



Friends of the Forum 28 April 2015
Agenda Item 8

Civil society report GFMD Friends of the Forum

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*As prepared for delivery;
acronyms defined at bottom;
documents cited are at www.gfmdcivilsociety.org*

Ambassador Samsar, colleagues,

With exactly 24 weeks to go to this year's Global Forum—and no further meetings of the Friends of the Forum scheduled until September, we are happy to share with you this update of civil society activities, both on process and substance.

1. Briefly on process: the Coordinating Office continues to make progress on fundraising and has begun gearing up for the organizing of the Civil Society Days in Istanbul in October.

On behalf of civil society in this Global Forum, we are grateful to Turkey for the Chair's contribution of \$125,000 USD and welcome the United Arab Emirates pledge of \$50,000. As you know our full budget with an invitation and options for funding support is among the materials emailed to you for this meeting. It is also on the side table and we would love to speak with you about possibilities together on this!

As promised last meeting, we have begun convening the **International Steering Committee** of civil society to help organize the programme of the Civil Society Days in October. In fact we will reorganize into two groups of civil society leaders. One will organize the **programme** itself. The other will, for the first time, organize "**global calls**" of civil society that focus, in two-hour on-line meetings, on progress and strategies concerning specific issues within civil society's "5 year 8 point plan" [*copies on the table at the side of the room*].

We were glad to speak earlier with the office of the Chair about plans that **civil society in Turkey** may have for its own activity before the Forum. Among other things, we are eager to welcome at least two representatives of Turkish civil society to participate on the International Steering Committee, and once again have reserved at last 15 seats at the Civil Society Days specifically for civil society delegates from the GFMD host country.

One of the first tasks for our Steering Committee will be to finalize the **concept paper** that we together develop for the Civil Society Days programme. Like last year, the issues of civil society's "5-year 8-point plan" will provide the principal structure for the Civil Society Days programme. In that direction, we will have a draft concept out for consultation in the coming weeks. But picking up on strong work and suggestions from civil society and the International civil society Steering Committee last year, it is already clear that the **following issues** will figure prominently in this year's civil society

programme: labour migration, with a focus on practical reform of the migrant worker recruitment, placement and employment practices; implementing the SDGs; children in contexts of migration; diaspora empowerment and action, and migrants on the move in crisis and distress.

But what good is a “5-year 8-point plan” if no one **measures progress** on it? We will do this in two ways. First, with a global **survey** of civil society action on migration and development both within and beyond the 8 points. And second, with a **global policy report** that measures *movement* these issues. Yesterday we completed interviews to hire an independent consultant to measure that movement in these first two years of the “5-year 8-point Plan”. The progress report will serve two purposes: as a kind of “letter” to you, our government partners in this GFMD work, and as a provocative background paper for the Civil Society Days in October. Both the survey and the global report will be completed between May and September.

We are happy once again to join the Chair and other governments in joint preparation of the **Common Space**. We look forward, among other things, to taking forward last year’s very productive inclusion of **city** government and civil society partnerships in the Common Space discussion, as so much of what is concrete in migration and development policy and practice is in fact *local*. We also believe that Common Space may, if wisely structured, provide a key moment to bring in and further consider, together, the importance of **private sector** actors in migration and development.

Finally on process, the **application process** for the Civil Society Days will open next month. For civil society delegates, we will invite applications through a global call to the 2,600 names in the database of our MADE (Migration and Development) project [*project brochure on the table at the side of the room*]. As in past years, we will then send through the Support Unit a further invitation to governments and international and regional agencies to participate. This will include a broad invitation to you to participate in the entire two Civil Society Days Monday and Tuesday October 12th and 13th as well as more issue and region-specific participation in smaller breakfast tables between governments and civil society leaders Wednesday morning the 14th.

2. Turning to substance, may I simply highlight **three migration and development activities** in which civil society around the world has been deeply engaged in recent months.

