

GFMD 2019 First Meeting of the Steering Group

Wednesday, 20 February
10h00 – 17h00
Salle XXII, 1st Floor, Building E
Palais des Nations

Summary Report

Morning session: 10h20 – 13h00

I. Welcoming Remarks

1. The GFMD 2019 Chair, Vice Minister for Human Mobility of Ecuador **Mr. Santiago Javier Chávez Pareja**, welcomed 28 Steering Group (SG) members¹ to the first preparatory meeting of the GFMD 2019 Ecuadorian Chairmanship. The Chair was joined on the panel by **Ambassador Emilio Izquierdo**, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UN Office at Geneva (UNOG); **Mr. Georg Klussman**, Head of Unit of Migration Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chair Germany; **Mr. Ahmed Skim**, Director of Migration Affairs, 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; **Mr. Maksim Roskin**, international advisor to the GFMD Chair; and **Ms. Estrella Lajom**, Head of the GFMD Support Unit.

II. Adoption of the provisional agenda

2. The [Provisional Agenda](#) of the meeting was adopted by the SG.
3. The Chair explained that the SG meeting would take place over a whole day, instead of only a single morning, in response to a request received by the Chair from a member of the SG requesting a special meeting of the SG in order to deliberate on the findings and recommendations of the GFMD Ten-Year Review report.

III. GFMD 2019 Chairmanship

(a) **Conceptual and strategic discussion on the [draft GFMD 2019 Concept Paper²](#) and [Work Plan](#)**

4. The Chair presented the substantive agenda and work priorities of the GFMD 2019 Chairmanship which will be organized under the overarching theme, “*Sustainable approaches to human mobility: Upholding rights, strengthening state agency, and advancing development through partnerships and collective action,*” leading to the Twelfth GFMD Summit in Quito. As outlined in the draft

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

² This was the first draft Concept Paper of GFMD 2019, circulated before the Steering Group meeting on February 20.

GFMD 2019 Draft Concept Paper, the Quito Summit will feature six Roundtable sessions under three broad Roundtable themes, as follows:³

- Roundtable 1 - *Joint responses to mixed migration flows: Partnerships and collective action to protect Rights*
 - Roundtable session 1.1: Providing regular pathways from crisis to safety
 - Roundtable session 1.2: Facilitating social and economic inclusion
 - Roundtable 2 - *Migration narratives and communication: What role, responsibility and resources do governments have?*
 - Roundtable session 2.1: Shaping public narratives on migration and migrants
 - Roundtable session 2.2: Communicating effectively with migrants
 - Roundtable 3 - *Addressing human mobility as part of urban and rural development strategies*
 - Roundtable session 3.1: Supporting arrival cities through policy coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships
 - Roundtable session 3.2: Harnessing migration for rural transformation and development
4. The Chair also aims in 2019 to build upon the recommendations of the GFMD Ten-Year Review Report, to help define the relationship between the GFMD and the newly established UN Migration Network, and to position the GFMD within the new global migration governance architecture without losing its core identity.
5. A majority of SG members expressed strong support for the Draft Concept Paper and thematic priorities, with many states welcoming the specific focus on mixed migration flows. Some held the view that the GFMD is well-equipped to handle such a challenging issue, given its informal and multi-stakeholder character. Other states readily announced their interest in Roundtable 2 on migration narratives and communication, as well as in Roundtable 3 on addressing human mobility as part of urban and rural development strategies. Suggestions to add other elements in the roundtables were also offered, namely: a focus on justice and education for all; addressing false information, xenophobia and negative migration narratives (including social media); and the role of cities in managing migration flows.
6. In regard to the future of the GFMD, there was general support for taking forward the recommendations of the Ten-Year Review report. One view was held that the GFMD must focus on its added value in an increasingly populated international migration ecosystem. On the other hand, some SG members urged the GFMD to align its priorities with the GCM and assist member states in achieving the GCM objectives. It was underlined that the informality and inclusiveness of the GFMD remain crucial in tackling contentious issues. One state looked forward to further elaboration of mechanisms for improving partnerships, including the Marketplace. Another noted that the Forum needs to find a Chair for 2020 as soon as possible, as this continuity is vital to the sustainability of the Forum.

(b) Thematic Workshop on the GCM Implementation (21-22 March, Geneva)

7. The first GFMD Thematic Workshop on the ‘Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration at the national level’ will be co-convened by the Philippines and Bahrain on 21-22 March 2019 in Geneva. The Workshop will focus on the implementation of the GCM at the national level, particularly Objective 5 (regular pathways for migration), Objective 6 (fair and ethical recruitment and decent work) and Objective 23 (international cooperation and global partnerships). The GFMD Chair emphasized the importance of the focus of this Workshop as the next logical step after the adoption of the GCM, and as part of the Chair’s plan to further regionalize the GFMD.

