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GFMD 2019 - Concept Paper

***Sustainable approaches to human mobility:
Upholding rights, strengthening state agency, and
advancing development through partnerships and
collective action***



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Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organizations
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MM	Mayors Mechanism (GFMD partnership mechanism)
PfP	Platform for Partnerships (GFMD online platform)
NYD	New York Declaration, 2016
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UCLG	United Cities and Local Government
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund

Introduction

The 2019 GFMD comes at a very timely moment for global migration governance: The magnitude of international migration and forced displacement has led the international community to address these issues at the highest political level. The affirmation of two Global Compacts -- one on Refugees (GCR) and the other for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in 2018 -- emphasizes the need for cooperation to address these global challenges in a comprehensive manner, which ensures the safety, rights and dignity of all migrants and refugees and harnesses their contributions to development at the local, national, regional and global level. Both Compacts and the prominent inclusion of migration-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development demonstrate important convergence and the possibility of broad consensus among States on what remain contested political issues. Yet, the Compacts do not enjoy universal endorsement and, especially in the case of the GCM, have generated different viewpoints in some countries. Large movements of refugees and migrants – which led to the adoption of the New York Declaration (NYD) in 2016 and the development of the two Global Compacts in the first place – remain a pressing political, policy, social, economic, and operational challenge. If managed effectively, responses to refugee challenges can be strengthened through global responsibility and coordinated shared actions, while safe, orderly and regular migration can advance the development of countries of origin, transit, destination and return. Migrants and refugees are central agents in this endeavor and should be engaged as such.

As Ecuador assumes the GFMD 2019 Chairmanship, one of its goals for the process this year is to play a bridging role: to nurture common ground among governments who may have different perspectives on the GCM; and explore complementarities of the two Global Compacts in line with commitments made in the New York Declaration, and in response to the need for integrated solutions on the ground.

The Chair also seeks to strengthen the dialogue among all GFMD stakeholders – to which mayors will add their perspectives going forward through the creation of the GFMD mayors mechanism this year. It is also in the interest of Ecuador to incorporate more systematically the inputs from academia, so that our policy deliberations benefit from the best available evidence, pinpoint gaps in our knowledge, and help inform research agendas. Too often, misinformation and misperceptions about migration and migrants and their societal impacts prevail in countries of origin and destination. Governments have a responsibility to explain and communicate their policies to the public, yet in an increasingly diverse and polarizing media environment, they compete for space in shaping narratives on migration. The GFMD 2019 Chair will therefore seek to explore possibilities to bring academia closer to the Forum as a way to: 1) diversify the range of participation and 2) create a stronger evidence base for informed policy choices.

This year in July, governments will for the first time be invited to report on actions they have taken to implement the central migration-related target in the SDGs, target 10.7 on “facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people”. The GFMD itself is again invited to contribute to the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on migration-related SDGs. Overarching trends, such as population growth and ageing, rapid urbanization, and the increasing impacts of climate change suggest a continued increase in human mobility this century. Large movements of people may trigger humanitarian and political crises. For movements to occur under conditions that are relatively safe and orderly, States and other stakeholders will need to work together at various levels of governance to predict, shape and respond to people’s need and desire to move, and to address the vulnerabilities they may face during their journeys. As a forum at the interface of migration and development, the GFMD will continue to forge synergies between migration and development actors with a view to finding action-oriented solutions to reach the SDGs.

The GFMD is an informal forum and has, consequently, enormous potential, first and foremost as a place that allows governments and other stakeholders to learn with and from one another. Governing human mobility is a complex task. The GFMD offers space for exploring sustainable approaches that incorporate long-term alongside short-term considerations and reflect interactions across policy areas and levels of governance. It can help elucidate the interests of governments and other stakeholders and foster an improved understanding of the costs and benefits involved in particular policy choices and practical action. To do this well and fairly, the rights and voices of migrants must become an integral part of the process.

