

Second Meeting of the GFMD 2024-2025 Friends of the Forum

Centre international de Conférences de Genève (CICG) - 19 February 2025, 11:00-13:00 CET
In-person and online

Summary of Proceedings

Opening Remarks by The Chair-In-Office

1. H.E. **Ambassador Alejandra Bonilla** opened the Second Preparatory Meeting of the Friends of the Forum of the 2024-2025 Chairship of Colombia, welcoming Member States and GFMD observers and proposing the adoption of the agenda focused on Summit preparations, financial planning and the identification of a new Chair in office.¹

Welcome remarks by the Troika Members

2. Ms. **Alia Ibrahim Mohamed Abdulrahim**, representative of the **UAE** commended the leadership of Colombia and the innovative formats for the roundtables introduced by the Chair in office; invited the Friends of the Forum to contribute actively to the Second Roundtable Consultations devoted to the exchange of promising practices; and reiterated the appreciation of the UAE to the Chair for ensuring continuity to the GFMD process.
3. Ms. **Claire Thuaudet**, Deputy Permanent Representative of **France** to the United Nations in Geneva highlighted the positive results of the first Roundtable Consultations held in November 2024; recalled the engagement of France as Co-Chair with Mexico of Roundtable 1, and the important role of women migrants in fostering development; recalled that the added value of the GFMD is to engage in a constructive process a multiplicity of stakeholders, reiterating the support of France to the Forum.

Updates of GFMD 2024-2025 Chairship

a. Update on the Advancement of the GFMD 2024-2025 Programme

4. Ambassador Bonilla highlighted the excellent outcomes of the First Preparatory Meetings of the GFMD held in November 2024, which gathered 165 participants including 95 delegates from over 50 States showing a continuous interest in the Forum. These meetings also gathered 37 representatives from international organizations and 27 delegates from the mechanisms. The new interactive format for the roundtables was well received by the GFMD community with close to 80 participants per roundtable.
5. A thematic segment has been introduced for the first time in the FOF agenda with a focus on the sharing of practices on the overarching theme of the Chairship. Five guest speakers have been invited to make presentations, including the German Agency for Development (GIZ), the three GFMD Mechanisms - Civil Society, Business, Mayors - and the Migration Youth and Children Platform. Furthermore, a thematic event entitled "From Knowledge to Action: Insights and Stories on Migration" has been organised with representatives from the academic and cultural sector to share historical and contemporary perspectives on migration.
6. The modalities for the second roundtable consultations have been adapted and the revised format was introduced through a short [Modalities Video](#). To build upon the outcomes of the

¹ The FOF meeting was attended by 164 delegates representing 50 Member States and 16 GFMD observers, including about 30 representatives from the GFMD Mechanisms for Civil Society, Business, Mayors, the Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP) and 30 representatives of International Organisations.

previous consultations, short outcome summaries have been prepared. As an example, the [Outcomes Summary Video](#) for RT5 was presented to the FOF.

b. Information regarding the 15th GFMD Summit in Colombia

7. Ambassador Bonilla highlighted that international migration is facing significant challenges worldwide, including in Colombia where the humanitarian situation has become critical. Recent events in the Catatumbo region linked to the confrontation between armed groups for the control of drug trafficking have caused over 50,000 displaced persons
8. Ambassador Bonilla reaffirmed the continued commitment of Colombia to host the 15th GFMD Summit and requested the support of the GFMD community to ensure its viability. As other high-level events are planned in Colombia for the second half of 2025, the GFMD Summit will be held in Barranquilla during the week of 9-13 June with dates for the Summit official events from 11-13 June 2025. The Summit will include a high-level segment.

c. Modification of the Calendar

9. Given the full calendar and the announced dates of the Summit, the Third Preparatory Meetings will not take place and the focus on solutions initially planned to be addressed during the Third Preparatory Meetings will be at the core of the Summit.
10. The duration of the Colombia Chairship, originally planned to end on 31 December 2025, has been adjusted to the modifications of the calendar. Colombia will end its term on 31 July and hand-over the process on 1 August 2025.