(c) Interaction with Other GFMD Mechanisms

³ The titles of the six RT sessions have been adjusted based on the Final GFMD 2019 Concept Paper circulated on 1 April 2019.

8. The Chair recognized the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in the GFMD throughout its existence, and noted the establishment of the new Mayors Mechanism in 2018, as well as the Chair's desire to further strengthen the participation of academia in GFMD discussions. The Chair then invited representatives from the GFMD Civil Society, Business Mechanism and Mayors Mechanism to update the SG on their planned activities and budget for 2019.
- i. [Mr. Stephane Jaquemet](#), Policy Director of the International Catholic Migration Center, coordinating office of the GFMD Civil Society (CS) process, expressed support for the GFMD Ten-Year Review, stating that it presented a very good basis on which to move forward. He also affirmed the continued relevance of the GFMD as an informal and state-led annual forum. Calling for urgent funding support for the CS process in 2019, he noted that ICMC received significantly less in contributions in 2018, with a deficit of between USD 150,000 – USD 200,000. Insufficient contributions in 2019, he cautioned, poses a risk of not being able to facilitate a dialogue between civil society and governments.
 - ii. **Ms. Stéphanie Winet**, Head of Stakeholder Engagement of the GFMD Business Mechanism, agreed on the relevance of the GFMD, the need to take results-oriented action in 2019, and echoed the call for a more sustainable funding strategy. She also highlighted three strategic issues linked to the business participation in the GFMD:
 - The GFMD Business Mechanism has consolidated a business network on migration with a governance structure to be led by a steering committee, comprised of a diverse range of stakeholders.
 - The Business Mechanism plans to organize two business workshops (in Dubai and Buenos Aires), publish two research papers, and host two informal lunch meetings in New York and Geneva, subject to funding availability.
 - The Business Mechanism proposes to reduce the business delegation to the Quito GFMD Summit in order to provide more regional workshops. They also propose a more interactive format for the Common Space, by having smaller, multi-stakeholder groups focusing on one topic or regional challenge.
 - iii. Subsequently **Mr. Maurizio Busatti**, Head of the Multilateral Processes Division, IOM, presented the [plan for the GFMD Mayors Mechanism](#) in 2019. The Mayoral Forum will form part of the Quito Summit program, and increased representation of mayors will be fostered in different Summit events. A light steering committee comprised of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), IOM and Mayoral Forum Council, among others, will be established to support the Mayors Mechanism.

(d) Presentation of the GFMD 2019 Provisional Budget

9. **Ms. Estrella Lajom**, Head of the GFMD Support Unit, provided a preliminary report with regards to the financial situation of the GFMD as of December 2018 (budget of USD 2.3 million, registered expenses USD 1.3 million, left over balance USD 712,472)⁴ and the [Provisional Budget for 2019](#) (USD 2,430,678). The GFMD 2019 Chair sent a Note to all Friends of the Forum, with the details of the proposed budget for the core activities in 2019, plus the USD 400,000 seed funding for the GFMD 2020 Chair.
10. The Chair called on all SG members to contribute financially and/or in-kind in order to implement the GFMD 2019 work plan. Thereafter he announced the end of the morning session of the SG meeting.

Afternoon session 13h20 – 17h00

IV. GFMD Ten-Year Review Report

⁴ These figures were based on a preliminary report. There will be an external audit at the end of March 2019. The left over balance may be carried forward to the GFMD 2019 depending on the agreement of the donor countries.

(a) Presentation of the main findings and recommendations of the report

11. **Dr. Steffen Angenendt**, representing the GFMD Year Review Report team, **presented** to the SG the main elements and findings of the Review report, drawn from a 15 point questionnaire administered to all Friends of the Forum (FoF) and other stakeholders in 2018.⁵ The report revealed that states value the informal state-led space that the GFMD provides, as well as its ability to discuss controversial issues with different stakeholders and facilitate partnerships and cooperation. However, there are some challenges that must be taken into account, including the Forum's limited structure and ad hoc nature. Some members opined that there was still insufficient follow up, learning, and sustainability between chairmanships. For this reason, Dr. Angenendt noted the need for the GFMD to adapt to emerging developments, to broaden ownership by States, and to refine its working methods and organizational structures.
12. **Mr. Maksim Roskim**, international advisor to the GFMD Chair, then explained the Chair's plan on how to implement the Ten-Year Review's recommendations. The Chair proposed to address the recommendations in **three clusters**:
 - **Cluster 1** – 3Ps (Policy, Partnerships and Peer Review) Vision, to be discussed at the first SG meeting on February 20;
 - **Cluster 2** - Finances, to be discussed at the second preparatory meeting on May 28; and
 - **Cluster 3** - Broadening ownership and user experience, to be discussed at the third preparatory meetings in September.