Substantive priorities

(1) Coordinated responses to mixed movements: Partnerships and collective action to protect rights

In recent years, events in different parts of the world have prompted large movements of people, including both refugees and migrants, often travelling irregularly under conditions of great vulnerability, facing abuse, exploitation and loss of dignity. Governments have been put under pressure to deliver coordinated responses in a very short time period. Depending on the circumstances and routes taken, people fleeing the same situation may end up in different situations based on the country where they arrive. Discrepancies in conditions across countries can create incentives for people to move onward. Among countries, it can lead to tighter restrictions on entry and conditions of stay as governments seek to limit arrivals and associated costs. All those factors can contribute to situations of prolonged limbo and create an environment in which smuggling and trafficking operations thrive, exacerbating the risk of exploitation and abuse.

In 2016, the NYD laid out principles to address large mixed movements of migrants and refugees, highlighting both the differences but also the common protection needs both groups can experience, especially while in transit. Against the backdrop of large-scale mixed movements in different parts of the world, this first thematic priority of the GFMD is to stimulate exchange among countries and regions on innovative approaches and lessons learned in dealing with situations of mixed movements in a manner that upholds and protects the safety, dignity and (human) rights of people on the move. It will examine how coordination among governments and cooperation with other stakeholders, including regional organizations, local authorities, development partners, civil society and business, migrant and diaspora organizations and humanitarian actors can bolster States' agency and capacity to manage movements and meet acute needs, upholding international protection obligations, while linking short-term responses to longer-term planning around safety and opportunity for newcomers and host communities, as well as those migrants and refugees who eventually return.

Roundtable 1.1: Providing regular pathways from crisis to safety

Expected outcome

The goal of this roundtable is to identify and share concrete measures by governments and other stakeholders to facilitate access to safe passage for people who are forced or compelled to leave their homes, vulnerable groups in particular, and provide access to legal status in the country of destination.

This discussion is to take stock of the range of policy options, and concrete measures governments have taken to respond to mixed movement situations, facilitate safe passage for people fleeing crisis situations (including those seeking a way out of other situations of vulnerability), provide access to asylum or alternative legal status and analyze the experience made through resettlement and complementary pathways. Issues for consideration will include questions of documentation and identification, reception procedures, including for groups in vulnerable conditions such as unaccompanied or separated children, persons with disabilities, persons with serious health concerns, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and victims of trafficking and other crimes, access to shelter and health services, and family tracing and reunification. Questions of coordination and cooperation at regional, national and local levels, among governments, with non-state actors and people on the move, will be a critical consideration throughout.

Guiding questions

- *What existing and/or new regular pathways can be used and, where necessary, adapted by governments to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration and mobility of migrants in situations of heightened vulnerability?*
- *How can the complementary application of the GCR and the GCM support State and multi-stakeholder responses to address mixed movement situations?*
- *Why do governments choose to grant alternative legal status besides asylum/refugee status? What forms of legal status/stay have been provided by States and on what basis? What are the costs and benefits of such arrangements?*
- *How have governments and non-state actors dealt with questions of (lack of) documentation and identification in crisis situations? Why is coordination on this matter important?*
- *What procedures have governments put in place to ensure safe reception and accommodation of newcomers and to safeguard the rights of particularly vulnerable groups? What role do international and non-governmental partners and volunteers play?*
- *What kinds of mechanisms at various levels (regional, national, sub-national) have governments and other stakeholders used to facilitate a coordinated response in situations of large movements? What lessons have they learned?*

Roundtable 1.2: Facilitating social and economic inclusion

Expected outcome

The expected outcome of this roundtable is to facilitate the sharing of models and practices that have worked to provide inclusive solutions that generate benefits for newcomers and host communities alike.

The degree to which newcomers can find safety, opportunity and a sense of belonging in a host community is often closely linked to their legal status, and to the sense of safety, opportunity and belonging that prevails among locals in that community. It is therefore critical to address shared needs and to bolster capacities in both groups to, ideally, foster a sense of common purpose. This theme is to explore the role of political leadership, policy design, resources, capacities, and of newcomers themselves, in fostering inclusive solutions that generate benefits for and meet the needs of both newcomers and host communities. It seeks to facilitate learning around experiences and good practices addressing the challenges and opportunities of settlement, including underlying questions

such as provision of adequate housing, healthcare and education, access to work and livelihoods, and interventions to foster social cohesion, prevent discrimination and xenophobia, and tackle labor exploitation.