d. Financial Update

11. During the Second Preparatory Meetings, the Chair shared the Preliminary Financial Estimates for the 2024-2025 GFMD programme. Ambassador Bonilla thanked France, the UAE, Mexico, Belgium, Canada, the Philippines, Germany and Switzerland for their voluntary financial contributions. Recalling the importance of voluntary financial contributions for the sustainability of the process, Ambassador Bonilla invited Ms. Barbara Sidoti, Head of the Secretariat, to present the financial situation of the GFMD to the Friends of the Forum.
12. Ms. Sidoti presented the preliminary financial performance of the GFMD from 1 April 2024 till 14 February 2025 and presented a revised budget for the Colombia Chairship announcing the remaining fundraising goal. As of 14 February 2025, the GFMD had received about 1,300,000 USD in voluntary contributions from Member States. This amount includes pledges and actual contributions received - of which 833,335 USD in fresh contributions and 478,436 USD of left-over contributions from the GFMD 2022-2023 Chairship of France. In terms of costs incurred, a total of 439,566 USD has been spent. Hence, the Forum currently disposes of 872,205 USD of resources. The Preliminary Estimates presented in November 2024 were revised after considering savings realised (from 310,000 or 11% of the budget to 65,000 USD or 3% for preparatory activities) and costs for the Summit assumed by the Chair, which allowed to reduce the GFMD budget from 1,545,000 USD to 800,000 for Summit-related costs. Overall, the GFMD budget has been reduced from 2,903,310 to 1,913,310 by almost 1 million USD thanks to savings and resources allocated by Colombia for the Summit. The most significant cost is currently foreseen for the sponsorship of delegates to the Summit to ensure equitable access to the Forum across as many countries as possible. This budget line amounts to 500,000 USD and is usually not fully utilized but helps the roll-over of funds to the incoming Chair to support the long-term sustainability of the process. The fixed operating costs of the Forum, including staff costs for the secretariat, office costs, website maintenance and administrative overhead, originally estimated for a 21-month Chairship from 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2025 will be

revised with the IOM Finance Department as soon as the Chair communicates the change in calendar officially. The corresponding reductions in costs will be reflected in the final budget of the Colombia 2024-2025 Chairship of the GFMD. Consequently, the GFMD 2024-2025 fundraising goal has been revised: The current level of resources raised 1,311, 371 USD is equivalent to 68.6% of the revised budget, and the funding gap is estimated at 601,530 USD, equivalent to the remain 31.4%.

e. Calls for Expression of Interest to Chair the GFMD

13. A Note Verbale has been sent to the Permanent Missions of the Member States in Geneva in December 2024 with a call for expression of interest for incoming Chair. Ambassador Bonilla recalled the importance of identifying a new Chair to ensure the continuity of the process and renewed the invitation to Member States to consider this important opportunity to lead the Forum from 1 August 2025.

Regular Migration, Labour Mobility, and Human Rights: Pillars of Development and Well-Being of Societies - Spotlight on Promising Practices

14. **The MEG project (GiZ) - Ms. Marianne Haase, Head of the program " Shaping development-oriented migration" (MEG) of the German Agency for Development (GiZ)** presented the MEG Project implemented in 14 countries worldwide including Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. She highlighted examples from Serbia and Colombia. In **Serbia**, the Serbian Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and civil society organizations play a key role to support and advocate for migrant workers. In **Colombia**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through Colombia Nos Une organised a virtual meeting for the Colombian diaspora around the world showing how digital technologies enhance diaspora participation in migration governance.
15. **Regional government of Catalonia (Mayors Mechanism) - Mr. Joan de Lara, Technical expert from the regional government of Catalonia** presented the legal institutional framework and showcased innovative projects on regular pathways. This included 2024 data on family reunifications cases in Catalonia and over €10 million in grants allocated to about 180 civil society organizations to support migrants' help programs and anti-racism initiatives. Initiatives include language courses and skills programs with certifications. Among innovative projects, **the Catalan scholarship for refugees** provides an alternative legal pathway for refugees in Lebanon, enabling the pursuit of university education in Catalonia; and **the Catalan program for Human Rights defenders** offers temporary shelter, psychological support and training for individuals facing persecution in their home country. Despite these successes, challenges remain, such as ensuring continuous and adequate resources for sustainable reception; maintaining equitable access to housing and basic services; fostering economic support to migrants; coordinating efforts among competent entities and actors. Mr. de Lara emphasized the importance of a multi-level approach where local, regional, national and European institutions work together for ensuring sustainable and forward-thinking migration policies.
16. **Start-uppers and Finalist of Previous GFMD Start Up Contest Invited by the GFMD Business Mechanism**
 - **Mr. Jeff Hu (TuneSpace)** introduced TuneSpace, a cybersecurity company helping migrants with their digital identify and verifiable credentials. Founded in 2020, TuneSpace contributed to helping migrants in over 10 countries and to verify over 6 million e-credentials. As an example, support was provided to Ukrainian universities to provide digital credentials.
 - **Mr. Mohannad Alsouqi (TalentSpace.AI)** stressed that as millions of migrants send money home to support their families, services for remittances need to adapt by providing safe digital

