

GFMD THEMATIC WORKSHOP ON “*CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN MOBILITY: TOWARDS DIGNIFIED, COORDINATED AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS*” -24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017, RABAT, MOROCCO.

Excellences

Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to thank first both the co-chairs of GFMD, Morocco and Germany, for arranging this thematic workshop on such an important topic, Climate Change and Human Mobility. Our Foreign Secretary Ambassador Md. Shahidul Haque was supposed to attend this event and deliver this plenary statement, but due to some urgent engagements back home he could not join us here. Through me, he has conveyed his best wishes for this GFMD event and also thanked both the co-chairs for inviting him to Rabat.

02. 'The greatest single impact of climate change could be on human migration', stated the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1990. This has been vindicated by evidence from past and recent events which show that climate change and natural disasters have resulted in significant levels of population displacement worldwide. According to the data provided by the International Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), sudden-onset weather-related hazards alone has caused a global average of displacement of at least 22.5 million people each year from 2008 to 2014, and disaster displacement since the 1970s is also on the rise. During 2008-15, close to 175 million people in developing countries have been displaced by disasters, accounting for 95 per cent of the global total.

03. It is now well acknowledged that climate change is a major driver of human mobility and is expected to increase the displacement of populations in years to come. Victims of climate change and natural disasters, as an adaptation strategy, first move internally within their own countries as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) for safety, dignity and secured livelihood. If the country of origin fails to provide them with access to basic services and rights, they have the potential to become international migrants. These displaced group of people would then pursue unsafe channels of migration and find themselves beyond own national borders in rather precarious conditions. This makes them vulnerable to abuses and violation of human rights. Unfortunately, global community is yet to find out a well-accepted practice and guiding principles to better manage climate change induced human mobility issues.

04. Therefore, we consider the proposed Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration as a historic opportunity for the global policy makers to ensure that adaptation measures are taken to prevent and mitigate displacement in the face of climate change.

Rightly, migration is seen as an adaptation strategy under which planned relocation is an adaptation measure of last resort.

05. In order to effectively address the issues related to Climate Change and Human Mobility, emphasis must be given to ground realities both in the countries of origin and destinations. National governments should prevent and avoid conditions that might lead to climate induced displacement. But when it goes beyond their capacity, they have to sustainably resettle its affected citizens. They should thoroughly do vulnerability assessment and risk-assessment. They should plan accordingly to ensure that individuals, households and communities can remain in their original settlements as long as possible in a manner fully consistent with their rights. In view of required re-settlement such analysis should be done both for the home area and the possible area for resettlement. In the light of the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF-2010), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are to be set up to identify medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs. It is also important to set up credible mechanisms for determining when planned relocation should occur including consultation with and participation of affected communities, both relocating and host. It requires the creation of an enabling environment, including a legal basis for undertaking planned relocation, capacity-building, institutionalization, and a whole-of-government approach to secure and promote the human rights of the affected.

06. The outcomes of the Nansen Initiative Consultative Process on Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change have emphasized the need for and the importance of integrating human mobility considerations into National Adaptation Plans and seek, inter-alia, to analyze and fill gaps in existing legal framework to support people affected by cross-border displacements due to natural disasters. Global Compact should also acknowledge the importance of regional dialogues and agreements to better manage climate induced trans-border mobility without ignoring the humanitarian aspects of such movements.

07. The Paris Agreement represents a unique opportunity for Parties to the UNFCCC to prevent and reduce climate change-related displacement. They include measures that: strengthen the resilience of climate vulnerable populations to enable them to remain where they live; support or facilitate voluntary and dignified internal and cross-border migration as an adaptation strategy; and, as an option of last resort, plan for participatory and dignified relocation. The Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) initiative embraces the importance of natural disaster and environmental factors in acute crises by proposing practical guidelines to relevant stakeholders at local, national, regional and international levels on how to prepare for and respond to crises in ways that empower migrants, leverage their capacities, and help migrants and communities recover from such crises.

