on the basis of an **open-ended, transparent and inclusive dialogue**. This unusually long 18 month Chairmanship will be an **opportunity** as well as a **challenge** and we hope to be able to count on your support.

The dialogue and the agenda need to be **broad and inclusive**. We all appreciate **Turkey's** offer to take over the GFMD Chairmanship after Sweden. I believe that a **multi-year agenda** could ensure that the GFMD continues to work along the broad migration and development lines that have been the core of the process from the outset, while leaving enough room for more in-depth discussions on sub-themes from one Chairmanship to the next.

The Swedish Task Force will work closely together with all GFMD stakeholders through the **Troika**, the **Steering Group**, the **Friends of the Forum** and the **Government Teams**. We will encourage **stronger engagement and involvement of states** and other stakeholders in the process. We hope to amplify the **GFMD Focal points** as a crucial link between the Forum and **policymakers in capitals**. To make our work more operational while drawing on more of the available knowledge, Sweden will seek to establish a **GFMD Experts Network**. It would include expertise within governments, international organisations and other actors.

There is also a need to further vitalise the dialogue with **Civil Society**, notably through the **Common Space**, which has turned out to be a fruitful and constructive format. In addition, a separate dialogue to involve and engage the **Private Sector** as a distinct stakeholder group is needed. Well-coordinated initiatives among **international organisations**, notably the **Global Migration Group**, can play a more important role both in **improving the evidence base** and in the voluntary follow-up on recommendations generated by the Forum.

Finally, **our third key objective**. The GFMD can only continue as a consolidated and sustainable process, if we can make progress towards **more stable and predictable funding**. A stronger **Support Unit** and **Platform for Partnerships** can ensure that the GFMD **evidence base** and **outcomes** can be showcased and shared more systematically with the international community.

We need to find forms for enhancing the impact of the GFMD on **the global migration and development agenda**. The Forum's substantive outcomes could in

particular feed into the **High-level Dialogue** in 2013, into the 2014 follow-up of the **Cairo International Conference on Population and Development**, and into the debate that has started regarding the millennium development goals and the **UN development agenda beyond 2015**.

Let me conclude on a more personal note. **We are all gathered in this Forum with the same objectives**. Our governments all share the same challenges and opportunities. People cross borders. Citizens in one country become migrants in another, or new citizens who stay or move again as part of **a more global world**. Their hopes and aspirations remain the same. They seek to change their own fate, and the future of their families and communities – be it in their old or in their new homes.

Development is about people. We all strive for development. Governments, in cooperation with international organisations, civil society and private sector stakeholders, can put in place frameworks that enable migrants to better use their capabilities. Ultimately, this will bring **clearer development benefits to the migrants and to all countries involved**. With that understanding as a starting point, we look forward to working closely together with all of you during the Swedish Chairmanship of the Global Forum.

Thank you.