Guiding questions

- *What are the major obstacles to providing newcomers with access to basic services such as health and education? What kinds of partnerships and innovations can ease existing constraints? How can they promote the operationalization of global policy developments, for instance in migration health to achieve better health outcomes?*
- *How do local institutions need to adapt to service the needs of newcomers? How can the costs and benefits be effectively communicated to the local population? How can community participation from all strands of society be ensured?*
- *What role do newcomers have in facilitating social and economic inclusion?*
- *How can efforts to generate livelihoods and ensure access to the labor market benefit newcomers and locals alike? How can labor standards and decent working conditions be safeguarded for all workers?*
- *What practices and partnerships have proven successful in addressing and mitigating mistrust and tensions between newcomers and host communities and in fostering social cohesion? How can governments avoid the impression of “favoring” newcomers over host communities? Are there good practices on how to mitigate “competition” or tensions between newcomers with different backgrounds? What role can governments play regarding their diaspora in a different country?*
- *How have innovations and new ways of doing things that were introduced as part of crisis responses, e.g. in immigration and local service delivery systems, improved service delivery for all users, including host communities? What role can local community stakeholders and newcomers play in co-creating inclusive solutions, for example, as co-developers and providers of inclusive health services?*

(2) Migration narratives and communication: What role, responsibility and resources do governments have?

In many countries, migration is an emotive and polarizing topic. Governments cannot manage migration without considering how migrants are perceived in society. Yet, perceptions of migrants are often influenced by factors that lie beyond the purview of migration policy, such as concerns regarding broader social changes, economic decline or public safety. Addressing migration as a proxy for these larger problems sends the message that migrants are indeed the cause. Hard evidence on positive aspects of migration, for example concerning the important contribution to development in countries of origin and destination, generally does little to disperse fears, replace existing negative images or correct misperceptions. Governments in their policies and own discourse have an important role in setting the tone for the national debate. But governments by far are not the only actors. Traditional and social media are a powerful force in shaping migration narratives that may not always be based on facts. Social media in particular tend to have an ‘echo chamber’ effect, whereby people receive (false) information that reinforces their existing views and beliefs and is thus prone to driving polarization.

Governments must communicate their migration policies with the wider public but also with migrants, who may be distrustful of government intentions, while language and cultural barriers may give rise to misunderstandings. Also, social media serve as an important source of information for many migrants who may put greater trust in what is circulated on social networks than by government services. Governments in countries of origin and destination must not only think carefully about their messaging and channels of communication, but also about their messengers. Migrants are most directly affected by inaccurate representations of themselves in public discourse and may feel alienated and marginalized as a result. Aspiring migrants are often targeted by misinformation, for instance regarding job opportunities abroad that may not exist or offer very different conditions from those advertised.

Under this second thematic priority, the 2019 GFMD aims to discuss the experiences of governments and other stakeholders when it comes to practices and lessons learned in communicating about migration, migration policies and their interconnection with sustainable development in countries of origin, transit, destinations and return, both with the wider public and with migrants and migrant communities.

Roundtable 2.1: Shaping public narratives on migration and migrants

Expected outcome

The aim of this roundtable is to critically assess government communication strategies to inform about their migration policies and explore government options to address the challenges arising in the context of new media, including the proliferation of misinformation and hate speech

This roundtable will examine government communication strategies and tools to participate in public discourse and underpin narratives on migration with facts. Issues for discussion will include: how to effectively use normative commitments, data and evidence regarding migration in public communications; how to engage public opinion research to understand perceptions and diverse audiences and connect with their values and concerns; how to understand and engage with a variety of media and their role in shaping public perceptions and discourse; and how to track and tackle the spread of misinformation and hate speech, especially on social media, that contributes to societal polarization and puts migrants at risk. This discussion should crystallize lessons learned and contribute to the media literacy of participating governments.

