

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

CONFERENCE

**SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT:
*DISCUSSING NEW EVIDENCE FROM THE ACP OBSERVATORY ON
MIGRATION***
3-4 JUNE 2014, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Keynote speech June 3, on *South-South Migration and the Global Forum on Migration and Development*, by Amb. Eva Åkerman Börje, Chair, Global Forum on Migration and Development, Government of Sweden

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A couple of weeks back, Sweden hosted the 7th Summit Meeting of the **Global Forum on Migration and Development in Stockholm**. The meeting was attended by approximately 900 participants from around 140 countries, 30 international organizations and a large number of civil society organizations.

The meeting was **opened by Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki-moon** who called governments to action, for cooperation on international migration, and in particular to include migration in the post-2015 development agenda.

I am glad to share with you that **the meeting was attended by 59 ACP countries, the ACP Secretariat and the ACP Observatory on Migration**. Never before have so many ACP countries been actively engaged in the government teams where the substantive preparations take place. 14 ACP countries took part in this work. The experience brought to the table by the ACP Observatory on Migration has also been key for understanding South-South migration.

The Global Forum, as you know, is an **informal, voluntary and non-binding state-led process** whereby governments share **experiences of policies and practices**. As such it is a unique global platform for **sharing of lessons learnt and inspiring to action**.

As Sweden assumed the Chairmanship, we set out to **enhance the development dimension of the discussions at the GFMD**.

In substantive terms, this has meant shifting the dialogue from a migration-centred approach, to **an approach that has taken development objectives as a point of departure** – How migration can

contribute to inclusive economic and social development, for the migrants themselves, their families as well as countries of origin and destination.

Three broad streams of work have characterized this during our chairmanship; policy coherence and bringing migration into development planning; the contribution of migration to inclusive economic development, and; the contribution of migration to inclusive social development.

The **inclusion of migration in the post-2015 development agenda lies at the heart of this endeavour** and the meeting in Stockholm resulted in concrete recommendations for how this could be done. These recommendations have been submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. It is our hope that we can thus influence the reports that they are producing.

With regards to **economic development**, this year's dialogue has focused on policies and programmes aimed at **matching of skills and demand on the labour market**, including the need for effective mechanisms for recognition of skills. The discussions have also focused on innovative initiatives tailored towards **engaging the diaspora in promoting trade, investment and transfer of skills**.

When it comes to **social development**, our deliberations have focused on how to **enhance the empowerment of migrants** as well as their **contribution to health and education outcomes**. Governments have shared how they have expanded access to services to migrants as well as how the voice of migrants has been strengthened, information made available and connections facilitated between places of residence and origin.

We also made efforts to include issues related to **South-South migration** – an issue which I am also glad to see is gaining greater attention in the EU's Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.

Let me share some of the **examples raised during our Chairmanship of how countries in the south can learn from each other and cooperate around these issues**.

Cape Verde and Mali highlighted how they, together with 11 other countries and the ICMPD, had worked in a project to **enhance the institutional capacities of national authorities** charged with migration and development to better harness the contributions of diaspora communities.

Through a **South-South Expert Exchange mechanism**, expertise in one country is linked up with capacity needs in another.

Through these initiatives, **participating states have been provided with concrete knowledge on tools to promote engagement with the diaspora.** Experiences included areas such as return and reintegration policies as well as supporting the entrepreneurship to name a few.

There were examples of countries offering to send their experts on **mainstreaming migration into development planning** to other countries in the South to assist in this endeavour; for example Jamaica making this offer to Cap Verde. Recognizing the value of such exchanges, there were calls for **enhanced peer-to-peer learning** in this realm.

The OECD shared initiatives aimed at **enhancing the capacity of partner countries to incorporate migration into their development strategies** and policies, as well as to assess the economic contribution of labour immigration in developing countries. [The latter is a joint project with the ILO, funded by the European Commission, which will explore what the impacts are on human capital, wages, labour markets, demand, fiscal and welfare systems, etc. Ultimately, the study will also try to establish the impact of labour immigration on economic growth.]

A number of experiences were also shared with regards to the **protection and empowerment of migrants.**

Examples include a tripartite framework for the support and protection of domestic migrant workers from the Horn of Africa going to the Gulf States; an initiative to promote sexual and reproductive rights among migrants in the Latin American and the Caribbean region; a Memorandum of Understanding between Thailand and its neighbouring countries allowing irregular migrants from the region temporary right to reside legally in Thailand; innovative programmes for extending health insurance coverage to documented and undocumented migrants, also in Thailand; as well as a multilateral social security agreement to facilitate portability of pensions among Ibero-American countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as you can see, **a lot of experiences were shared at the GFMD with high relevance for south-south migration.**

There was also a recognition that more needs to be done in this regard. This was highlighted, in particular, with regards to **skills matching and labour migration**; especially when it come to the recognition of the skills that migrants bring back from working abroad and how to leverage return migration for development. Finding a way to valorise experiences from abroad is key, but the return perspective is today not always taken into account in migration policies in the south.

These experiences can only be generated through the active participation of countries in the South and our international partners, including the organizers of this conference.

While I am happy that we had the highest number of ACP countries contribute actively as government team members throughout our Chairmanship, I would like to **encourage even more governments to engage in the ongoing day-to-day work of the GFMD process**. Your contributions bring great value and, I am sure yield high returns for your own policy development.

This is the essence of the GFMD: to share experiences; learn from each other; and craft policies that improve the development outcomes from migration, for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination.

In closing, I would like to mention that much of the experiences mentioned – and a lot more – can be accessed through the **GFMD Platform for Partnerships and the Policy and Practices Database**, which is available at the website of the GFMD: www.gfmd.org. I trust that you will find these useful.

Thank you very much!