(b) Exchange of views on the Report's possible implications (strategic, operational and structural) for the GFMD

13. SG members welcomed the Chair's commitment to follow up on the recommendations laid out in the Ten-Year Review, with many highlighting the importance of ensuring GFMD's sustainability and its relationship with the GCM. A number of states welcomed the GFMD's role in implementing the GCM; others, however, stressed that the GFMD must focus on its added value in the changing global policy landscape and not become subordinate to, or limited by the GCM.
14. It was suggested that a dedicated mechanism be put in place to carry forward the follow up process to the Review recommendations. On this note, the recommendation for the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration (formerly Ad hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and GCM) to take up this role was met with general approval. It was underlined that the Working Group should have an open character, allowing the expertise of other Member States and stakeholders (including, potentially, academia) to feed into the process, where appropriate.
15. Some specific comments were proffered with regard to the 3Ps vision:
 - i) On Policy, intervening SG members welcomed the idea of multi-stakeholder, issue-specific working groups, but warned against the duplication of work. Other SG members spoke against creating new structures at a national level in view of existing whole-of-government consultations. There was general support for an increased – but targeted - involvement of academia with the GFMD in order to provide a strong evidence base for policy discussions. One specific suggestion was for the academia to contribute to the preparation of Roundtable background papers.
 - ii) On Partnerships, the value of the PfP was recognized as both a space to update on GCM implementation and to promote interaction with non-GCM member states. There was a call to clarify how the PfP should be situated vis-à-vis the envisaged UN capacity building mechanism outlined in the GCM, in order to avoid duplication of work while enhancing the PfP's capacity.

V. GFMD and Related Processes

⁵ 65 governments completed the questionnaire, including 26 of the 30 members of the SG.

(a) Migration and the 2030 Agenda

16. **Mr. Julian Pfaefflin**, representing the German Co-Chair in the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration, presented an overview of the [draft recommendations of the GFMD](#) to the 2019 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), upon the invitation of the ECOSOC President. The draft report outlines how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in focus at this year's HLPF strongly link to migration issues. The SG members were invited to submit their comments and written inputs to the GFMD's report by 28 February. Thereafter, the report will be finalized and submitted to the HLPF on or before 15 March.
17. **Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UNOG, presented the revised [Terms of Reference \(TORs\) of the Working Group](#) on Sustainable Development and International Migration. He also announced that Bangladesh was ready to relinquish the seat as Co-Chair of the WG, inviting other WG members to take on this role. For her part, **Ms. Irene Biontino**, German Co-chair of the WG, highlighted the action points for the Working Group in light of its [revised TORs](#).

(b) Global Compact for Migration

18. Upon the GFMD 2019 Chair's invitation, **Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi** gave an informal overview of the highlights of the first intergovernmental consultations held February 13 on the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) process, which is co-facilitated by Ambassador Masud bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in New York. Some common issues in the IMRF negotiations which were highlighted included the desire to maintain the IMRF's non-binding, state-led character; to ensure a 360 degree approach to migration; for the IMRF to promote best practices and innovative partnerships; and to build on existing mechanisms and platforms.
19. At the Chair's request, **Mr. Jonathan Prentice**, Head of the Secretariat of the UN Migration Network (UNMN), provided an update on the Network's ongoing set up and immediate priorities. The Network aims to support Member States and a panoply of actors in the implementation of the GCM. The Network's activities will be done in the spirit of the GCM, and will be well aligned with the Agenda 2030 and the UN System as a whole. He noted Member States' request to define the relationship between the Network and the GFMD, and to clarify how they can work together. An eight-member Executive Committee comprised of UNDESA, IOM, ILO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNICEF and UNODC, with IOM acting as the Coordinator and Secretariat, will lead the Network, whose immediate priorities were to hire the necessary staff in the Secretariat, develop a work plan, and establish the Migration Compact Fund. The Fund will be based on existing designs of country-driven, UN pooled funds, to be administered by the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund office. Replying to a query from one SG member about the link between the PfP and the CBM and connection hub, Mr. Prentice shared the view that curating existing data portals and tools, rather than creating new ones, would seem to be the logical approach.

VI. Any other business

20. The Chair informed the SG that the Netherlands and United States have communicated their decision to step out of the SG membership.
21. The meeting was adjourned at 16h51.

*Prepared by the GFMD Support Unit
23 April*