

GFMD 2019 Second Meeting of the Steering Group

Tuesday, 28 May 2019

10h00 to 12h30

Room XI, International Labour Organization (ILO) Building

Report of the Proceedings

I. Welcoming Remarks

1. The second meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Steering Group¹, under the Ecuadorian Chairmanship was opened by Ambassador Santiago Javier Chávez Pareja, Vice Minister for Human Mobility, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of the Republic of Ecuador, 2019 Chair-in-Office of the GFMD.
2. Joining the GFMD 2019 Chair at the podium were **Mr. Georg Klussmann**, Head of Unit of Migration Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chair Germany; **Mr. Tarik Sissou**, Head of the Multilateral Cooperation Division, Ministry Delegate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in charge of Moroccans Living Abroad, representing the GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chair Morocco; **Mr. Andres Montalvo**, Coordinator of the Ecuadorian GFMD Task Force; **Ms. Marcia Porras**, advisor to the GFMD Chair on migration and refugees at Ecuador's Permanent Mission in Geneva; and **Ms. Estrella Lajom**, Head of the GFMD Support Unit.
3. The Chair commenced the meeting by taking stock of the progress made and activities that have been organized since the first GFMD Preparatory Meetings in February:
 - a. In New York, a week after the first GFMD Preparatory Meetings, the Chair represented the GFMD in a series of high-level meetings and events at the Migration Week, namely: (1) Expert Symposium on International Migration and Development on 26 February; (2) High-Level debate on International Migration and Development on 27 February; (3) Side Event on Ensuring Fair Recruitment on 27 February; (4) International Dialogue on Migration 2019 on 28 February; (5) Reception to mark the launch of the 2019 GFMD on 27 February; (6) as well as bilateral meetings over the course of the week.
 - b. In Geneva, together with the Governments of the Philippines and Bahrain, the first GFMD Thematic Workshop was organized on March 21-22 which focused on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) at the national level. An informal consultation on the relationship between the GFMD and the GCM was also held on April 4, in view of the upcoming release of the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) Modalities Zero Draft.
 - c. In Washington DC, the Chair participated and presented the thematic priorities of Ecuador's Chairmanship in a side event on April 12, organized by the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) in the margins of the World Bank spring meetings.
 - d. In Latin America (Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, and Quito), the Chair organized and took part in a series of meetings to exchange views and forge strategic partnerships with various migration actors and promote the GFMD Chairmanship in the region.

¹ Steering Group Member States that participated in the meeting: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Ecuador, France, Egypt, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Morocco, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates

II. Adoption of the Agenda

4. Given the mandate and responsibility of the Steering Group to provide conceptual and policy advice to the Chair, the Chair explained that the agenda covers three main topics:
 - a. Presentation and decision about the request by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to assume the GFMD Chairmanship next year.
 - b. Presentation by the chair-in-office of its thematic agenda and work plan, including upcoming workshops and the Twelfth GFMD Summit in Quito.
 - c. Follow-up of the GFMD Ten-Year Review, a process led by the GFMD Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration.
5. The Provisional Agenda of the meeting, which was circulated on 13 May 2019, was adopted by the members of the SG without any comment or reservation.

III. GFMD 2020 Chairmanship

6. Ambassador Chávez informed the SG that the United Arab Emirates submitted their candidacy for the GFMD 2020 Chairmanship. Upon deliberation with the GFMD Troika, the Chair shared that they found merit in UAE's candidacy, owing to their active involvement in the GFMD process and their rich experience in managing migration as a home to the fifth largest migrant population in the world. This also represents the first time that a Gulf State will chair the GFMD.
7. In addressing the FOF, **Ambassador Obaid Salem Saeed Al Zaabi**, Permanent Representative of UAE to the UNOG, conveyed his country's readiness to lead the GFMD at this critical juncture, when the GFMD has been called upon by the international community to play an important role in the GCM process. In his speech, he stressed that the UAE has been a strong supporter of the GFMD since its inception. The UAE has been a member of the Steering Group since 2008, and has consistently engaged in roundtable sessions, annual GFMD summits and GFMD working groups. He highlighted four areas that will be priorities for the UAE Chairmanship:
 - a) Further explore and test innovative formats and ways to engage Member States in the development of the 2020 thematic agenda.
 - b) Develop more inclusive relationship with the three GFMD mechanisms: GFMD Civil Society, Business Mechanism and Mayors Mechanism.
 - c) Strengthen the relationship between the GFMD and regional processes; and
 - d) Balance the role of the GFMD under the terms of the GCM, giving due consideration to those Member States that have either opted out or abstained from adopting the Compact.
8. A number of Steering Group Members welcomed and extended their support for UAE's voluntary offer to chair the GFMD in 2020, with many citing their positive working experience with the UAE in the framework of the GFMD, and recognizing UAE's added value at a time of transition in the multilateral migration landscape. Without any objection from the Steering Group, the Chair, together with the Moroccan and German Troika Members, declared the UAE's 2020 Chairmanship as endorsed.
9. Consequently, the Chair also invited the UAE to co-chair the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration (SD & IM) with the Government of Germany, in view of the UAE's active involvement in the WG, and its future role as the GFMD Chair. To promote coherence and continuity, the UAE positively responded to this request.

