

## **GFMD Dialogue on the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration**

**6 April 2017 09:30 – 17:30**  
**Palais des Nations, Geneva**

### **Summary Report**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) has been formally invited to contribute to the process of elaborating a Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (GCM)<sup>1</sup> aimed at improving the international governance of migration. In this regard, the 2017-2018 Co-Chairs of the GFMD, Germany and Morocco, have focused their Co-Chairmanship on the GFMD's contribution to the GCM, to be submitted at a stock-taking exercise in Guadalajara, Mexico on 4-6 December 2017. As a preparatory step, the GFMD 2017 Roundtables will be linked with the six GCM thematic clusters, and several meetings dedicated to GFMD's contribution to the GCM.
2. The first GFMD dialogue on the GCM was held on February 2, just after the final Modalities Resolution for the GCM process was adopted. The meeting reflected on what the road to the GCM should look like, and considered GFMD's possible contribution. On the latter point, participants emphasized that the GFMD should continue to serve as a thought leader and knowledge broker by providing a platform for informal and consensus-building dialogues among all concerned stakeholders. The dialogue pointed to three possibilities for GFMD contributions in terms of "substance, space and stakeholders". They also expressed a strong support for the work of the ad hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and GCM in leading GFMD thematic reflections.
3. The second dialogue, held on 6 April 2017, was organized around three of the six thematic GCM clusters. It was the first global discussion on the GCM, ahead of the UN-organized thematic consultations<sup>2</sup>. The dialogue opened with a high-level plenary session which was presided by Ambassador Götz Schmidt-Bremme, representing GFMD Co-Chair Germany, together with Mr. Ahmed Skim, representing GFMD Co-Chair Morocco. During the session, Ambassador Shameem Ahsan spoke on behalf of the GFMD 2016 Chairmanship, a video message was delivered by the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for International Migration (SRSG), Mrs. Louise Arbour, and GCM Co-Facilitators, **Ambassador Juan José Gomez Camacho (Mexico) and Ambassador Jurg Lauber** (Switzerland) gave opening statements. Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director-General of IOM and Under-Secretary-General Hu Wongbo of UNDESA shared their institutional perspectives.

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<sup>1</sup> As per Article 22.B of the Resolution on the Modalities for the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) process.

<sup>2</sup> The first GCM thematic consultation was held on May 8-9. Five other such thematic consultations will take place during the first phase of the GCM process, as outlined in a Work Plan prepared by the office of the SRSG.

4. After the opening plenary, three simultaneous Working Sessions were held, covering the GCM cluster 1 (Human rights of all migrants), cluster 4 (Contributions of migrants and diaspora to development) and cluster 6 (Irregular migration and regular pathways). The Dialogue was closed in a plenary session where each of the session rapporteurs summarized the discussion of their respective sessions, and the GCM Co-Facilitators and GFMD Co-Chairs gave their final remarks.

## Opening plenary

5. In his welcome remarks, GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chair **Ambassador Götz Schmidt-Bremme** explained that the principal objective of the dialogue was to contribute substantively to the GCM process. The dialogue was one of the four avenues by which GFMD participating states could provide inputs for the GCM, along with the Berlin Summit Roundtables, the GFMD Thematic Workshop to be held in September 2017 and the ongoing work of the ad hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM. He encouraged participants to have stimulating and substantive reflections throughout the day. The outcomes of the dialogue, he said, would form part of the GFMD's contribution to the GCM stocktaking exercise to be held in Mexico in December 2017.
6. While the Modalities Resolution provide for six GCM cluster themes, it was not possible to cover all clusters within one day. The GFMD dialogue working sessions looked at three GCM thematic clusters that enjoyed relatively greater focus from the GFMD through the years, and have resulted in concrete policy and practical outcomes. These are:
  - GCM Cluster 1: Human rights of all migrants and social inclusion
  - GCM Cluster 4: Contributions of migrants and diasporas
  - GCM Cluster 6: Irregular migration and regular pathways
7. To further contextualize the GFMD dialogue, **Ambassador Shameem Ahsan**, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UNOG, recalled the important steps undertaken by GFMD 2016 Chair Bangladesh to improve the global migration governance for the benefit of all. [In his remarks](#), Amb. Ahsan underscored the leading role of Bangladesh in kick-starting the GCM process. During its Chairmanship, Bangladesh organized the first Dialogue on the GCM in November 2016 in New York. In addition, the Dhaka Summit Roundtables aimed at improving the governance of migration. He highlighted the call for the GFMD to take an active role in the elaboration of a Global Compact, as stipulated in the [Sutherland report](#). The GFMD's added value, he stressed, is its consensus-building and flexible approach which can generate trust and confidence among all concerned stakeholders. This would be particularly useful during the upcoming global consultations from May to October 2017, to which the GFMD could contribute. He suggested different options to effectively deliver substantial inputs:
  - a) The summary outcome of the Dialogue;
  - b) The outcome of the six government roundtables;
  - c) The consensus outcome from the GFMD ad hoc Working Group on 2030 Agenda and GCM, the report of which may be formally submitted to the stocktaking conference.
8. Ambassador Ahsan shared his views on the broad lines of agreement on the substance and the format of the GCM - a framework convention including legally binding elements and concrete operational commitments. In view of the mixed migratory movement, the need to construct synergies and commonalities with the Global Compact on Refugees was also highlighted, as well as the relevance of the Global Migration Group (GMG). He concluded by reminding the GFMD's ambitious undertaking in elaborating the GCM and reaffirmed his support and confidence in the GFMD Co-Chairs, Germany and Morocco, in successfully steering the Forum in the right direction.
9. In her video message, the new SRSR **Mrs. Louise Arbour** articulated that the New York Declaration offers an unprecedented opportunity to develop a Global Compact, coupled with an important responsibility to deliver something that will have an impact on the lives of the millions of people. She

