

*“Unlocking the potential of migration for inclusive development”*

**Fourth Meeting of the Steering Group  
La Salle XI, ILO Building, Geneva  
19 November 2013**

**Summary Report**

1. On 19 November, Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje, GFMD 2013-2014 Chair, convened the fourth meeting of the GFMD Steering Group, attended by 27 Governments<sup>1</sup>. Beside the Chair at the podium was the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative for Migration and Development (SRSG), Mr. Peter Sutherland, the incoming GFMD 2015 Chair Turkey, represented by Ms. Esen Altug, Deputy Director General for Migration, Asylum and Visa and representatives of the GFMD 2013-2014 Secretariat and the GFMD Support Unit.
2. The Chair began by explaining that the meeting would be shorter than usual because of a lunchtime presentation by the SRSG on the follow up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> High Level Dialogue.
3. Amb. Mehmet Ferden Çarikçi, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the UN in Geneva and Other International Organizations then addressed the Steering Group. He expressed his utmost appreciation for the tireless efforts of the Swedish Chair and the Secretariat, and the excellent preparations by the GFMD Support Unit. As incoming GFMD Chair, Turkey values the GFMD as an evolving process that addresses wide-ranging and cross-cutting issues of global concern. Its valuable work has utmost importance in responding to challenges and building trust among various partners. Amb. Çarikçi was optimistic that the discussions on technical, administrative and budgetary issues will guide the work of the Steering Group.

**Enhancing the working methods of the GFMD Steering Group**

4. As background information, the Chair circulated on 12 November the paper entitled *“The GFMD Steering Group - Manageable size and enhanced working methods Cover note New draft Terms of Reference.”* The paper contains some concrete proposals on how to enhance the working methods of the GFMD Steering Group. The Chair underlined that the issue is sensitive and difficult, but needs to be discussed in order to pursue the recommendation of the GFMD assessment exercise to *“ensure an appropriate regional balance and manageable size of the Steering Group”*.
5. Ms Sofia Ostmark, Senior Policy Adviser at the Swedish GFMD Secretariat, presented the key elements of the proposed Terms of Reference (TORs) for the GFMD Steering Group. Based on the agreement at the previous SG meeting, the proposed TORs are built around the following principles: i) aim to limit the size of the Steering Group; ii) clarify expectations of SG members; iii) further define the roles and responsibilities of SG members; iv) define a clear process on how other governments can indicate their interest in becoming members of the SG; and v) explore the possibility of a rotation membership.
6. The proposed ToRs suggest that the SG is mandated to provide overall strategic direction to the GFMD process, advise on policy issues, provide advice, as required, to the Chair-in-Office, and periodically assess the activities of the Forum. In addition, the ToRS propose that the SG members have the responsibility to a) demonstrate their sustained commitment and active engagement; b) promote the process; and c) assist the Chair in Office.

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<sup>1</sup> The meeting was attended by the Governments of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States.

