

**GFMD Friends of the Forum Meeting
Geneva, 21 February 2019**

Speaking points - Stephanie Winet, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, IOE

1. Comments on the Draft 2019 Concept Note

- The priorities identified by the chairmanship are very timely and the questions raised for the roundtables should trigger fruitful exchanges among stakeholders.
- On mixed migration flows (priority 1): there are different opinions and positions within the business group on how to address the mixed migration flows and the related integration into labour markets. Yet all concur with the fact that the priority lies on the necessity for the selected individual to be granted with a work permit that allows him/her to fill a specific position open in the company.
- Initiatives that aim to open international employment pathways for skilled refugees to fill talent gap are being created. We follow and support them. Talent Beyond Boundaries is one of these initiatives that connect a refugee talent pool with employers around the world who are searching for skilled workers. For these initiatives to be scaled up, partnerships with governments to ensure legal pathways will be key.
- On communication, especially with migrants (priority 2): employers in sending countries would certainly benefit from an enhanced communication with the potential migrants, as well as with the returning migrants. Communication with the local population is key to ensure that when an individual decides to move for better opportunities, he/she does so in an informed way and aware of the local job opportunities. Also, communication is key to inform about open opportunities for returning migrants.
- An example where such communication would benefit all stakeholders is in the booming hospitality industry in Sri Lanka. According to an industry survey a minimum of 400'000 new jobs will be available at all levels in the hotel, tourism and industrial sector in the next three years in Sri Lanka. Communicating these opportunities to the potential, as well as to the returning migrants is crucial.
- Partnership is an important component of the concept note. The private sector is very diverse, let's use this diversity for the benefit of different actions.
- For example: Because manpower shortage is reported everywhere, employers in sending countries could work closer with governments on finding solutions to fill their skills gaps; global multinationals, which Human Resources deal with immigration laws on a daily basis, have the expertise and resources to help policy-makers craft migration policies that help the movement of people and thereby job

creation; the organized recruitment industry can support governments in adopting or adapting regulations that promote responsible recruitment; national employers federations can identify the skills needs and work on skills matching programs for specific industries; finally, start-ups are important private sector players. The world of work is changing fast, in particular with automation and digitalization.

- Those are just examples of what we can achieve toward the Summit in Quito. The IOE will work in close collaboration with its member in Ecuador, la Federacion Nacional de Camaras de Industrias del Ecuador to deliver results at the Summit.

2. Update on the Business Mechanism

- The Business Mechanism completed its third year of operations in 2018 with the challenging task of following both the GFMD and the GCM processes.
- As part of the 2018 activities, we hosted a workshop in Kuala Lumpur in October, contributed to the IOE policy paper¹ on migration that was launched at the GFMD Summit, participated in Employers consultations in Sri Lanka, Uganda and Geneva and brought a delegation of 50 business representatives to the GFMD Summit in Marrakech. Mr. Skim reported on the Business meeting of the GFMD Summit in his earlier intervention.
- A small business delegation observed the GCM negotiations in New York and provided recommendations to Governments mainly on objectives 5 on regular pathways, 6 on responsible recruitment and 18 on skills development.
- The business group that engaged in the process welcomed the efforts of collaboration toward the management of migration, despite the fact that it did not agree with every provision in the text. As the private sector representative, the President of the IOE was invited to deliver a statement at the opening ceremony of the GCM conference in Marrakech; he highlighted the importance of a coherent multi-stakeholder approach to achieve concrete outcomes on the ground. A “private sector Marrakech paper” in that sense was sent to the UN SG, the PGA and was circulated to all UN member states.
- Looking ahead, The Business Mechanism will continue to focus on regional challenges. We plan on hosting two business/governments workshops in the Middle-East (Dubai) and in South America (Argentina). We count on the active participation of governments to ensure in-depth discussion on local migration policies. Best practices will be highlighted in each region to draw lessons learned and implement change on the ground.

¹ Link to the “IOE Position Paper on labour migration”, December 2018: <https://bit.ly/2TX5Oet>

- The expected result is a better understanding of the business/Human Resources realities when dealing with immigration laws on a daily basis, and of policy-makers constraints when drafting immigration systems.
- In addition, the Business Mechanism will host four informal meetings with the Ambassadors of both regions in New York and Geneva to inform permanent missions of developments related to the Employers' consultations. These lively and instructive discussions proved to be very constructive last year, as we addressed specific issues of concerns to the regions.
- In terms of budget, the Business Mechanism was co-funded in 2018 by both governments and private companies. As we are finalizing the 2019 budget, we call on you to share the financial burden of the Business Mechanism, to ensure that we can deliver on our project proposal.
- Finally, as for our internal working methods, we are in the process of formalizing our business network, with a governance structure led by a steering committee, which will include a number of companies, of non-profit global business associations, as well as national employers' federations, which would represent the five regions. This group will be representative of large and small companies, as well as employers from the developed and less developed countries. Business Mechanism donor governments will be invited as observers.
- The network will serve to input not only the GFMD, but also the GCM and other foras where private sector engagement is called for. In principle, nothing changes in the work and service provided to the GFMD, but we believe that a formal structure will add transparency and legitimacy.
- We look forward to continued engagement. Thank you.