

**STATEMENT BY  
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**At the GFMD-GMG Side Event on  
“Fair Migration and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda”  
9 July 2014, 13:15 – 14:30, New York**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,

Allow me to start by thanking you for attending this side event that Turkey, Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), and International Labour Organization (ILO), Chair of the Global Migration Group, organized on the theme “Fair Migration and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda”. Turkey has assumed the Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) as of 1 July 2014.

Given the fact that we are at a critical stage in crafting post-2015 development agenda, I consider this meeting timely. As a member of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) which has been discussing what the future UN development agenda should be like and what the future goals and target will be, Turkey supports inclusion of migration in the new UN development agenda.

As you will remember, by adopting the “Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development” the General Assembly, among other things, “acknowledged the important contribution of migration in realizing the Millennium Development Goals, and recognized that human mobility is a key factor for sustainable development which should be adequately considered in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda”. What needs to be done now is to keep this recognition in mind during our deliberations.

Today there are around 230 million international migrants all around the world. This figure is getting bigger each day. Migrants contribute to economic, social and cultural life in the host countries by filling the gap in labour markets,

alleviating adverse effects of ageing populations and enriching the cultural life in the host societies. Today all countries need highly skilled migrants. Enhancing mobility is very important in that respect. This is an area we should be more focused.

Migration is one of the most direct ways by which people help lift themselves and their families up from poverty. The remittances they send back home are very important for the well-being of their families. Furthermore, remittances make up a significant portion of GDP in many countries. So, any improvement in this area can be felt immediately.

Ensuring human rights of migrants is also of utmost significance. We should always keep in mind that regardless of their status, all migrants should be entitled to enjoy human rights. They must have access to quality education, health and decent jobs.

One other important area I want to touch upon is the need to combat racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Racism, xenophobia and discrimination are scourges of modern societies. Discrimination in all its forms against migrants must be fought with all available legal means. We all should be aware that only a tolerant climate can attract highly skilled foreigners and help unleash potential migration may offer. So, reducing crime, violence, discrimination against migrants and ensuring a tolerant climate for all should be aimed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2<sup>nd</sup> UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development held in October 2013 came out with a landmark Declaration by the UN Member States calling for the recognition of human mobility as a key factor for sustainable development. The Declaration also urges the international community to consider migration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda -- one of the 8 priority action points for the UN Secretary General on how to maximize the positive gains from migration while minimizing its costs.

For the GFMD, the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 development agenda has taken a central stage as an HLD follow up issue for the Global Forum process. Since its inception, the GFMD Friends of the Forum have reached a

common understanding about the positive impacts of migration on development, and that human mobility should be a key element of the post-2015 development agenda.

This consensus was a key outcome of the 7<sup>th</sup> GFMD Forum meeting hosted by Sweden last May. Attended by more than 500 delegates from around 140 member states and 30 international organizations, the Stockholm meeting had a dedicated Roundtable session on how to include migration in the post-2015 development agenda. The Roundtable discussion resulted in a recommendation to *ensure that migration is recognized as a cross-cutting enabler for sustainable development and that its positive contributions to societies of origin, transit and destination, are acknowledged and enhanced*. The meeting also endorsed the recommendations in the GFMD 2014 background paper.

As GFMD Chair for 2014-2015, Turkey is benefiting from the valuable work of the Sweden in sharpening the focus of the GFMD on how to better recognize and integrate migration's contribution to development.

Turkey is currently contemplating on an overarching theme, "*Strengthening Partnerships: Enabling Human Mobility for Sustainable Development*." The Turkish GFMD work program will aim to achieve three objectives – a) to enhance a migrant-focused migration governance, b) to recognize the developmental impact of migration in public policies, c) and to consolidate the GFMD as one space for all concerned stakeholders working seriously on advancing the dialogue and cooperation on migration and development. These objectives will be our guidepost as Turkey makes its own contribution to making the GFMD an inclusive and transformative dialogue.

Like previous GFMD Chairs, Turkey will consult with the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum in finalizing the GFMD 2014-2015 concept paper and work program. We will do this under the able guidance of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development. Turkey will also take advantage of related processes like the ECOSOC, not only to promote the work of the Global Forum, but also to explore synergies, with a view to achieving greater coherence and coordination of dialogue and action.