IV. GFMD 2019 Thematic Agenda and Work Plan

a. GFMD 2019 Roundtables

10. The Chair shared that [six Roundtable teams](#), led by some 13 co-chairing governments will meet in the [afternoon](#) of May 28 to gather inputs, as well as to discuss the format and structure of the final Roundtable sessions in Quito. These sessions will be at the centerpiece of the Quito Summit. Since February, progress has been made in the elaboration of the background papers of the various Roundtable sessions. All RT session co-chairs were invited by the GFMD Chair to update the Friends of the Forum (FOF) on the state of play of their respective RT sessions at the [FOF meeting](#) scheduled the following day, May 29.

b. [Thematic Workshop on Migration Narratives and Communication, 4-5 July, Rabat](#)

11. The GFMD 2019 Chair Ecuador, in partnership with the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, will convene a GFMD Thematic Workshop entitled “Narratives on Migration: Toward evidence-based Communication” on 4–5 July, at the Mohammed VI International Conference Center in Skhirat, Morocco. Representing the Moroccan co-convenor, **Mr. Tarik Sissou** explained that the workshop aims to initiate an open discussion, allowing each of the stakeholders (governments, civil society, private sector, academia, media, etc.) to analyze in depth the mechanisms that shape public perceptions of migration issues. It will have the following objectives:

- Exchange experiences of governments and other stakeholders about practices and lessons learned in communicating about migration, migration policies and their interconnection with sustainable development.
- Understand the mechanisms of antagonistic discourse on migration and identify concrete recommendations to foster good perception of migration with a greater outreach and impact.
- Identify the benefits of effective partnerships between research actors and communication actors in the digital age.
- Reinforce the commitment of key actors to change negative public perception towards migration

c. [Observance Event for “International Day of Family Remittances,” 14 June, New York](#)

12. In partnership with the Permanent Missions of Algeria, Guatemala, Madagascar, and Philippines and along with IFAD, IOM and UN-DESA, the GFMD Chair will co-sponsor an Observance event for the "International Day of Family Remittances: Supporting one billion people reach their own SDGs," to be held at the UNHQ in New York on 14 June. The Chair emphasized that the event is directly linked to the third thematic priority of their Chairmanship, which aims to highlight migrant contributions to sustainable development through remittances and investment.

d. [Side Event on the margins of 2019 High Level Political Forum \(HLPF\), July](#)

13. For three years in a row, the GFMD has contributed a thematic input to the annual High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. As is the case in 2017 and 2018, a GFMD side event will be organized on July 11 to present the findings of the [GFMD Recommendations to 2019 HLPF](#) to the migration and development community in New York. The planned side event will feature perspectives from all concerned stakeholders.

e. [Twelfth GFMD Summit, 18-22 November 2019, Quito](#)

14. The Twelfth GFMD Summit will be held at the Quito Convention Center in the week of 18 to 22 November 2019. As the coordinator of the GFMD 2019 Task Force, **Mr. Andres Montalvo** shared, the key features of the Summit which will include: (1) a high-level inaugural ceremony; (2) Common Space organized by all GFMD stakeholders; (3) Government-led roundtable sessions; (4) GFMD Platform for Partnerships session; (5) Future of the Forum session; (6) GFMD Civil Society Days; (7) GFMD Business Meeting; (8) 6th Mayoral Forum; and (9) GFMD side events.

15. In the lead up to the Summit in Quito, Mr. Montalvo assured the Steering Group that the arrangements in the Summit will allow for more interaction between participants on and off-sessions, as well as offer proper amenities and communications among the participants. The official invitation to the Summit is expected to go out by mid-July.