tools. As an example, partnering with remittance platforms contributed to embed insurance solutions and protect migrant workers and their families from risks.

- **Mr. Sam Ndori (Inclusivity Solutions)** presented ways to leverage AI to bridge labour market gaps. The Inclusivity Solutions platform offers a solution by analysing millions of jobs offers and fostering skills-matching efficiently. This helps overcome skills shortages empowering applicants, employers and governments.
- **Mr. Gabriel Ekman (BAG Technologies)** introduced BAG technologies as a solution to help employers build robust talent pipelines and job seekers and talents find jobs on the African continent.
- **Mr. Andrew Stetsenko (Relocate.me)** presented the Relocate.me program which helps migrants to be better prepared to enter world of work by making information on fiscal systems, costs of living, housing and medical services easily accessible and preparing applicants for interviews.
- **Mr. Andrea Adamo (3MinuteJob)** presented a platform tailored to employers willing to hire internationally, including a database composed of 6000 employers and an AI system to interview candidates and verify documents and facilitate visa procedures.

17. **The GFMD Civil Society Mechanism, represented by ICMC**, highlighted the role of the GFMD in promoting and replicating good practices to create a virtuous cycle among Member States and help change the narrative around migration. ICMC recalled that documenting good policies and practices has become part of the GFMD DNA, stressing also the challenges connected with setting a rigorous methodology for identifying them. In preparation for this Second Preparatory Meetings devoted, the GFMD Civil Society Mechanism organised four meetings on 29-30 January 2025, gathering more than 400 representatives from NGOs networks, trade unions and academia and [shared six criteria](#) proposed by civil society to consider a practice as successful.
18. The **Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP)** emphasized the importance of youth involvement in regular migration, labor mobility, and human rights. Highlighted the participation of over 100 youth at the 14th GFMD Summit, supported by the governments of France and Canada, IOM, UNICEF, and the European Youth Foundation, MYCP noted that this engagement was crucial for creating new partnerships and confirmed the GFMD's role as a platform for nurturing and sharing successful partnerships. MYCP thanked the GFMD community for supporting youth in co-designing and co-implementing migration policies that reflect their experiences and contribute to more inclusive and fair migration governance.
19. **Spain** illustrated recent initiatives to implement safe and regular migration including a platform launched in 2024 to facilitate migration procedures; the introduction of measures to foster better access to education, especially for people from 21 to 26 to access university; and cooperation programs with different countries including labour pathways for 16,000 workers from Morocco.
20. **The Central African Republic (CAR)** highlighted the situation of the country with approximately 80,000 refugees arrived in CAR mostly from Sudan. In response to this situation, the Ministry of Security of CAR provided residence status to more than 32,000 Sudanese citizens. CAR also signed the Yaoundé Declaration ensuring protection of refugees and asylum seekers and developed a strategy to facilitate durable solutions for long-term refugees through various initiatives, including two-year permits.
21. **ICMPD** commended the leadership, determination and vision of Colombia as GFMD Chair, acknowledging the relevance of the six priorities of the GFMD Chair program in a context where regular migration pathways remain limited and the need for safe, orderly and regular migration is ever more pressing. ICMPD facilitates several regional dialogues in different parts of the world, including the Budapest, Khartoum, Prague and Rabat processes, which demonstrate that regional cooperation on migration and development requires solidarity, partnership and shared responsibilities. ICMPD provides access to training and skills for women to unlock their full

potential as catalysts for development and supports youth diaspora's engagement in entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer across borders. In terms of practices, a project funded by INTPA of the European Commission and implemented in Medellin focuses on the local integration of migrants, especially women and young people. A labour mobility scheme launched between Spain and Colombia, within the framework of the ICMPD Mobility Partnership Facility, focuses on training and skilling long-term care workers in Colombia to find jobs in the country or Spain.

