

Meeting of the Friends of the Forum  
11 March 2014, Geneva  
Agenda item 9

## Report of Civil Society Activities

John K. Bingham, ICMC  
GFMD Civil Society Coordinating Office

*Submitted in writing as prepared for delivery*

**Ambassador Åckerman Börje, Deputy Director General Altuğ**, organizing partners and colleagues,

Eight weeks from today civil society delegates will be arriving in Stockholm for the Civil Society Days of the seventh Global Forum on Migration and Development. We are pleased to offer you this final update on our preparations, *along with an invitation* to government GFMD delegates to join us in our deliberations that week and, as I close, *two important requests* to collaborate with you more directly in this Global Forum.

### 1. Since our last report to you in November:

- Most of our small GFMD Civil Society Coordinating Office has moved to Brussels, led by Ms. Wies Maas, with the very good news of significant new project funding from the **European Commission**. I briefly referred to this in our updates to you at our September and November meetings together, but allow me a few words on this long sought and very positive contribution to our shared work in this Global Forum. In December, we signed contracts with the European Commission for funding to ICMC to strengthen civil society around the world in its work on migration and development at national, regional and Global Forum levels. We have spent much of January and February organizing this valuable new resource—which is a major step forward on the sustainability of civil society's participation with you in this Global Forum. The particular emphasis is on civil society network-building in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, where many of our project partners have been leading actors in the Global Forum and High Level Dialogues over the years. We are most grateful to the European Commission that the support is multi-year, going through 2016. Principal activities will be [1] sustained participation in Global Forum work before, during and after the annual meetings; [2] regional and national network-building and convenings; and [3] global and regional advocacy particularly around the three issues of labour migration and recruitment; global governance of migration and development—including post 2015 development processes; and migrants and diaspora working for development. In addition, a seed fund will support a small number of pilot projects in the three regions. The name of the new programme is **MADE**, which stands for **M**igration **A**nd **D**evelopment **N**etwork, and it will formally be launched during the Civil Society Days in Stockholm. *A two-side snapshot of the MADE programme is on the table at the side of this room, and will be sent to you with a Press Release later this week.* Lastly only to note that the funding comes with a co-funding responsibility of over 20%, where we will continue to need to fund-raise ourselves, actively, to sustain our share of this Global Forum with you.
- Three quick notes regarding our **budget** for GFMD civil society activities this year, which we set, manage and fundraise for largely independent of the Chair. First, with efficiencies and cost-cutting we have held civil society's GFMD budget for full year 2014 to exactly the level as for the last GFMD, in 2012: US \$790,000, with all costs reflected in the budget. This follows a modest

expenditure for our GFMD civil society work in the 2013 interim year for which we are specifically grateful to Sweden. In addition to the European Commission, on behalf of global civil society we also thank the governments of Sweden, Switzerland and Australia for your contributions already this year. At present, we are US \$70,000 short of achieving breakeven on the budget, in large part for travel and hotel support for civil society delegates representing organizations with low budgets and from developing countries. Ahead of the last Global Forum and for the High Level Dialogue, several governments stepped forward with support for *five to ten* civil society delegates from their own countries and others: we appreciated that so much then, and would welcome it right now.

## 2. May I turn to the **Civil Society Days Programme (CSD)** of the Global Forum 12-14 of May in Stockholm.

Different from your government meetings, civil society has always set a ceiling for the number of **delegates** to the GFMD: in Mauritius and again this year, between **180 -200** (including 15 representatives of civil society in the host country), plus about 100 observers.

By our recent deadline for applicants from civil society, we received **780 applications**, the highest ever.

- **more than half** of the applicants are **migrants** themselves or represent organizations that are **migrant- or diaspora-led**
- **almost 600** of the applicants are from development and rights NGOs, with **87** from trade unions, **75** academics and **39** from the private sector
- **more than half** participated in previous GFMD Civil Society Days or HLD activities
- **380** indicated that their organization works **in Africa**; about 250 each in **Europe, Asia-Pacific and the Americas**; and **183 in the Middle East** (some organizations work in more than one region)

As in all prior years civil society's International Steering Committee (formerly called the "International Advisory Committee")—this year 35 civil society leaders from every sector and region around the world—is conducting a selection process to choose from all the applicants a smaller mix of delegates who reflect representivity, commitment, and a diversity of regions, sectors, gender and activity at international, regional, national and grassroots levels; also for travel and hotel assistance to between 50 and 60, *if* funding is fully available. 69 civil society delegates received such assistance for the last GFMD.