Guiding questions

- *Why do governments engage in public communication about migration and migration policies? With what objectives?*
- *Who guides governments' public communication efforts on migration? Is it centralized or decentralized? How is messaging coordinated?*
- *How do governments develop messaging on migration? Who is involved? What role do opinion research and polls, as well as other kinds of research and data, play in that process? How do they measure the impact of their communications effort?*
- *What channels of communication and messengers do governments use to shape narratives on migration? How do they engage with traditional and new media? What kinds of capacities are needed to effectively track messages and communicate on social media?*
- *What are critical migration-related data points that the public cares about? What resonance do normative arguments (e.g. based on human rights, religious beliefs) have*

with different audiences? What is the potential to promote narratives on positive contribution of migrants to host communities?

- *What lessons learned from successful and unsuccessful public communication efforts can be shared with other participating states? In what circumstances can evidence of the positive interconnections between migration and sustainable development be useful to influence the migration discourse?*

Roundtable 2.2: Communicating effectively with migrants

Expected outcome

The objective of this roundtable is to bring out lessons learned and foster a better understanding of governments' goals, tools, challenges and responsibilities when communicating directly with migrants throughout the migration cycle.

This discussion will facilitate an exchange of experiences around governments' goals, tools, challenges and responsibilities when it comes to communicating directly with migrants, including for instance in the context of pre-departure information campaigns, as part of consular outreach efforts, in the context of immigration and visa processes, in local integration processes, and to explain and incentivize returns. This dialogue will benefit from consultations with and the insights of international and non-governmental organizations, civil society, as well as local authorities who are often direct interlocutors for migrants and refugees, as well as migrant, refugee and diaspora organizations. It should allow policy-makers to reflect on the effectiveness and ethical implications of their communication practices.

Guiding questions

- *What goals do different parts and levels of governments pursue in their communications with migrants? Can and should governments ensure overall coherence in their messaging and communications?*
- *How can governments make their information accessible to migrants? How can they be responsive to migrants? Are certain communication practices/channels with migrants more useful than others? If so, why and for what purpose?*
- *How can governments establish trust with migrants within their borders and with their own citizens abroad (through their consular offices)? What messengers have they used to communicate with migrants?*
- *How can governments and other stakeholders tackle fraudulent information directed at migrants? What role can migrants and their networks play in vetting information (peer-review)?*
- *How can governments and other stakeholders measure the effectiveness of their communication efforts, e.g. do pre-departure campaigns lead to more informed migration decisions? How can governments, including at local levels incorporate tailored information on basic services to promote social inclusion and participation by migrant communities?*
- *How can immigration and visa processes be enhanced to better inform migrants about the availability of regular pathways for migration?*

- *To what extent do successful communication practices incentivize voluntary return and sustainable reintegration?*

(3) Addressing human mobility as part of urban and rural development strategies

In July 2019, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development will be reviewing SDG 10, which aims to “reduce inequality within and among countries”, including through targets calling for well-managed migration policies and a reduction in remittance transfer costs. The goal dovetails with the overarching promise of the SDGs to “leave no one behind”, a promise that is becoming all the more pertinent as the effects of climate change threaten to undermine development gains and exacerbate existing inequalities within and between societies.

Achieving SDG 10 will require measurement of development progress beyond national averages and tackling differences in prosperity, resilience and social cohesion across national territories and groups of people. For policymakers concerned with the interlinkages between large movements of refugees and migrants and development, this means paying close attention to the way migration and displacement interact with existing inequities and territorial dynamics; for instance, whether and how it contributes or counter-balances the concentration of people and resources in certain areas of a country or region.

As emphasized in SDG 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities, urban areas will be a central locus for realizing sustainable development aspirations in this century. As they are rapidly absorbing a growing share of the world population, including a majority of migrants and refugees, cities must manage growing demands on their infrastructure and services, while reducing their carbon footprint, and facilitating diverse communities to live together. Meanwhile, emigration and the inflow of remittances are transforming rural economies in some parts of the world, while migrant workers help keep agricultural production afloat in others.

In the spirit of the New Urban Agenda, adopted in Quito in 2016, this theme is to facilitate a dialogue between different levels of government on how national and local authorities can work together within and across borders to facilitate the contributions of refugees and migrants to both urban and rural development.

Roundtable 3.1: Supporting arrival cities through policy coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships

Expected outcome

The expected outcome of this roundtable is to identify factors that make cities functioning places of welcoming, inclusion and integration and to understand the role that local and national governments and other partners can play in facilitating cities’ success.