acknowledged the remarkable job that Mr. Peter Sutherland, the former SRSG, has done in building the GFMD and forcefully setting migration on the global agenda. She considered the [Sutherland Report](#) as a key reference for the GCM process. She recognized the important role played by the GFMD in setting the global agenda on international migration and in building trust among states and other stakeholders. She appreciated the GFMD's wealth of substantive knowledge, data/repository of good practices, thematic recollection, all of which could be valuable in the GCM consultation phase. She looked forward to working with all GFMD stakeholders in strengthening the multilateral approaches to migration.

10. The two GCM co-facilitators, Ambassador Juan José Gomez Camacho of Mexico and Ambassador Jürg Lauber of Switzerland, gave an update on the Modalities Resolution, which was adopted later that day by the UN General Assembly in New York. **Ambassador Lauber** encouraged the continuity of a transparent and inclusive approach in trying to achieve the ambitions and expectations of member states about the GCM process. The Global Compact which, he said, should contain specific recommendations and deliverables that can be implementable and reviewable through a follow up mechanism, while being non-binding. He also explained the preparatory process of the thematic sessions which is led by the office of the SRSG. The first thematic session is scheduled on 8-9 May in Geneva.
11. **Ambassador Gomez Camacho** praised the constructive, open and transparent process that led to the adoption of the Modalities Resolution. He considered the Global Compact as a unique “make or break” opportunity to improve the lives of millions of people, vis-à-vis the enormous responsibility of the international community. He underlined the crucial role of the GFMD in offering a discussion mechanism for member states and other concerned actors in the past 10 years, beginning from a time when it was difficult to discuss migration within the UN system. Remarkable progress has indeed been achieved to date, with the ongoing process for the elaboration of a Global Compact, and IOM having become a member of the UN family. Member states today are ready to discuss the human rights of migrants and their contributions to development. Within this context, he urged member states to be pragmatic and practical. He announced that the GCM stocktaking conference will be held on 4-6 November in Guadalajara, Mexico.
12. [In his statement](#), IOM Director-General Ambassador William Lacy Swing shared the organization's vision, role and contribution for the GCM process. He committed IOM's substantive and technical support for the state-led process. In addition to the International Dialogue on Migration and global meetings of Regional Consultative Processes, IOM is using its global footprint, close relationships with governments and its ability to bring different actors in the migration landscape to the table to contribute to achieving a principled and practical global compact. He shared the IOM's vision for the GCM to promote a world where migrants move out of a genuine choice and not out of necessity. He upheld the sovereign right of governments to determine who may enter and stay, but pleaded for more open and regular pathways for migration. A unifying framework was needed, he said, with a set of achievable tools and objectives, practical solutions and common principles to manage human mobility.
13. In a video message, UNDESA Under-Secretary General Wu Hongbo underlined the state-led character of the GCM and the linkages between migration and development that was recognized in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Asked to share his vision for a successful GCM outcome, he cited four elements: a) The Compact should foster countries to establish well-managed policies; b) The Compact should uphold the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migratory status; c) The compact must acknowledge migration as an enabler of sustainable development; and d) The Compact should meet a robust implementation mechanism which should be guided by an explicit plan of action with measurable targets and benchmarks of success.