- On incorporating migrants and migration in the **post-2015 global development agenda**: Two weeks ago, our MADE partner **Cordaid**, the Dutch development NGO, organized a webinar of civil society leaders and networks around the world. First, to update political work with governments on supporting the current OWG goals and targets, especially goals **8.8** on decent work and protection of migrant worker rights and **10.7** on safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration. Second, to turn attention to preparing effective indicators for the achievement of these and other goals and targets. Here, civil society was of one mind: indicators cannot be so reduced, either in number or scope, so as to empty the goals and targets of their purpose. Whatever the mix of global and national or thematic indicators, as a whole the indicators must cover the intended scope of the OWG goals and targets meaningfully—in some cases, with new data and measuring, if necessary. And civil society *practitioners* as well as formal statisticians and academics have a clear role in identifying indicators, collecting data and measuring.
- On labour migration, ICMC and our MADE partner **Migrant Forum in Asia** (MFA) continue to focus intensively on rights and protection-based reform of current **migrant recruitment, placement and employment** practices. The MADE Working Group on Recruitment now involves some 200 civil society organizations around the world, with particular emphasis on labour migration corridors in Asia and the Middle East-Gulf countries and through the Americas. ICMC continues to work with IOM, ILO, employers, recruiters, other civil society organizations and with

private and public donors in programmes that are moving on this, like IOM’s International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS).

On the occasion of this year’s 25th anniversary of the UN General Assembly adoption of the 1990 UN Migrant Workers Convention (the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their Families)—and another sign of civil society’s deep, commitment to this convention, MFA has further launched a global “*Step It Up!*” campaign to increase ratification. Information is available at www.mfasia.org.

- Last but not least: **migrants in peril on the move**. Much of civil society worldwide is in an uproar about the death and distress of migrants and refugees on survival journeys within and across so many regions of the world, notably this past week in the Mediterranean but also in the Americas and in the Asia-Pacific. As civil society organizations have expressed it everywhere, given the causes, scale and suffering that we are all seeing, *these situations are humanitarian—emergencies—with huge costs to human and economic development at both ends, and the middle, of these journeys*.

IOM Director General Swing put it so clearly—in seven words—at the Global Forum last year: “*risks to migrants are risks to development*”—human as well as economic.

To the extent that a large portion of this distress clearly occurs in regions and countries wrestling with crisis, civil society broadly welcomes the commitment that governments have made in the **Migrants in Countries of Crisis** (MICIC) initiative. We are glad that governments, working with ICMPD and IOM, are so committed to collecting the clear principles and best practices so important before, during and after crisis.

In civil society, where so many of us are migrants and migrant diaspora ourselves, we are serious about our personal role as both subject and co-actors in these situations. For that reason, civil society was happy to organize its own consultation over two days just ahead and *outside* MICIC’s first regional government consultation in Manila recently, and then to share civil society perspectives—and commitment—with governments *inside* it. In particular, civil society emphasized that greater protection of basic rights of migrants in ordinary times—before any “crisis” takes place—equips us migrants to be better able to take care of ourselves as well as participate in any government-assisted plan or protection when there is a crisis. Going into upcoming MICIC consultations in other regions, we expect that among others, partners including the **Scalabrinian** network and the **International Network on Migration and Development** in the Americas and **Caritas Sénégal** in Africa will bring to the discussion further perspectives on human security and protection of migrants in transit. Not only in points 3, 4, 5 and 6 of civil society’s “5-year, 8-point plan”, the issues of human security and protection of migrants in transit have been a *leitmotif* in meetings that, among others, MADE partners have organized in those regions.

/Thank you.

Acronyms

GFMD: Global Forum on Migration and Development

ICMPD: International Centre for Migration Policy Development

ILO: International Labour Organization

IOM: International Organization for Migration

MADE: ICMC’s civil society Migration and development Network

MICIC: Migrants in Countries in Crisis initiative

NGO: non-government organization

OWG: UN member states’ “Open Working Group” on the sustainable development goals

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals