

OPERATING MODALITIES

The Global Forum on Migration and Development is a voluntary, inter-governmental, non-binding and informal consultative process open to all States Members and Observers of the United Nations. UN agencies and other international and regional bodies may be invited as observers. It was created upon the proposal of the UN Secretary-General at the September 2006 General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The Forum was initiated by Belgium and is led by governments. Its purpose is to address, in a transparent manner, the multidimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges related to international migration and its inter-linkages with development, to bring together government expertise from all regions, to enhance dialogue and cooperation and partnership and to foster practical and action-oriented outcomes at the national, regional and global levels. National Focal Points have been designated by participating governments to coordinate Forum-related preparations at the national level.

These Operating Modalities are of a preliminary nature and aim at ensuring sufficient continuity and practical support for the incoming chair(s), to be assessed and revised, as appropriate, in 2008.

1. Chairing arrangements - Troika

The host country (Chair-in-Office) assumes responsibility for the preparatory process and the implementation of each Forum. The host government chairs all sessions related to Forum preparations and chairs the Forum.

The Chair-in-Office is assisted by a co-chair -- the country that organised the previous Forum.

Once a third country has been identified to host a following meeting of the Forum, the three countries concerned will form the Troika that includes the outgoing Chair, the Chair-in-Office, and the forthcoming Chair of the Forum. The Co-chairs shall assist the Chair-in-Office.

The Chair-in-Office should, in principle, alternate annually between a developing and a developed country. Countries interested in assuming the Chair of the Forum shall communicate their intention to the Troika.

2. Steering Group

The Steering Group is comprised of governments that are firmly committed to offer sustained political and conceptual support to the Forum process and to the Chair-in-Office, and to ensure continuity of the process. Its membership shall be sufficient in number to provide efficiency, flexibility and transparency. The Troika governments are ex-officio members. The Steering Group is regionally balanced and its composition takes into account different migration perspectives and interests of governments, including those governments that contribute substantially to the migration and development debate and are prepared to provide concrete input to the thematic preparation of Forum meetings. Steering Group members and the Chair-in Office are also called upon to brief other governments, as appropriate, on Forum-related developments, including through the National Forum Focal Points. The Special Representative of the Secretary General on International Migration and Development shall be invited to the meetings.

Following the first meeting of the Forum in Brussels, the Steering Group and the Troika, with the support of participating governments/National Focal Points, will undertake an assessment of the

Forum process, including the preparations and outcome of the first meeting of the Forum and the Operating Modalities of the Forum.

The Steering Group is convened and chaired by the Chair-in-Office. It meets at regular intervals to consider and advise on all relevant policy issues pertaining to the smooth running of the Forum process. It may also create thematic follow-up working groups. It meets in Geneva.

3. Friends of the Forum

The Friends of the Forum is open to all States Members and Observers of the United Nations. Specialised agencies of the United Nations and other international organisations may be invited as observers. It acts as a sounding board, ensures that all States Members and Observers of the United Nations are kept abreast of Forum-related developments and advises on the agenda, structure and format of each Forum meeting. Friends of the Forum meetings are chaired by the Chair-in-office. They are held, in principle, at least twice in between each Forum meeting, at a venue to be determined by the Chair-in-Office.

4. Support Structure

The Support Structure should assist the Chair-in-Office in preparations of the Forum, including the deliberations of the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum. It shall be responsible for maintaining the archives and for other related matters such as operating a website.

The support structure is attached to and supervised by the Chair-in-Office. It may be comprised of host government staff as well as experts and advisers seconded from other governments and from interested institutions.

5. Funding

Each Chair-in-Office prepares a comprehensive budget for the respective Forum, indicating the part it will cover through its own resources and the part for which it will require external funding. Provisions for the possible transfer of left-over funds from one Chair-in-Office to the succeeding Chair-in-Office must also be considered.

Financial contributions are paid to a fund administered by the Chair-in-Office. The Chair-in-Office incurs expenditures in accordance with the budget and ensures the efficient management of all funds received, including controlling and auditing.

6. Relationship with the United Nations System

The Forum does not form part of the United Nations system. However, the Forum maintains, through the Steering Group, links with the Secretary-General, notably through the Special Representative on International Migration and Development. The Forum can also benefit from the expertise of the inter-agency Global Migration Group (GMG) and may consult with the GMG both through the individual institutions and the GMG chair. The Forum may also consult and cooperate with other relevant international and regional bodies.

The Chair-in-Office conveys the outcomes of the Forum meeting to the Secretary-General.

7. Participation of GFMD Mechanisms

Appropriate arrangements shall be made for the participation of GFMD Mechanisms (for civil society, including relevant NGOs, business and mayors / local authorities). Member States co-chairing Working Groups, thematic meetings or Summit Roundtables may invite a mechanism to co-chair.

8. Format of Forum meetings

The Forum meets every year for an inter-active and practice-related dialogue. It is attended by high-level and senior government policy-makers and its deliberations are held under Chatham House Rules. An outcome report is prepared at the end of each Forum.