

GFMD 2017-2018 First Meeting of the Steering Group

Wednesday, 1 February 2017

09h30 – 12h30

Salle XXIII, Building E, Palais des Nations

Summary Report

I. Welcoming Remarks

1. Mr. Götz Schmidt-Bremme, Ambassador for the 2017-2018 GFMD Co-Chairmanship of Germany, welcomed 62 representatives from 27 member states of the [Steering Group](#) (SG)¹ at a first meeting held on 1 February under the GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chairmanship of Germany and Morocco. Co-Chairing the meeting was Mr. El Habib Nadir, Secretary General, Ministry in Charge of Moroccans living abroad and migration affairs. The Co-Chairs were joined on the podium by Ambassador Shameem Ahsan, representing previous Chair Bangladesh and Mr. François Fouinat representing the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for International Migration.
2. In his welcoming remarks, Amb. Schmidt-Bremme noted that this Co-Chairmanship is unprecedented and necessary to address the problems of migration. As symbolized by the 2017-2018 Chairmanship logo, there is a need to build bridges on migration between countries, between continents and across the world. Mr. Nadir on the other hand conveyed the Co-Chairs' gratitude to the GFMD 2016 Chair Bangladesh and expressed the hope to continue the dynamics that was set by the Bangladesh Chairmanship of the GFMD, including through the contribution of the GFMD to the [Global Compact on Migration \(GCM\)](#). On this note, Amb. Schmidt-Bremme seconded Mr. Nadir's statement and thanked Bangladesh for giving GFMD a head start by organizing a special dialogue on the Global Migration Compact in New York in November 2016. He recalled that the New York Declaration of 19 September provides a mandate to hold intergovernmental negotiations on a Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration by 2018, and GFMD is invited to contribute to it. He acknowledged with appreciation the leadership of Mexico and Switzerland in drafting the [Modalities Resolution](#) which refers to a contribution from the GFMD in Article 22.b.
3. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme informed the Steering Group about key developments since the GFMD Summit Meeting in Dhaka: Germany and Morocco held a well-attended presentation of the GFMD Co-Chairmanship in the margins of the annual Migrants' Day at the UN Headquarters in New York on 19 December 2016; the GFMD website has been re-launched; a Co-Chairmanship flyer has been produced. On 20 January 2017, the ad hoc Working Group (WG) on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM had its first meeting, while a brainstorming meeting regarding the work of the Business Mechanism took place on 31 January 2017. Two GFMD dialogues in Geneva have been scheduled with the GCM co-facilitators, the first to be held on 2 February. Furthermore, meetings with the International Steering Committee of the Civil Society, German Civil Society and International Civil Society have taken place, and contact with Global Migration Group (GMG) Chair UNU (United Nations University) has been established.

II. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

¹ Of the 30 Member States, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Philippines, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States participated in the meeting.

4. The Provisional Agenda that was circulated ahead of the meeting was adopted by the Steering Group.

III. GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chairmanship

A. *Draft Concept Note² and Work Plan*

5. As set out in the [draft concept note](#), Amb. Schmidt-Bremme explained that the work of GFMD 2017 will be entirely dedicated to GFMD's contribution to the GCM. The roundtable themes to be organized under the overarching theme, "Towards a Global Social Contract on Migration and Development," will be linked to the six thematic clusters in the Modalities Resolution. The ad hoc WG on the 2030 Agenda and GCM will consecrate itself to the GCM contribution. The outcomes of the Berlin Summit will be consolidated in the Chair's Summary, which will be used by the WG in drafting the GFMD contribution. The Co-Chairs will hold a thematic workshop in Geneva in September 2017 to consolidate inputs from all GFMD sources. The final draft will be submitted to the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum for endorsement. This document is to be delivered to the Secretary General of the GCM in September or October 2017. GFMD will be represented at the stocktaking conference to be held in Mexico at the end of November 2017.
6. It was emphasized that in assuming the GFMD Co-Chairmanship in 2017-2018, Germany and Morocco have intended to send a strong signal for linking Africa and Europe at a time when migration issues are on top of the political agenda in large parts of the world. The Co-Chairs will work to ensure that national and international efforts will create the framework conditions to ensure a triple win situation – for countries of origin and destination as well as for migrants.
7. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme mentioned that the Co-Chairs have received some written comments on the draft concept paper. When he opened the floor for further comments,³ 14 Steering Group members intervened⁴ and expressed their support for the comprehensive and coherent concept paper. They welcomed the thematic agenda of GFMD 2017, particularly the strong focus on the GCM. They were optimistic that the GFMD 2017-2018 co-chairmanship will steer the GFMD towards a valuable contribution to the GCM. At the same time, they commended the outgoing Chair Bangladesh for deftly leading the GFMD in 2016.
8. Several speakers expressed that they would like to see the perspective of human rights more explicitly in the concept paper and mainstreamed into the different roundtables. For roundtable 2.1, there was a suggestion to focus be on international migrants, rather than on protracted refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Other points that were raised were the need for GFMD to find a balance between countries of origin, transit and destination, and the need for clarification on the term 'social contract' which appears in the overarching theme of GFMD 2017. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme clarified that he did not see this social contract as binding in a legal sense, but more as a philosophical thought that was necessary in order to reach a common understanding of possible solutions to mutual challenges.
9. Many of the interventions focused on the role of the Global Compact on Migration in the draft concept paper and the GFMD 2017-2018 Chairmanship. Mr. Nadir mentioned that when Germany and Morocco decided to co-chair the GFMD, the GCM was not yet in sight. The Co-Chairs thus welcomed the comments of SG, which are summarized below:
 - There was general appreciation for the inclusion of the GCM in the concept paper and the idea to link the GCM themes to the roundtables. The SG members were optimistic that the GFMD can play an important role in fostering the discussions on the GCM.
 - Some raised the question on the extent to which the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees should be interlinked. On the one hand, there is a need to differentiate between migrants and refugees; on the other hand, there are many common elements between migrants and refugees, such as in regard to integration.
 - Another point raised was how the work of the ad hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM relates to Roundtable session 1.2. It was stressed that the substantive work of the GFMD should feed into the GCM process.

