

GFMD 2017-2018 Fifth Meeting of the Steering Group

Monday, 5 February 2018

10h00 – 13h00

Salle XXIV, Building E, Palais des Nations

Summary Report

I. Welcoming Remarks

1. **Mr. El Habib Nadir**, GFMD Moroccan Co-Chair, together with **Ambassador Götz Schmidt-Bremme**, GFMD German Co-Chair, welcomed some 25 participating [Steering Group](#) (SG) members¹ at the fifth preparatory meeting of the GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chairmanship. The Co-Chairs were joined on the podium by **Mr. Jonathan Prentice**, representing the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for International Migration, and **Ms. Estrella Lajom**, Head of the GFMD Support Unit.
2. The objective of the meeting was to review the 2018 work plan, including the draft concept paper and proposed roundtable themes. Mr. Nadir emphasized that this year the Forum will transition from “words to deeds” with a view to two international frameworks – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), the latter to be adopted in Marrakesh at the end of 2018.
3. In reflecting on the first year of the German-Moroccan Co-Chairmanship, Mr. Nadir conveyed gratitude to his counterpart, Ambassador Schmidt-Bremme and the entire German task force for their friendship and mutual trust. He affirmed that the Co-Chairmanship will continue in a positive spirit to consider how the Global Forum and its members can transition from commitments into action, how to promote exchanges among countries on good practices and also how to promote partnerships with other stakeholders. Ambassador Schmidt-Bremme reaffirmed Germany’s full support for the second year of the Co-Chairmanship which will be under the lead of Morocco.

II. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

4. The [Provisional Agenda](#) that was circulated on 24 January was adopted by the Steering Group.

III. GFMD and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

*- Presentation of the UN Secretary General’s Report: “Making Migration Work for All”
By Mr. Jonathan Prentice, Office of the SRSG for International Migration*

5. Mr. Prentice, speaking on behalf of the SRSG for International Migration, updated the SG on the GCM process ahead of the release of the Zero Draft later in the day in New York. The Office of the SRSG (OSRSG) released the UN Secretary-General’s report in January titled, “Making Migration Work for all,” which served as an input to the GCM Zero Draft. The report has three main elements – the centrality of state sovereignty, the necessity to situate the discussion of migration firmly within the 2030 Agenda, and an emphasis on the inevitability of state interdependence – which articulate that the Global Compact could, and should be an agreement to cooperate.

¹ Of the 30 Steering Group Member States, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and United States participated in the meeting.

6. Furthermore, Mr. Prentice explained that the report has three substantive pillars: (1) the recognition that although the majority of migrants move in a regular fashion, their situation is one in which they are exposed to a large number of vulnerabilities; (2) there is a clear call for an increase in legal pathways as one principle way to reduce recourse to irregular migration; and (3) a strategy for how to manage large mixed movements. Mr. Prentice underlined the need for clarity in the debate over drivers of migration and detailed the key challenges and reflections on how the GFMD can contribute to the GCM process. This includes demonstrating support for the process itself, engaging in concerted efforts to dispel the notion that negotiating the GCM is inimical to the concept of state sovereignty and continuing the collective efforts to avoid divisive and often inaccurate language.
7. In his closing remarks, Mr. Prentice mentioned upcoming GCM events – the release of the GCM Zero Draft in New York (5 February) and the beginning of intergovernmental negotiations (20 February). He was optimistic that there will be a recognition of the GFMD in the realization of the Global Compact.
8. During the opening discussion that followed, intervening SG members expressed their support for the UN Secretary-General’s input to the GCM Zero Draft and welcomed the reference made to the GFMD in the UNSG’s report. They conveyed their hope that the Forum will play an active role in the Global Compact, including the follow-up process, while remaining true to its character as an informal platform. They agreed that GFMD members themselves should take an active lead in shaping this role.
9. On the substantive aspect of the UNSG’s report, a delegate remarked that there was insufficient distinction between “regular migration” and “irregular migration,” a lack of concrete proposals on the contribution of diasporas, and no reference to migrant trafficking as a theme. Another delegate voiced the need for the GFMD to be actively present in New York throughout the GCM negotiations phase. Mr. Prentice responded to some of the interventions, highlighting points of convergence and reiterating that he welcomed the support of the GFMD in the GCM process.
10. Ambassador Schmidt-Bremme then shared his reflection on the future role of the GFMD with regard to the GCM. First, considering the GFMD was established in 2007 following the first High-level Dialogue on migration and development in 2006, he considered the Forum as a “child” of UN thinking that offers ten years of experience and discussions on migration. However, he cautioned that Member States should neither delude themselves nor overstretch their hand, when some of them expressed reservation about the GFMD’s thematic contribution to the GCM last year, and that so far no country has stepped forward to continue the Global Forum process in 2019. He reminded the Steering Group that the GFMD has the mechanisms needed to play a leading role in the GCM process, and thus urged the Forum to respond positively if asked by the GCM Co-Facilitators to participate in the GCM process.
11. Mr. Nadir explained the Co-Chairs’ plan to embark on a comprehensive assessment of the past ten years of the Global Forum. In his words, a key element of the Forum is to allow for an exchange of good practices; therefore a study is needed to assess whether the Forum has indeed served as a platform for these exchanges, and to work on defining the role that the Forum should play after the GCM adoption. The outcomes of this study will feed into the proposed GFMD Dialogue on the GCM implementation to be held on 4 September. The objective of this dialogue is to prepare the GFMD community’s vision for the future of the Global Forum, to be discussed at the 11th Summit Meeting in Marrakesh on 5-7 December.