## Open discussion

14. During the open discussion, 10 countries and 3 GFMD observers took the floor to share their aspirations about the GCM process and their views on the format and content of the GCM, as well as on GFMD's role and potential contribution. It has been 30 years since the international community first recognized the complexity of international migration and decided to work together through dialogue and cooperation. Speakers held the view that the international community has a moral obligation to succeed and translate the political commitments of the New York Declaration into concrete outcomes that will transform the lives of migrants. Views were repeatedly held that the GCM could help achieve the vision for the 2030 sustainable development agenda to leave no one behind. There was a proposal to ensure cohesion and complementarity between the Global Compact for safe orderly and regular migration and the Global Compact in Refugees so that the two compacts become mutually reinforcing while remaining as distinct.
  
15. On the format of the Global Compact, many speakers supported the idea that the Global Compact should be non-binding, but must include political commitments, practical solutions and effective monitoring mechanisms. Managing migration is a shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination that entails differentiated calls for cooperation towards identifying solutions to shared challenges. A crucial first step is to acknowledge the different interests at stake (between countries of origin, transit and destination, and migrants themselves). Balancing these interests will require a grand bargain of sorts. To this end, a strong political will and commitment for real partnerships is needed from Member States. An ideal GCM outcome would require operational commitments, measures of success and robust follow-up mechanisms.
  
16. On the substantive front, speakers underlined that the Compact must be anchored on the protection of the fundamental human rights of migrants, regardless of their migratory status. Below are some aspirational elements of a successful Global Compact, as mentioned by the intervening governments:
  - Address the drivers and root causes of migration.
  - Open legal channels of migration and mobility by improving access to global labor markets, promoting sustainable labor migration for decent work, and effectively regulating and managing temporary or circular migration which fosters the transfer of skills to developing countries;
  - Enhance capacity for managing migration in countries of origin and countries of transit (including by combating human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and contemporary forms of slavery);
  - Manage crisis-related movements and protect migrants at risk;
  - Foster the inclusion of migrants and their contribution to development;
  - Strengthen collective capacities to govern migration at local, national, regional and global levels;
  - Ensure that migration is orderly, that irregular migration is brought under control, and that returns can be effectively carried out;
  - Recognize the important role of national human rights institutions;
  - Build mechanism of trade mission, develop interstate cooperation and information exchange, emergency preparedness for mass migration influx, etc;
  - Save lives and respect the human dignity of all migrants.
  - Provide safe access to essential services by States, including housing, education, health services<sup>3</sup>, etc. irrespective of migrant's legal status and without the fear of facing arrest;

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<sup>3</sup> The health of migrants has not been included in the thematic clusters of the GCM. Nonetheless, in January 2017, the WHO executive board in its 140<sup>th</sup> session made a decision to develop a framework of priorities in guiding principles to promote the health of refugees and migrants for consideration of the WHO General Assembly in May 2017, followed up by a Global Action Plan in 2019.

- Protect from persecution, violence and violation of fundamental rights throughout the migration journey; considers the needs of children, unaccompanied or separated minors and women; and
  - Adopt and integrate a balanced and positive narrative about migrants and migration.
17. Participants also highlighted the “three-S” contributions that the GFMD has offered as a process in the last 10 years. First, they recognized that the Forum has given clarity and depth to the discussions, identified solutions and promoted the sharing of knowledge and experiences (*substance*) on the interlinkages between migration and development. It has also provided an important *space* for dialogue and cooperation and brought together perspectives from diverse *stakeholders*. The challenge is how to filter the key recommendations that the GFMD has generated through the years and translate them into specific action points, while retaining its informal character. A view was held that the GFMD can do its utmost in contributing to the Global Compact by remaining as a think tank and a discussion hub for all interested parties. However, the same intervener believed that vesting the forum with a monitoring function for the implementation of the compact would be counterproductive.