08. Migration is often misperceived to result from the failure to adapt to a changing environment. However, migration can be a positive coping and survival strategy that, for example, allows rural household income sources to be diversified, reduces pressures on

fragile eco-systems, and leads to positive development impacts. Through migration, utilizing the safe and approved channels, the adaptive capacity of vulnerable households and communities can be improved, for example through training to help people access jobs on the global labour market or through providing special visa categories for people from specific areas affected by climate change. These examples can establish migration as an informed choice, rather than becoming a forced decision in the absence of alternative adaptation options that would enhance their resilience.

09. In this regard, I would like to refer to the guidelines developed by IOM for integrating migration into National Adaptation Plans to climate change, which has rightly identified that both **community stabilization** and **facilitating migration** are essential stages of the process. Strengthening the resilience of communities requires context-specific solutions that can increase the relevance of local knowledge and livelihood strategies, in particular those based on local natural resources, fostering labour migration programs and creating incentives to remittances and diaspora contributions to adaptation.

10. The GCM should draw on and assimilate all these existing mechanisms, initiatives and body of knowledge and come up with a concrete plan of action to address climate induced human mobility issue.

11. Unfortunately, like many other countries, Bangladesh, despite being among the least emitters, is one of the most vulnerable countries to global climate change. A study, carried out in 2013 (by RMMRU), estimates that from 2011 to 2050, as many as 16 to 26 million people would move out from their places of origin in Bangladesh due to a number of climatic hazards. These flows would include both predominantly internal displacement and other forms of labour migration. Sea level rise from climate change is anticipated to worsen many of these processes and to subsume up to 13 percent of Bangladesh's coastal land by 2080. On the other hand, riverbank erosion and river flooding are the key drivers of displacement in the mainland regions. In the face of such a grim future, Bangladesh and other least emitting yet climate vulnerable, developing countries must be extended adequate support by the international community and development partners.

12. Bangladesh has already designed her National Plan for Disaster Management and National Strategy on the Management of Disaster and Climate Induced Internal Displacement to (i) adopt both preventive and adaptive measures to minimize the internal displacement caused by climate-related disasters; (ii) guide development of sectoral programmes for the creation of conducive environments for safe, voluntary and dignified return/integration or relocation/resettlement of the displaced group and (iii) to ensure effective and efficient management and access to entitlements for promoting livelihood opportunities and overall human development through proper financial inclusion. Though designed earlier, most of the goals and visions of these documents are in line with Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement.

13. Bangladesh also puts immense importance to the “Agenda for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters and climate change” brought forward by the Nansen Initiative. The initiative stresses that cross-border disaster-displacement requires strengthened action at all levels and sets out principles and a toolbox of effective practices that have proved useful to addressing the challenges identified. Another finding is that climate and disaster-related human mobility is a cross-cutting issue that requires strengthened action at all levels, including humanitarian action, human rights protection, migration management, protection of refugee and other forcibly displaced people, disaster risk reduction and management, climate change adaptation, and development.

14. The 2nd Thematic Session of the GCM process just took place in UNHQs, New York and had discussed many of the aspects of climate change and natural disaster related displacements. My delegation believes that GFMD can further elaborate and generate ideas and concrete recommendations centered to this theme and thereafter, feed it to the main process for shaping the compact. During our term as GFMD chair, we kept the Forum’s focus inter alia, on the co-relation between climate change and mobility as one of the thrust areas and accordingly came up with recommendations at the end of the Dhaka Summit. We would like to see those inputs reflected in action oriented manner in the GCM. We are happy that the current GFMD chairs are maintaining this focus, of which today’s event is a demonstration.

15. My delegation wants to see a compact which is action oriented, target based and reviewable and therefore, we would like to envision a compact which is legally binding in nature. Member states needs to take into account the humanitarian nature of climate-induced displacements, acknowledge their obligations and therefore commit to share the global responsibility to support the vulnerable. It is time to take actions. Developing guidance and providing technical and capacity building support to national and local authorities, and sub-regional organizations, to include human mobility considerations within climate change adaptation strategies and policies through broader international collaboration is essential. I believe, this event taking place in the propitious moment of the consultative phase of the GCM, would generate more effective inputs to the process.

I thank you.