

Summary of Key Points of the Steering Group Meeting 01 February 2010, Geneva

The Steering Group members generally shared Mexico's vision for GFMD 2010. The partnership perspective of Mexico's overall theme was widely accepted. Partnership among governments, with civil society, between private and public sectors and with migrants, is a key tool for managing migration and development in a comprehensive and balanced way. The focus on human development – as defined by the UNDP 2009 Human Development Report on Migration - was also welcomed.

Shared responsibility as part of the partnership approach was key to advancing governments' thinking on migration and development and making policies work better.

A number of overarching issues were raised:

- i) Some governments were concerned about discussing irregular migration; others felt that the GFMD was the place to speak openly about it. For the Mexican chair, the focus is not on irregular migration per se but on joint approaches to managing irregular migration. Understanding the causes of irregular migration is part of a comprehensive approach to managing migration, particularly for enhanced development outcomes. Regular and irregular migration are two sides of the same coin; hence some governments suggested combining or linking the two sub-themes in RT1 relating to regular and irregular migration.
- ii) Governments also felt there was a need for clearer definitions of key terms used in the themes and sub-theme titles such as “human development”, “shared prosperity”, and “shared responsibility”. These terms will be elaborated on as working definitions in the preparation by the government teams of the roundtable sessions and the background papers. The final titles proposed for the Roundtables and RT sessions will be considered carefully before finalizing the Themes Paper.
- iii) Some governments were interested in giving greater emphasis to climate change and its effects on migration. Other governments felt that it was premature to discuss this at the 2010 GFMD, or that the Forum itself was not suitable for this issue. Given the strong interest in this issue, the Chair advised the Steering Group at the end of the meeting that the Chair will prepare a note on how this may be incorporated in the Roundtable discussions.

The Roundtable themes

The discussion on the proposed Roundtables was supportive and constructive. Governments generally selected two sub-themes per Roundtable (in some cases involving a merger between sub-themes). Following summarizes the key responses and preferences expressed by the Steering Group members:

Roundtable 1 – *Partnerships for migration and development: shared prosperity - shared responsibility.*

The majority expressed a preference for sub-themes 2 (*Partnerships for more regular and protected migration*) and 4 (*Joint strategies to address irregular migration*). Some governments suggested linking or merging these two sub-themes, given their strong inter-linkages. Comprehensive approaches to dealing with the full range of regular and irregular migration issues relevant for development were called for; and a need was identified to build on the themes and outcomes of earlier GFMDs. There was also considerable interest in sub-theme 1 (*Improving public perceptions of the development benefits of migration in host and origin countries*), as an area inviting partnerships with civil society and new public-private partnerships, for example among the media and other public

institutions. Improving public perceptions was also considered important in the context of South-South migration.

Roundtable 2 - Human mobility and human development.

The majority expressed a preference for sub-themes 1 (*Labor, health and education: strategies for human development*) and 2 (*Migration, gender and family*), which covered critical areas for maximizing the human development and empowerment of migrants. It was recommended that these also address vulnerable groups (including children). Sub-theme 3 (*Lowering the costs of migration - raising the gains*) was also identified by some as key to protecting and facilitating less risky human movement. There was also considerable support for sub-theme 4 (*How diaspora and migrants impact education, training and employment*), which linked with sub-theme 1 and could help improve public perceptions about migration (hence also links to RT 1). Some suggested to contextualize these issues in an expanded discussion of circular migration. Others felt they should build on earlier GFMD debates and outcomes relating to integration, protection and empowerment of migrants/their families, and Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSPs). Existing good practices, handbooks and guides, e.g. on bilateral labor agreements, social security arrangements etc., should be showcased. It was also suggested to include climate change and migration in this RT; this was also considered premature.

Roundtable 3 – Policies and institutional coherence to address the relationship between migration and development.

More governments expressed an interest in sub-themes 1 (*A comprehensive approach to address the cause-effects relationship of migration and development*) and 3 (*The impact of migration on the economic and social development of host and origin countries*). While both topics were considered important, a number of governments felt that relevant aspects of both sub-themes could be merged in one session which would also assess the impact of coherent policies and practices in host and origin countries and reflect on best practices and lessons learned in these areas. There was a strong vote for sub-theme 2 (*Assessing the relevance and impact of climate change on migration*), where more information/data were needed to understand the links with development and where there has been little debate to identify the key issues this raises for governments. Any discussion on climate change, migration and development should be fact-based. Concerning sub-theme 4 (*How to include the migration and development nexus in Regional processes and Inter-regional fora*), a majority of governments considered that this topic should remain on the GFMD agenda, as recommended in Athens, but that discussions should not be repetitive and preferably focus more directly on the development implications of migration.