7. In terms of membership, the SG had agreed during previous meetings that members of the SG should demonstrate a real commitment and engagement for GFMD, which implies both intellectual/substantial input and, to the extent possible, also financial contributions. The draft ToRs also underlined the importance of having regional balance and countries with different migration perspectives in the SG.
8. In order to move the agenda forward, the draft ToR also includes a proposal for a possible rotational system that takes into account the above mentioned factors, and aims to allow for new countries to join the SG without enlarging the group too much. The proposed system aims to be structured yet flexible. In short, the suggested rotational system and reformation of the membership in the SG is guided by the following principles; i) based on confirmation from countries of their willingness to remain members of the SG, ii) current-, previous- and incoming Chair/s permanent members (up to ten years), iii) possibility to renew terms and iv) Troika to have a decision making role in the rotational system.
9. The Chair also mentioned that there are no existing TORs for the Troika and the Friends of the Forum, and that it might be good to develop these as well, in order to clarify and better explore the complementarities of these supporting structures with the GFMD Steering Group.
10. The Special Representative, Mr Sutherland, made a few remarks following the presentation from the Swedish Chairmanship, in which he underlined the importance of an active SG comprised of members that have a real engagement and human resources needed to actively engage. He also stressed the importance of allowing new and committed countries to join the SG, and to have a group that can be operational.
11. A very rich discussion followed the presentation. Delegates commended the Chair for the paper and the excellent work that has been done in order to enhance the working methods of the Steering Group. The overall mandate of the Steering Group was well-received. In addition, a suggestion was made to also task the Steering Group to come up with a communications strategy and to follow up on the outcomes of the Forum, in order to provide sustainability and continuity. The importance of differentiating the agenda of the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum to avoid any duplication was also emphasized.
12. There were quite a few comments on the proposed rotational system. While some were positive to a rotational system; others asked some more questions on the proposal, including on the suggestion to divide the existing SG members into three groups with 1-2-3 year terms which was deemed by some to be complicated. A few found the suggested 10-year permanent membership of the past, current and future GFMD Chairs to be too long. While many supported the idea of the Troika having a decision-making role, others thought that the SG itself should have a say on this. Some requested a more informal system. One concrete suggestion that was supported by a number of delegations was to introduce an “opt-in or opt-out” system that can be linked to the annual pledging meetings, where countries could, on a voluntary basis, express their commitment, e.g., by giving financial support, co-chairing or being a member of a RT session, and the like.
13. During the two rounds of comments, 3 additional countries confirmed their interest to remain in the SG. The Chair noted that it took them a long time to do so. These countries were not among the 23 that earlier confirmed, following the written request of the Chair and the discussions during the SG meetings in May and September.
14. The Chair observed that with the enlargement of the SG, the FOF has become more passive, where delegates are not so engaged in the discussions and many of them are not able to do more than take notes and fill in the seats. To energize the FOF, the Chair introduced new and more substantive elements in the FOF, including presentations on the Platform for Partnerships and results of the GFMD thematic survey. But there was little traction for these initiatives.
15. The Chair thanked all interveners for their valuable comments and suggestions. Written comments on the proposal were also encouraged. The TORs will be updated based on the comments to be received, with the aim of presenting a final product to the FoF at the March 2014 meeting. If necessary, additional consultations with SG members in the interim would be done electronically.

## **Long-term financing framework for the GFMD**

16. Also on 12 November, a discussion paper on the “Long Term Financing Framework for the GFMD” was disseminated to the Steering Group. It builds on the earlier discussions of the GFMD Steering Group in May and September, and takes into account key inputs from the Troika and the Government of Switzerland<sup>2</sup>.
17. Ms Sofia Östmark, presented the proposal which outlines the key elements of the proposed multi-annual funding mechanism and includes two annexes – Annex 1 is a template for a standardized budget, with some indicative figures for the operational costs of the GFMD Support Unit and the organizational costs of preparatory meetings in Geneva, while Annex 2 explains the existing financial arrangements of the GFMD, including the delineation of tasks between the Chair, the Support Unit and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), host of the GFMD Support Unit.
18. Based on earlier discussions, the proposed long-term financing framework addresses the GFMD’s need for a multiannual funding mechanism that supports a multiannual work plan. The framework facilitates for donors to make multi-year contributions and enables the carry-over of unspent funds from one year to the next. Its key features would include a standardized budget, an established pledging mechanism, clear governance and accountability framework, and the proposal of a review after 3 years.
19. When the Chair opened the discussion for some questions, one delegate sought clarification about the minimum amount of USD 400,000 being proposed to be made available at the start of each Chairmanship. The Chair clarified that this amount is needed to cover the first six-month operations of the GFMD Support Unit and the costs of organizing preparatory activities in Geneva. Such a baseline is needed given that contributions only trickle in beginning from the second half of the year. Another question was raised concerning parallel and/or separate activities spearheaded by non-governmental stakeholders. The Chair reiterated that such activities will not form part of the GFMD budget, unless those are co-organized by the Chair-in-Office and/or directly feeds into the Roundtable preparations, thematic meetings, or other core activities of the GFMD Government meetings. It was clarified that the pledging meeting would make room for civil society to present their budget and their work plan as an integral part of the meeting. This was a compromise solution that was agreed at the SG meeting in September.
20. The Chair promised to continue to work with the Troika and Switzerland to further fine-tune the document. The new long-term financial framework will be implemented from July 2014.