V. GFMD Ten-Year Review Follow up -Report of the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration on:

a. Key Features and Supporting Recommendations

b. Roadmap of Review Follow up Process

16. The Chair updated the SG on the work of the WG on Sustainable Development and International Migration, which has been tasked to follow up on the recommendations laid out in the [Ten-Year Review report](#). To this end, the WG has produced a document entitled “GFMD Key Features and Supporting Recommendations” to streamline the follow-up process and ensure that all Review recommendations are given due consideration by the Steering Group in a systematic manner. The Chair then called on the representatives of Switzerland and UAE, as the lead drafting WG members, to present the salient elements of the document.
17. **Ms. Mahbah Mohammed Saleh Al Saleh**, representing the UAE, highlighted the need to follow up on the GFMD review report, given the wider political background that the GFMD is operating in. She explained that the document was drafted to restate the value of the GFMD, while at the same time setting a vision for the future. She elaborated on the first part of the document – the GFMD Key Features -- which sets out a generic description of what GFMD is, what it does, and how it does it: (1) improving how migration is managed; (2) linking migration and sustainable development; (3) space for controversial issues; (4) focused on practical outcomes; (5) state-led and informal, voluntary and inclusive; and provides a space for (6) policy discussions, (7) partnerships and (8) peer learning.
18. Representing Switzerland, **Mr. Pietro Mona**, explained the latter part of the document— Recommendations of the 10-Year Review—which are divided into two parts: (1) those that are unlikely to meet with significant resistance or prolonged discussion by Member States (Recommendations Proposed for Immediate Adoption by the Steering Group); and (2) those that are potentially more politically contentious and will therefore require further clarification and consideration (Recommendations Requiring Further Consideration). He then elaborated on each of the recommendations proposed for immediate adoption which are categorized into three pillars namely: (1) Preparatory Process and Summit (Substance); (2) Institutional Framework; and (3) Financial Framework.
19. A number of Member States appreciated the work of the Working Group, recognizing the importance of undertaking the follow-up exercise to clarify and maintain the GFMD’s added value and relevance in the era of GCM implementation. Several recommendations gained strong support from a number of SG members such as the (1) introduction of state-of-the-art facilitation techniques at the GFMD Summit and in other meeting formats; (2) strengthening the GFMD Support Unit (SU); (3) review of the GFMD Long-term Financing Framework; (4) organization of a Geneva-based Summit; (5) extension of GFMD Chairmanship to two years, etc. There were some reservations, on the other hand, about (a) the reference to the GFMD as a “policymaking forum,” (b) the recommendation to engage the research community in the GFMD process and (c) introduction of an annual membership fee to Member States.

*c. **Feedback of the Chair on its Priorities of the 2019 Chairmanship related to the Recommendations***

20. The Chair thanked the Working Group for its commitment to formulate concrete actions to follow up on the review recommendations—as illustrated in the documents (1) Key Features and Supporting Recommendations and (2) Roadmap of Review Follow up Process. The Chair affirmed that the re-clustering of the recommendations into those that can be immediately adopted and those requiring further consideration is a useful approach, and that the proposed Roadmap is instructive and realistic. The Chair asked the SG members to submit their written comments to facilitate the remaining work of the WG. There being no objection from the Steering Group, the Chair considered the roadmap as adopted and instructed the Working Group to take the next steps.
21. As a complement to the ongoing follow up of the review commendations, the Chair also mentioned a number of short-term measures that Ecuador has already implemented or is planning to implement over the course of its Chairmanship: (1) diversification of the agenda of the GFMD Steering Group and Friends of the Forum; (2) introduction of state-of-the-art facilitation techniques and more dialogic formats at GFMD events; (3) Improvement of Quito Summit format (e.g. “holistic Common Space” agenda); (4) reintroduction of the GFMD Marketplace as a matchmaking mechanism” between various stakeholders; (5) participation of policy-oriented researchers in GFMD discussions and (6) strengthening of the GFMD Support Unit.
22. In view of the role accorded by the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) to the GFMD in the implementation, follow up and review of the GCM, the Chair held an informal consultation on 4 April 2019 in Geneva. Its objective was to share with the Co-Facilitators of the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) Modalities Resolution -- **Ambassador H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen**, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York and **Ambassador H.E. Mr. Agustin Santos Maraver**, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations in New York -- the views and ideas of Member States and other GFMD actors on a number of key issues relating to GFMD’s relationship to GCM, including on how the GFMD can provide a space for informal exchange on the implementation of the Global Compact, and relay information on best practices and innovative approaches to the IMRF. The Chair conveyed a [letter with the summary report](#) of the April 4 consultation to the Co-Facilitators on May 27, with an invitation to attend the Friends of the Forum meeting on May 29. The Chair asked all members of the Steering Group to attend the Friends of the Forum meeting.
23. The Chair also proposed to establish a so-called Council of Elders—comprised of the present, future and past GFMD Chairs-in-person since 2007 to date—to leverage their individual and collective knowledge and strategic guidance, in order to enhance the visibility and promote the sustainability of the GFMD process. He was optimistic that the overall process would considerably benefit from the stewardship of all GFMD Chairs in a systematic manner. The Chair sought the feedback and comments of the SG on this proposal. Some intervening Member States affirmed the value of seeking the advice of former GFMD chairs; however, they requested more time to carefully consider the added value of establishing a new “Council of Elders.” They cautioned that this may add another financial burden and layer to the GFMD structures already in place. One recommendation, instead, was to take advantage of, and empower already existing structures—such as the Steering Group and the Troika. Conversely, one Member State held the view that the GFMD could profit from the expert advice of individuals who have been intrinsically part of the process, pointing to the recent engagement of former GFMD Chairs, Switzerland and Philippines in the Ten-Year Review process.

IV. Any Other Business

24. The meeting was adjourned at 12h13.

Prepared by the GFMD Support Unit