## Closing Plenary

18. After the simultaneous working sessions, participants reconvened for the closing plenary session which was presided over by **Ambassador Götz Schmidt-Bremme** of GFMD Co-Chair Germany. The session began with the reports of the three working session rapporteurs, followed by brief remarks from the GCM Co-facilitators, **Ambassador Juan José Gomez Camacho** and **Ambassador Jurg Lauber**. **Mr. Ahmed Skim**, representing GFMD Co-Chair Morocco, delivered the closing remarks.
19. As reported by **Ms. Carolina Hernandez** of the OHCHR, Working Session I on human rights of migrants recognized the positive and empowering experience of migration, as well as the social, economic and cultural benefits it brings to all. However, the precarious situation of individuals along migratory routes poses serious human rights concerns. While there was a consensus around the protection of human rights for all migrants, regardless of their migratory status, the lingering question is how to uphold these human rights, based on existing normative and pragmatic frameworks, and in line with the commitments of the New York Declaration. In that regard, the GCM should strive to foster a far more comprehensive human rights-based and gender-sensitized approach to migration. Concerns were expressed during the session about the rising xenophobia, intolerance and toxic narratives against migrants and migration. Countering these would require a multi-stakeholder engagement and a concerted effort to promote a more positive and evidence-based understanding of migration. In addition, participants underscored the need for a whole-of-society approach to ensure the effective protection and social inclusion of all migrants. The session also appreciated the GFMD for having provided a space for trust building and exchange of relevant practices should be continued, according to the participants.
20. Working Session II, according to **Mr. Pedro de Vasconcelos** of IFAD took stock of the enormous contributions made by migrants in both countries of origin and destination, including not only remittances and financial investments, but also in-kind contributions. These contributions are directly relevant to the 2030 Agenda, inasmuch as migrants’ remittances help address the issues of poverty, food security, health and education of migrants’ children in the countries of origin. But the session urged to take into account the equally important contributions that migrants make to their host countries – i.e. 85% of migrants and diasporas’ income stay in countries of destination and migrants fill in skills gaps and venture into entrepreneurial activities. To maximize the impact of these contributions, there is a need for political coherence at the national level and engagement by the government with the civil society, the private sector and the migrants themselves. It was highlighted during the session that the GFMD database has in store many good practices in harnessing migrants and diaspora’s contributions. Participants also acknowledged that the GFMD has deepened the

international community's reflections on lowering the costs of remittance transfer and recruitment, promoting financial inclusion and literacy, as well as portability of benefits for migrant workers. They urged the GFMD to feed these policies and lessons learned from ten years of discussion into the GCM process.

21. **Ms. Michelle Leighton** ILO reported that the discussions in Working Session III on irregular migration and regular pathways began by recognizing the changing demographics and the challenges of the future of work. The discussion focused on the need for better labour migration governance. There was a wide agreement that the GCM should ensure fair and ethical recruitment and promote skills recognition and mobility, including the upskilling of migrant workers. Participants agreed that the existing governance mechanisms could be strengthened, for instance, through bilateral and regional agreements and cooperation. They encouraged the establishment of well-managed regular pathways, through better admission policies, national coordination mechanisms and public-private-partnerships. They recognized the vital role that local authorities, businesses, workers' organizations and the migrants themselves play in promoting regular migration and addressing irregular migration. They affirmed the GFMD's potential to contribute to the GCM process by serving as an accessible pool of information and a database for relevant practices.
22. In their separate statements, the Co-facilitators expressed their appreciation for the summaries of the three working sessions. They reaffirmed their neutrality in the GCM process; nonetheless, they appreciated the positive outcomes of the deliberations, which has once again proved the GFMD's usefulness, relevance and potential to contribute to the GCM process. Ambassador Gomez Camacho made it clear that the Global Compact will be a non-binding instrument, and that the whole process leading to its adoption in 2018 will remain pragmatic and action-oriented. Ambassador Lauber, on the other hand, committed to keep a positive and dynamic atmosphere throughout the process.
23. In his [concluding remarks](#), Mr. Ahmed Skim expressed his appreciation for the richness of the debates which he believed would be helpful in preparing the GFMD's contribution to the GCM. He applauded the chosen thematic clusters of the Dialogue, which in his view combined the human face with the development dimension of migration. This was important, he said, because migration challenges cannot be overcome unless the 2030 Development Agenda is achieved. He shared his ambition for a Global Compact that takes into account the complexity of migration and human mobility. The Compact, he urged, should not just become a catalogue of good intentions for migrants, but must ensure the positive impact of migration on countries of origin, transit and destination and the migrants themselves. As essential elements, the Compact must emphasize policy coherence, uphold the protection of the rights of migrants, open regular migration and mobility pathways, and include goals and indicators that can facilitate the implementation of agreed principles. Under the Co-Chairmanship of Germany and Morocco, he pledged that the GFMD will not disappoint the international community's expectations for a substantial contribution to the GCM.