## **Multiannual work plan for the GFMD**

21. Since May, the Swedish GFMD Chair and the incoming Chair Turkey have worked closely together on preparing a draft Multiannual Work Plan (MWP) in consultation with Mauritius. The objective of the MWP is to contribute to the sustainability and consistency across GFMD Chairmanship and help to increase the transparency and visibility of GFMD outcomes and progress.
22. A draft document has been distributed to the Steering Group also on 12 November. The Chair wanted to present the format and purpose of the MWP and to hear the views of the Steering Group on these elements, without getting into the details on the substance of the draft. The aim is to arrive at a standardized format, with some flexibility, which may serve as a planning instrument for future years, increasing transparency and functioning as an aid for incoming Chairs. Based on comments from the SG, a second draft MWP will be discussed in March at the FoF. The Chair hopes that the MWP will be endorsed at the Future of the Forum session in Stockholm in May.

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<sup>2</sup> The Chair invited interested members of the GFMD Steering Group to join the GFMD Troika in elaborating the TORs/guidelines for a multi-annual funding framework for the GFMD. Switzerland expressed its interest and offered some comments on the draft proposal.

23. Mr Kristof Tamas, Senior Policy Adviser of the Swedish GFMD Secretariat, reiterated that the main objective of the MWP is to promote sustainability, consistency and global outreach of the GFMD by focusing on the longer term, strategic principles and procedures. The MWP draws upon the GFMD assessment report, the Swedish GFMD Chair Concept paper, incoming Chair Turkey's input, and consultation with former Chair Mauritius.
24. The MWP Table of Contents is proposed to have three main structures – a) thematic substance: continuity and progress; b) GFMD process and its sustainability; and c) evidence base, outreach and impact. Different elements are discussed under each heading, with clear objectives, required action(s), lead, timeframe, and desired output/results.
25. The MWP section on “thematic substance” shows both the continuity and progress of discussions, through a multi-year thematic agenda and more development focus of the GFMD. The section on “the GFMD process and its sustainability” includes the GFMD working structures, relations and dialogue with various stakeholders, and a predictable funding structure. Finally, the section on “evidence base, outreach and impact” presents the GFMD outreach to the global community, efforts to strengthen the GFMD evidence base, and the GFMD follow up to the High Level Dialogue outcomes and recommendations. It was underlined that this first version was rather detailed and that the aim is to work towards a more streamlined MWP and that the focus at this stage should be on structure.
26. A few delegates took the floor after the presentation, including incoming GFMD Chair Turkey. The latter reaffirmed their full support for the draft MWP, but anticipated changes in Turkey's thematic priorities. Internal deliberations are still going on in Ankara among various government agencies that are collectively defining their vision and work plan for the GFMD 2014-2015 Chairmanship. Their decision will be communicated to the Swedish Chair and to the Steering Group in due time. One government praised the inclusion of the HLD outcomes follow-up in the MWP and urged the GFMD to offer an action-oriented space for the protection of the human rights of migrants.
27. The Chair invited all Steering Group members to submit their written comments on the draft MWP.

### **Closing Remarks**

28. For lack of material time, the last agenda item, “The GFMD Forum Meeting 2014” was not discussed. The Chair gave assurance that it will be taken up at the FOF meeting in the afternoon.
29. The Chair thanked all the delegates for their active participation and announced that the last meeting of the GFMD Steering Group under the Swedish Chairmanship will be on 11 March 2014.
30. Before adjourning the meeting at 12.30 hrs, the Chair expressed the hope that all SG members will be able to attend the special presentation by the SRSG, together with the Swedish GFMD Chair and the GMG Chair (represented by IOM Deputy Director General Laura Thompson) on the HLD Outcomes.

*This summary report was prepared by the GFMD Support Unit.*