In refugees’ and migrants’ daily lives, city and local authorities tend to shape their experience of and relationship to the State. Some cities have become successful “arrival cities” that offer newcomers opportunities for belonging and upward social mobility, while others struggle with the persistence of marginalized communities and segregation. This theme will explore what makes some cities more welcoming and functioning as motors of inclusion and integration than others. It will look at good practices in cities as well as challenges and bottlenecks facing city governments, and discuss the role of policy coherence and cooperation across levels of governance in facilitating migrants’ inclusion in and contribution to urban development.

Guiding questions

- *What factors contribute to making cities places of upward social mobility for refugees and migrants? What policies are critical for ensuring successful integration in cities? How much authority do cities have in setting policy in those areas and how much is determined at higher levels of government?*
- *What role does coordination between different levels and sectors of government play in refugee response as well as migration policy development and implementation? What are good practices in this regard? What are obstacles to effective policy coherence and cooperation across different levels of government?*
- *What other local actors are important for facilitating migrants' and refugees' inclusion and contribution to urban development? What role do multi-stakeholder partnerships play in this context? What role do the migrants and refugees themselves play in cities?*

Roundtable 3.2: Harnessing migration for rural transformation and development

Expected outcome

The objective of this roundtable is to discuss what policy choices governments have when it comes to enhancing the positive and mitigating the negative effects of migration and remittances for resilience-building and transformation in rural areas.

Development strategies in many countries have tended to focus on preventing rural flight and stemming migration into overcrowded cities. Yet, as existing root causes – such as poverty, conflict, land degradation, food insecurity and discrimination – stand to be exacerbated by a changing climate, threatening to further undermine livelihoods that heavily depend on natural resources and are vulnerable to droughts, floods and other environmental impacts, governments may increasingly need to consider human mobility as part of rural resilience building strategies. This session will discuss the role of migration and remittances in the transformation of rural areas, including the impact on agriculture and related industries, as well as local employment opportunities and entrepreneurship. And, it will explore options for policy makers at national and local levels to enhance positive and mitigate negative effects.

Guiding questions:

- *What drives migration out of rural areas? Who leaves? What role do gender and age play in rural emigration? How might the transformation of rural areas in the context of climate change and associated changes in agricultural production affect migration?*
- *What lessons have governments and partners learned in trying to address “rural flight”? Is migration more of a challenge or an opportunity for rural development and resilience-building? What kinds of policy interventions can enhance the positive effects and mitigate the negative effects of migration from rural areas? What is the role of cooperation between national and local governments and among local governments in rural and urban areas?*
- *What role do remittances and migrant investments play in rural areas and how can they be leveraged to support rural development and resilience-building? What bottlenecks exist in this regard and who needs to come together to address those? Beyond remittances, what is the role of the relationship between those who leave and those who stay?*

Priorities for the GFMD process

Follow-up to the 10-year review

The GFMD was created over a decade ago to facilitate dialogue and trust-building among States and advance policy ideas and solutions for linking migration and development. It has helped include migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and informed the formulation of the GCM. It has also made governments more comfortable with including stakeholders like CSOs and business in their migration policy discussions. In 2018, the German and Moroccan Co-Chairs commissioned a review of the GFMD to assess its achievements over the last decade and survey GFMD stakeholders on future directions. The review produced a number of recommendations that were first presented at the Future of the Forum session in Marrakesh.

One impetus for reviewing the role and relevance of the GFMD is the shifting global environment: with the adoption of the SDGs, the NYD, and the GCM, migration is now firmly on the UN agenda; the IOM has joined the UN system; and there are more actors in the migration field. As UN Member States have committed to global goals and targets on migration, the GFMD has been invited to inform the review processes in the context of the HLPF and the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), given its established role in facilitating the sharing of good practices and innovative approaches and providing a venue for match-making among partners.

Another driver for taking stock and reviewing the GFMD has been the recurring questions regarding the ownership and sustainability of the Forum as securing a succession of Chairs, rotation on the GFMD Steering Group, and continuity in terms of work planning and financing have proved challenging.