IV. GFMD and the High Level Political Forum (2018)

- GFMD Contribution to the HLPF 2018

12. The GFMD Co-Chairs received an invitation to contribute to the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2018 by the President of ECOSOC, focusing on the actions of the GFMD in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. The GFMD Ad hoc Working Group on 2030 Agenda and GCM, Co-Chaired by Germany and Bangladesh, will prepare the GFMD’s contribution to the HLPF 2018 which focuses its review on the following migration-related SDGs: 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17. The Ad hoc WG held a meeting on 26 January and will have further meetings to prepare the GFMD’s report. It will also support the

organization of a GFMD thematic workshop on “Migration and 2030 Agenda” to be held on 18-19 April in Rabat. The deadline set by ECOSOC for the GFMD to submit its input to the HLPF is 27 April 2018.

13. On behalf of the Co-Chairs of the WG on 2030 Agenda and GCM, **Ms. Carmen Esser** gave an overview of the broad outline and initial ideas for the report that will be presented to the HLPF 2018. She conveyed the WG’s view that through the submission of GFMD’s report to the HLPF 2017, the GFMD has established itself as a trusted expert body that can add value to the implementation and review of the migration-related SDGs. Equally, the side event on the margins of the HLPF 2017 helped illustrate the development-oriented migration policies that the GFMD has consolidated and are now posted on the Platform for Partnerships database. A similar side event on GFMD’s recommendation to the HLPF 2018 will be organized by the GFMD Co-Chairs.

V. Second year of the GFMD 2017-2018 Co-Chairmanship

A. Draft Concept Note and Work Plan

14. Mr. Nadir then presented the main features of the GFMD agenda for 2018. The three elements of this year’s work plan are: (1) continuity between the Berlin and forthcoming Marrakesh Summits, (2) aligning the GFMD with the Global Compact drafting process, as well as the adoption and implementation phases, and (3) taking stock of the implementation of migration-related SDGs in the 2030 Agenda.
15. The theme for GFMD 2018 is, “*Honouring International Commitments to Unlock the Potential of Migrants for Development*,” which signals the need to move into action in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and GCM, and in the spirit of the global social compact that the GFMD advocated for in 2017. The substantive agenda of the GFMD 2018 will revolve around three main “roundtable” themes. The first roundtable, “*From Vulnerability to Resilience*” will address the factors that lead to migrant’s vulnerability and consider how migrants could overcome these vulnerabilities so that they can contribute to local economies and become agents of development. The second roundtable on “*Regional Mobility*” will focus on mobility and the role of origin, transit and destination countries. Lastly, the third roundtable, “*Good Migration Governance for Sustainable Development*” will analyze the ways in which global migration governance models can be aligned with contemporary drivers of migration.
16. The three main RT themes are divided into six RT sub-themes:
 - RT 1.1: Harnessing migrants’ existing capitals to build resilience
 - RT 1.2: Migrants’ engagement with public services: from basic access to co-production
 - RT 2.1: South-South mobility: trends, patterns and transferable learning
 - RT 2.2: Regional mobility and policy coherence to support development
 - RT 3.1: Aligning governance with contemporary drivers of migration
 - RT 3.2: Beyond remittances: enhancing the transnational civic engagement of diaspora and migrants
17. In addition to the said roundtable themes, a number of important events would form part of the 2018 Calendar of Key Activities. The usual preparatory meetings will be held in Geneva on 5 February, 2 May and 3 September. Three thematic workshops will also be organized to focus the discussions on crucial issues, namely: “Migration and 2030 Agenda” (Rabat, 18-19 April), “Labour Migration” (Geneva, 3 May) and “Children in the context of migration” (Morocco (TBC), June). On 4 September, GFMD will hold a dialogue on the GCM to consider those elements that have not been captured in the negotiated Global Compact, and reflect on GFMD’s role in the implementation and follow up/ review processes. Like in 2017, GFMD in 2018 will organize *side events* on the margins of relevant international conferences, such as the UNDESA Annual Coordination Meeting on International Migration (15 February), the International Dialogue on Migration² (26 March and 9 October), and the High-level Political Forum (July). All these preparatory activities will lead to the 11th GFMD Summit in Marrakesh on 5-7 December, on the eve of the GCM intergovernmental conference on international migration scheduled on 10-11 December, also in Morocco.