² The draft concept note (as of 15 December 2016) is posted on the GFMD web portal: <http://gfmd.org/docs/germany-morocco-2017-2018>

³ Prior to the meeting, the Co-Chairs received written comments on the draft concept paper from: OECD, United States, Department of International Relations of the University of Freiburg, IFAD, Sweden, Switzerland and Nigeria in a joint comment, United Kingdom, IOM, PDD, Canada, UNHCR and Brazil.

⁴ Some of the statements are posted on <http://gfmd.org/docs/germany-morocco-2017-2018>.

- The potential usefulness of the Platform for Partnerships (PfP) in conjunction with the GCM process was also highlighted, and continued work on the PfP was encouraged.

10. Several governments expressed their interest in having an active role in the government-led roundtables (RT): Bangladesh to co-chair RT session 1.2; Switzerland, Nigeria, United Arab Emirates and Ghana to Co-Chair RT session 2.2; Mexico to co-chair RT session 3.1; Greece to co-chair RT session 3.2. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme thanked these countries and explained that the [composition of the roundtable teams](#) would be further discussed during the RT sessions the following day. He also welcomed all comments that were given during the meeting. These oral comments and those previously submitted in writing will be considered in finalizing the concept paper which will be circulated by the end of February.
11. Subsequently, the [draft work plan 2017](#)⁵ was presented by the Co-Chairs. The activities in 2017 will include two sets of preparatory meetings in (1-2 February and 5-7 April, Geneva), one thematic workshop on Migration and Climate Change (24 May, Rabat) and a Business Mechanism meeting (3-4 April, Geneva). The final Summit Meeting will be held on 28-30 June in Berlin, to be followed by the Civil Society Days on 29 June to 1 July. In September, there will be a thematic workshop on the GCM, instead of the usual third preparatory meetings. This meeting is aimed at wrapping up all the knowledge of the GFMD that will feed into the GCM discussions. Mr. Nadir added that Morocco will continue chairing COP22 in 2017 and will commit to including the issue of migration and climate change in the COP22 document.
12. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme invited the SG to comment on the Terms of References (TORs) for the Government-led RT teams which were earlier circulated by the Support Unit. As there were no comments offered, the TORs were deemed as adopted.

B. GFMD and the Global Migration and Development Agenda (Follow up of GFMD 2016)

13. The representatives of Bangladesh and Germany⁶, Co-Chairs of the ad hoc WG on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM, reported to the SG on the progress made since the WG's mandate was extended at the Dhaka Summit. The WG has been renamed as ad hoc WG on the 2030 Agenda and GCM. On 20 January, a meeting of the WG was held to discuss the updated TORs and work plan.⁷ The WG will focus on two related work streams: 1) to contribute to the GFMD efforts in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with an emphasis on the follow-up and review of the High-Level Political Forum and 2) to contribute to the Global Compact on Migration. In addition, Australia has left the WG, while new membership requests have been received from Philippines, Slovakia and United Arab Emirates. In order to maintain the regional balance within the group, the WG Co-Chairs suggested the Philippines to replace Australia.
14. At this juncture, the representative of the United Arab Emirates shared that the 23 Jan 2017 Ministerial Meeting of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) came out with a [Colombo Declaration](#) which identifies as a key area of cooperation the collective engagement of the ADD in the GCM consultations. He asked the GFMD Troika and the Steering Group members to support their request to become a member of the WG so that UAE can engage their region in the global dialogue on the GCM. The representative of the Philippines also reiterated their interest to join the WG. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme enjoined the WG Co-Chairs to discuss with the interested countries and find an amicable solution.