The Chair plans to hold more in-depth discussions on the review findings and recommendations with GFMD participating States and other stakeholders throughout the year. For this purpose, Ecuador proposes to address clusters of the report's recommendations during the three envisaged GFMD preparatory meetings in Geneva in February, May and September 2019 as follows:

- February: Review of the 3-P vision that would organize the GFMD around the three pillars of Policy, Partnerships, and Peer-review;
- May: Review of GFMD's financial basis and future arrangements;
- September: Review of operational recommendations to improve GFMD's overall "user experience".

The Chair will prepare three discussion notes elaborating on each recommendation cluster to steer the discussions and ensure action-oriented proposals with concrete timelines on how to implement the recommendations.

The GFMD Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration, which holds responsibility for preparing the GFMD's annual submission to the HLPF, will also take forward the follow-up on the recommendations of the 10-year review. The WG will meet in between the preparatory meetings to formulate concrete actions to implement consensus recommendations of the review. For this purpose, the Working Group may invite further Steering Group members as well as thematic experts from international organizations, local authorities, civil society, private sector, and academia.

Among the areas for follow-up to the review in the short-term, the Chair sees scope to explore and introduce new formats of engagement prior to, and during, the GFMD Summit in 2019, with a view to facilitating innovative, interactive, problem-driven dialogue, hands-on learning, and matchmaking among potential partners. Thus, the GFMD seeks to implement the format of the Marketplace this

year, which is to facilitate the formation of partnerships and to serve as a “matchmaking” platform between those facing specific policy and practice issues and those providing targeted solutions. The Chair is working with the GFMD Support Unit to diversify the agenda of the Steering Group and Friends of the Forum meetings to make both distinct and engaging venues. The review of the Terms of Reference of the GFMD Support Unit will continue with a view to reflecting the full scope of its responsibilities and securing adequate operational support from IOM as its hosting organization. The Chair also plans to initiate a review of the GFMD Multi-Annual Financing Framework, which has been due since 2017, to serve as a basis for more in-depth discussion of the financial future and sustainability of the GFMD.

An important aspect of reviewing the future role and functions of the GFMD will be to consider the relationship between States and other GFMD stakeholders, including civil society and business, for instance when it comes to setting the agenda for and designing the format of spaces for multi-stakeholder interaction within the GFMD, such as the Common Space and Marketplace. More such formats, dedicated to concrete problem-solving, could be envisaged. In addition, more stakeholders may be invited to contribute to the GFMD.

In 2018, the GFMD for the first time engaged with youth through a dedicated thematic meeting realized with the support of UNICEF. It also agreed to establish a more permanent relationship with the annual Mayoral Forum on Human Mobility, Migration and Development by establishing a Mayors Mechanism (MM) for the GFMD. The MM is to incorporate the perspectives and lessons of regional and local authorities into the GFMD’s deliberations. 2019 will be the year to make this new mechanism fully operational and a valuable addition to the GFMD’s thematic priorities. The Chair will work with the MM partners – the Mayors Migration Council, IOM and United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) – in overseeing this new development.

The Chair plans to strengthen the participation of policy-oriented researchers in the GFMD discussions to support evidence-based deliberations and, ideally, an ongoing dialogue and feedback loop between those who study the field of migration and development and those who seek to act and influence the actions of others through public policy.

The GFMD will need to redefine its link with the UN system, as the Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration (OSRSG) has concluded its mandate and the new UN Network on Migration (Network) is being established. The Chair plans to liaise with the Director General of IOM as the Coordinator of the Network to foster continued engagement between the GFMD and the Network; enhance coordination between the GFMD Support Unit and the Secretariat of the Network so as to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in the context of the GCM. The GFMD plans to overhaul the GFMD Platform for Partnerships and seeks to contribute to the global knowledge platform of the GCM Capacity Building Mechanism, once established.

Supporting the implementation & follow-up of international commitments

The GFMD is primarily to inform the policy development and implementation in participating States and to facilitate the meeting of potential partners. At the same time, it has brought together and continues to generate a significant amount of collective knowledge and experience that has informed formal multilateral discussions. As a result, the GFMD has been invited to contribute to the review processes of both the 2030 Agenda and the GCM.