Updates of the GFMD Mechanisms and Platforms on Stakeholder Engagement

22. Joint Pooled Fund - The **Civil Society Mechanism** stressed the crucial role played by the GFMD stakeholder groups for many years as active participants and highlighted the role of its networks to continue to uphold the GFMD as a pioneer and role model for meaningful stakeholder participation. Expressing appreciation for the full support of the Friends of the Forum community in terms of financial assistance and partnerships, in the current difficult financing context, ICMC informed the Friends of the Forum about the launch of the [joint pooled fund](#) for the GFMD mechanisms and the Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP). This initiative shows the solidarity between the mechanisms and MYCP and allow for a streamlined effort to support stakeholder participation. The joint pooled fund will be carried out in a transparent, fair and equitable manner according to the following 3 criteria: Equitable distribution of total funds for fair and balanced support; Flexible contributions to ensure the possibility of earmarking from Member States; Operative as quickly as possible.
23. Commending the commitment and collaborative approach of Colombia to include global and Colombian civil society organizations in the GFMD process, ICMC stressed the difficult context for migrants, with an increasingly hostile landscape in communities and at the global level, the normalization of rapid mass deportations, dismissal of international legal obligations and narratives criminalizing migrants. Recalling its role to ensure that a diversity of civil society contributions is part of the GFMD process, for these Second Roundtable Consultations, the Civil Society Mechanism invited nine civil society delegates from five regions, highlighting **four key messages**. ICMC thanked the Swiss Development Agency (SDC), the German Agency for Development (GIZ) and the government of the UAE for their continuous support and encouraged all Friends of the Forum to support Colombia in implementing its program.
24. The **GFMD Business Mechanism** has finalized six position papers to contribute to the GFMD Roundtables, launched the first [video](#) of their Narratives Campaign, which highlights the positive impact of migration on the economy and society from a business perspective and announced a series of interviews with business leaders and governments starting in March 2025. The IOE introduced a delegation of private sector representatives at the Second Preparatory Meetings, including tech startups, multinationals, and industry experts. They thanked the governments of Georgia and Ecuador for co-chairing Roundtable 6 on Technology and Digitalization, emphasizing the opportunities provided by AI to enhance migration systems, increase efficiency, and ensure transparent and secure processes. The importance of digital identities and innovative tools like digital wallets was also highlighted for improving service delivery, transparency, and security.
25. The **Mayors Mechanism** welcomed the announcement of the organization of the Summit in Barranquilla, a city very engaged as a champion for migrants' rights and stressed that, in spite of political and financial constraints, cities, local and regional governments continue to be mobilized and champions for migrants' inclusion. A White Paper entitled "[Brokering Solutions: How Local and Regional Governments Shape Regular Migration Pathways](#)" has just been finalised and highlights the work of local and regional governments in the field of migration pathways, showing the role of local governments as incubators of innovations to setting up pathways with the regulatory framework provided by the national governments.

26. The **Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP)** thanked the governments of Brazil and Honduras for co-chairing Roundtable 2 alongside MYCP and for implementing migration policies that are child-friendly and rights based. MYCP expressed the wish to organize the fifth edition of the Migration Youth Forum and the third edition of the Youth Leadership and Innovation Award at the Summit in Colombia. It also proposed a special retrospective feature to show the journeys of youth delegates to the previous Summits and how the GFMD has shaped their paths.

Open floor for the Friends of the Forum

27. **Iraq** commended the leadership of Colombia and stressed the role of the GFMD as a vital platform for international cooperation to exchange perspectives on migratory and humanitarian issues and to build sustainable solutions. Iraq stressed the importance for having an integrated approach to migration based on the human rights and sustainable development principles and reaffirmed its engagement through active participation to the GFMD process.
28. The **Central African Republic** thanked the Chair for its commitment and commenting on the issue of financial constraints, asked what possible measures and initiatives can be taken to ensure the GFMD's sustainability.
29. Ambassador Bonilla thanked the representatives of Iraq and Central African Republic for their support and questions and recalled that that the sustainability of the Forum is ensured by the voluntary contributions of the Member States, reiterating her call to the Member States to continue to support the process.

Closing remarks

30. Ambassador Bonilla thanked the Troika members and all Friends of the Forum for attending this meeting.