C. GFMD 2017-2018 Co-chairmanship Budget

15. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme called on the members of the Steering Group to give financial and/or in-kind support to the GFMD Co-Chair in particular and to the GFMD process in general, in order to make meaningful changes during the Co-Chairmanship. He referred to the note on the [Provisional Budget](#) that was circulated to the Steering Group members on 25 January 2017, and explained that the total core budget (comprising the operational costs of the GFMD Support Unit, and the costs of organizing the Preparatory

⁵ The calendar for GFMD 2017 can be found here: <https://www.gfmd.org/meetings/germany2017/calendar>

⁶ Co-Chair Bangladesh was represented by Ms. Nahida Sobhan and Co-Chair Germany was represented by Ms. Carmen Esser and Ms. Ilse Hahn.

⁷ The updated Terms of Reference and Work Plan of the ad hoc Working Group were distributed to the Steering Group members on 25 January 2017.

and Thematic Meetings and the final Summit Meeting) for the GFMD in 2017 is around \$ 2.335 million. Taking into account the USD 400,000 amount to be carried forward to 2018 plus the contribution to the civil society, the budget requirement rounds up to about \$ 3 million for 2017. Of this total, Co-Chair Germany will cover \$ 1 million, excluding the costs of the German GFMD Task Force. With an assured seed funding of \$ 400,000 from GFMD 2016, the funding gap is about 1.6 million USD. He urged the SG members to make their pledges during the Friends of the Forum meeting to be held later in the day. The representatives of Canada, Mexico, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States indicated that they would make financial contributions to GFMD 2017. After thanking the countries that readily pledged financial contributions, Amb. Schmidt-Bremme pointed out that besides the financial aspect, he would also appreciate receiving intellectual inputs from the SG members.

16. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme then gave the floor to Mr. François Fouinat, representing the Special-Representative of the UN Secretary General for International Migration (SRSG) Mr. Peter Sutherland. According to Mr. Fouinat, the medical condition of Mr. Sutherland remains a matter of concern and he is still unable to perform his duties. The UNSG has announced that a new SRSG will be appointed; thus, the work of Mr. Sutherland and his team will come to an end. Nonetheless, the Sutherland report will be published within several days. Mr. Fouinat expressed the hope that this report will be taken into consideration by the GFMD in its efforts to elaborate the GCM. On behalf of the GFMD, Amb. Schmidt-Bremme expressed his gratitude for the work of the SRSG and requested Mr. Fouinat to convey their best wishes to the SRSG.

IV. Request for GFMD Observer Status

17. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme announced that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has earlier submitted a request to become an Observer of the GFMD. He then relayed to the SG that the Troika⁸ agreed earlier in the day to endorse ICRC's request, as ICRC is an important and highly reputable organization that ensures humanitarian protection and assistance to victims of armed conflicts and other situations of violence. One delegate, while welcoming ICRC as an observer to GFMD, asked the Co-Chairs to convey to ICRC a request to ensure that its humanitarian assistance be also extended to economic migrants, provision of legal support to detained migrants, handling human remains and the tracking of missing persons. As there were no further comments from the floor, ICRC's request to be a GFMD observer was deemed as accepted by the SG. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme indicated that ICRC will be invited to the Friends of the Forum Meeting that would follow in the afternoon.

V. Any Other Business

18. Amb. Schmidt-Bremme commended previous Chair Bangladesh for reaching out to the private sector. The GFMD Business Mechanism was successfully endorsed in Dhaka as a permanent feature of the GFMD. He committed to further strengthen the debate with private sector stakeholders. On this note, he mentioned that there will be a GFMD Thematic Business Meeting on 3 and 4 April 2017 in Geneva.
19. Mr. Nadir informed the SG members of the Troika's decision to continue the work of the ad hoc WG on Communications in order to implement the recommendations made by the WG, as outlined in its final report for the Dhaka Summit. However, Australia has stepped out as Chair of this WG. If no other country was willing to take over the chairing role, Morocco would be prepared to lead the WG.

In concluding, Amb. Schmidt-Bremme thanked the members of the Steering Group for their attendance and invited them to be present at the Friends of the Forum meeting on the same day. The meeting was adjourned at 11h36.

⁸ The GFMD 2017-2018 [Troika](#) consists of the past Chair Bangladesh, and Co-Chairs-in-Office Germany and Morocco.