Negotiations on the modalities of the GCM follow-up and review process will be underway this spring at the UN in New York. The Chair will seek an early discussion with members of the GFMD Steering

Group to achieve a common vision regarding the role of the GFMD in the formal GCM follow-up and review process and whether this would require any changes to current functioning and organization of GFMD's work.

The GFMD Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration,¹ led by the Government of Germany, is leading the GFMD's preparation of its thematic input to the 2019 HLPF. The WG will also take the lead in developing proposals for follow-up action to be taken on the recommendations of the 10-year review, including as regards the proposal for creating a peer-review space within the GFMD that would serve to assemble and assess good practices and lessons learned with a view to informing contributions to the formal SDG and GCM review processes.

Deciding on the GFMD's role in relation to the follow-up and review of the GCM will also have implications for the future functionality of the online GFMD Platform for Partnerships (PfP), the main repository of practices on migration and development. The GFMD Support Unit will also present to States plans for the roll-out the GFMD communications strategy in 2019.

Thematic and regional meetings to address substantive and institutional priorities

With a view to substantiating discussions on the thematic and institutional priorities as outlined above, the Ecuadorian GFMD chair will convene thematic and regional meetings throughout the year. States that are interested in and willing to co-host a regional and/or thematic meeting are invited to approach Ecuador at gfmdecuador@cancilleria.gob.ec or through the Support Unit at support.unit@gfmd.org. Proposed dates for thematic and regional meetings can be found in the preliminary calendar of activities.

A first Thematic Meeting on the topic of GCM implementation took place in Geneva on 21-22 March 2019 under the co-leadership of the Governments of Bahrain and the Philippines. This meeting offered an early opportunity to discuss the development of national plans and strategies for implementing GCM commitments.

It is Ecuador's commitment to bring the GFMD closer to the regions in order to broaden participation of different regional stakeholders and as an effort to de-centralize the process. Therefore, Ecuador particularly welcomes self-funded proposals for regional meetings from GFMD participating states and other interested stakeholders to be held outside Geneva or New York.

Conclusion

In light of the 2019 GFMD Chair's overarching theme, "Sustainable approaches to human mobility: Upholding rights, strengthening state agency, and advancing development through partnerships and collective action", Ecuador seeks to offer an exchange platform in which a broad range of stakeholders come together to identify concrete policy actions to address human mobility in a sustainable manner and uphold the safety, dignity and rights of all vulnerable people on the move and harnesses their contributions to development. As shown by the recent international efforts at the highest political level, the phenomenon of human mobility can only be addressed through multi-stakeholder partnerships and collective action. In its GFMD Chairmanship, Ecuador puts migrants and other people

¹ Formerly, the WG on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM, was renamed upon the decision of the WG members on 11 February 2019. Bangladesh served as WG Co-Chair from 2016 to 2018.

on the move at the very heart of the debate. In this respect, upholding the rights of migrants and strengthening state agency on behalf of migrants represent two essential ingredients.

In the first year after the adoption of both the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, the 2019 GFMD Chair will initiate the discussion on the implementation of the goals and identify synergies between both Compacts through its thematic focus on mixed movements. With respect to the GCM, the GFMD will provide a safe space, in which the voices of critical stakeholders can be expressed, and consensus can be forged.

With regard to the SDGs, this year's Forum will continue to deliver important findings at the interface of migration and development, a function that will benefit from a more systematic incorporation of the academia into the Forum. Through its thematic priorities which will be addressed through Roundtables, thematic and regional meetings, the 2019 GFMD will advance the policy discussions on migration and development while introducing innovative ways of working.

With a view to following up on the recommendations of the 10-year review commissioned by the German-Moroccan GFMD Chairmanship 2017-2018, Ecuador will engage in constructive discussions with the GFMD participating states to develop consensus on concrete actions for implementation. At the end of Ecuador's Chairmanship, the GFMD will be able to position itself in the new environment, without losing its core identity. To reach these ambitions, Ecuador is committed to closely cooperating with all GFMD stakeholders, and equally counts on the support of GFMD participating States and all other stakeholders.