Again this year, and very much like your government meetings, **the programme of the Civil Society Days** is built around opening and closing plenaries with simultaneous breakout sessions in the middle. In one sentence, the substance of all our plenary and breakout sessions will be the 8 points in civil society's 5-year 8-point Plan for collaboration with governments, straight-line from the GFMD in Mauritius, the World Social Forum on Migration in the Philippines the week after, and last year's HLD. *A two-side copy of the 5-year 8-Point Plan is on the table at the side of this room, with further information available at [www.gfmdcivilsociety.org](http://www.gfmdcivilsociety.org).*

Of course at the Global Forum on Migration *and Development*, there will be special **focus on migrants and migration in the post-2015 development agenda**. This will center upon a 2-page set of civil society goals, targets and indicators that is currently in global editing by civil society networks and organizations around the world. In addition, and I am delighted to report this, at the invitation last week of the government co-chairs of your GFMD Roundtable 1.2, the civil society and government programmes will actually be sharing background papers for our two GFMD sessions on post-2015. That's a "first" for the Global Forum.

Another "first" this year—and civil society is very keen about this—will be a set of small **breakfast conversations** that civil society is organizing with governments\_Wednesday morning May 14<sup>th</sup>, in the open moment before the government programme and common space open just after noon. "Small" breakfast conversations means about "4 + 4": up to 4 civil society leaders with up to 4 governments, all concerned and ideally active together on a specific issue. Recruitment. Migrants in crisis. Children in contexts of migration. Something like 8 small tables on 8 points. The method is conversation; the mood is collegial, and co-responsible; the goal is collaboration. *Individualized invitations to these small breakfast*

*conversations will be extended in the next two weeks.* In addition, civil society leaders are finalizing plans for one or two bigger meetings that morning, on labour migration and possibly xenophobia.

**3. May I only briefly touch on some civil society activities ahead of the GFMD.** As in past years, a number of civil society organizations have organized or participated in **preparatory consultations at national, regional and international levels**, often with government officials. A full list will be posted on the website shortly, but simply as example to note national consultations in Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Nepal, the Philippines and Sweden; regional consultations in Mexico and Latin America; and international consultations and briefings on the post 2015 development agenda held and being scheduled in Switzerland, Belgium and the US. Absolutely a model for such consultations is the work that ICMC's Swedish partner Mr. George Joseph of Caritas Sweden has done with his colleagues in Swedish civil society, with modest financial support organizing three meetings in different parts of the country in December and January, focusing directly on the principal themes of your three roundtables.

In the three days immediately preceding the Civil Society Days, a number of civil society organizations and leaders active in the Global Forum are organizing the **People's Global Action on Migration Development and Human Rights, also in Stockholm**. As you may know, the PGA is an important civil society process that for many years has quite effectively brought together hundreds of civil society organizations around GFMD and HLD events and issues but *outside* of the official programmes. Consistently over the years, as many as half of the PGA's civil society participants and all of its principal message and recommendations have been the same as those inside the Global Forum and HLD. We work closely on and greatly respect these linkages with the PGA.

**4.** We have been happy to **work closely with the Chair**, on matters from logistics to interpreters to programme and longer-term planning, including on new efforts to engage the private sector, post-2015 work, and **Common Space**. We are very enthusiastic about the structure and opportunities in the Common Space format just presented—in particular the inclusion of practical examples of policy and practice at the local level, demonstrating work-a-day collaboration between civil society and local authorities. We always say that migration and development are inherently international, but migration is also local; development is *profoundly* local—or it is not at all.

**5.** To close then—as we approach this Global Forum we share in eight weeks, may we offer **one invitation, and two proposals** to you as partners:

- **Invitation to all governments:** to join us in the Civil Society Days in Stockholm, in particular during our plenary sessions Tuesday. We especially invite the chairs and rapporteurs of your GFMD roundtables.
- **In return**, may we formally request, especially of your roundtable chairs, if the **chair and rapporteur of each civil society roundtable session be invited to bring to the corresponding government roundtable**, principal perspectives and recommendations of civil society. This would do no more than follow the modality that was so effective—and collaborative—at the HLD in October.
- **Finally, a formal proposal:** in this *pre-2015* development moment, at *the* Global Forum on Migration and *Development*, with both civil society and governments having breakout sessions, plenaries and Common Space paying attention to migration and the post-2015 development agenda, can we consider preparing and releasing, together, a **joint civil society-government message** from the GFMD expressing convergence—already achieved among us all, in great part, e.g., at the HLD and in multiple other processes—on migrants, migration and the post-2015 development agenda? Can we do that at the Global Forum? In these next 8 weeks, can we together do whatever work is needed to make that message happen?

*Thank you.*

*/Copies of this report will be circulated with the record of the meeting*