² The specific theme for the IDM in October remains TBD, although it will revolve around the health of migrants. The GFMD welcomes any suggestions and comments in this regard.

18. All intervening SG members welcomed the concept note and expressed optimism that it will contribute to, and strengthen the GCM, given its alignment with the current discussions. One delegate also welcomed the proposed ten-year assessment of the GFMD and suggested that this review be carried out by the Members States themselves, with assistance from an external agency or a GFMD Working Group.
19. Several delegates expressed their interest in having an active role in the government-led roundtables (RTs). The United Arab Emirates offered to co-chair RT 1.1 on “Harnessing migrants’ existing capitals to build resilience”; the Philippines proposed to co-chair RT 2.2 on “Regional mobility and policy coherence to support development”; and the Netherlands would like to take part in the preparation of RT 2.2 (ibid.) and 3.1 on “Aligning governance with contemporary drivers of migration”. Mr. Nadir thanked these countries for their encouragement and expression of support. The GFMD Co-Chairs, he said, would collect all requests for RT participation and aim to establish a regional balance when making a decision. He encouraged SG members to submit written comments on the concept note by 28 February³ so that the Co-Chairs can distribute the finalized version by 16 March.

B. First Government-led Roundtable Preparatory Meetings on February 6

20. The Co-Chairmanship would host its first round of government-led Roundtable Teams Consultations for the year on 6 February. As in the past year, two sessions with three parallel meetings – one featuring RT 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1 and another featuring RT 1.2, 2.2 and 3.2 – would be held. All SG Members were encouraged to attend the meetings organized around their subjects of interest.

C. Provisional Budget of the GFMD in 2018

21. In her report to the Steering Group, Ms. Estrella Lajom presented the preliminary budget for the period 1 January to 31 December. Taking into account (1) preparatory costs, (2) the final Summit meeting in Marrakesh and (3) the GFMD Support Unit operational costs, the proposed budget amounts to USD 2,311,711. This amount includes the provision for a dedicated Communications Officer and an external development expert to support the contribution of the GFMD to migration in the 2030 Agenda, as well as a standard 10 per cent contingency. The GFMD expenses as of 31 December 2017 totaled USD 1,023,969. With the balance of resources carried forward amounting to USD 809,273 and an assured seed funding of USD 400,000, the funding gap as of 5 February stands at USD 1.5 million. Ms. Lajom thanked the countries that have steadily funded the GFMD and acknowledged that Germany shouldered the majority of costs for the GFMD in 2017, which granted the Forum left over balances in 2018. As an aside, she informed the FOF that the SU has been working closely with IOM to streamline processes to make it more efficient for facilitating and managing international contributions from donor countries.

VI. GFMD Relationship with the GFMD Civil Society and Business Mechanism

22. Mr. Nadir informed SG members that Mr. John Bingham was succeeded by Mr. Stéphane Jaquemet as Head of Policy at ICMC, coordinating office of the GFMD Civil Society. Mr. Jaquemet would address the Friends of the Forum in the afternoon to share the latest Civil Society developments. Ms. Stéphanie Winet from the GFMD Business Mechanism and IOE, on the other hand, was also expected to inform the FOF about the GFMD business mechanism’s activities for 2018.

VII. Any Other Business

23. Ambassador Schmidt-Bremme advised SG members that to date no formal expression of interest has been brought to the attention of the Co-Chairs for assuming the 2019 GFMD Chairmanship. He believed that the year 2019 yields great challenges and rewards, especially considering the opportunities for contributing to the implementation and follow-up of the GCM – and honoring the work of the late Sir Peter Sutherland. He thus urged Member States to consider stepping forward to take on the Chairmanship after Morocco.

³ An initial date of 23 February was presented, however the GFMD Co-Chairs have decided to extend the submission deadline to 28 February.

24. The meeting was adjourned at 12h01.

Prepared by the GFMD Support Unit.
19 March 2018