

Closing Remarks
Ambassador Naci Koru, Deputy Foreign Minister, Turkey
(16 October 2015)

Excellencies,

Dear Participants,

First, I would like to thank all participants for their valuable contribution to the Summit. Let me congratulate you all for your hard work to make this meeting of the Global Forum a success.

This Global Forum came at a time when the world's attention has been focused on migration more intensely than at any time in a generation—and there is a real sense of crisis. And you have been meeting in a country more affected by this crisis than any other—at least as measured by the number of people who have arrived in Turkey seeking a safe harbor.

When Turkey assumed the Chair of the GFMD, in July, 2014, we were hosting about 795,000 Syrians who had fled the war in their country. Today, there are more than two million Syrians in Turkey, and at least as many more in Syria's other neighbors, Lebanon and Jordan. The end of this tragedy is nowhere in sight.

In the face of this turmoil, it is easy to forget that migration in today's world is generally a positive thing. It has tremendous potential to promote development in the countries that receive migrants as well as the countries they have left. It can promote closer ties between countries through trade, investment, cultural exchange and powerful new networks of knowledge. But its potential can only be realized by, as the theme of our GFMD chairmanship says, “strengthening partnerships” to make sure that human mobility contributes to sustainable development.

We recognize, as you do, that international migration cannot be addressed effectively by any one country alone, or by states without the cooperation of others actors—including international organizations, civil society, the private sector and migrants themselves.

International migration is here to stay—a product of two of the most powerful forces in the world: market forces and the universal human urge to achieve a safer, better life for oneself and one’s children. It is up to all of us to work together to promote the positive outcomes of international migration, for people and for countries. Even migrants who are forced to leave their countries by war, persecution, economic collapse or environmental catastrophe carry with them an endowment of talent and experience. No one can take that away from them, but it can be wasted if migrants are not empowered to use their skills and energies.

The new 2030 Development Agenda, expressed in 17 Sustainable Development Goals, calls for “peaceful and inclusive societies”, and for partnerships. Migration is mentioned in several of the targets included in the 2030 Agenda, but it is implicit in almost all of them. How can we build peaceful and inclusive societies without making sure that migrants are well integrated and that their rights are protected? The GFMD has a role to play in developing the indicators that must be developed to make sure the Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented effectively.

Turkey was very pleased that the 2015 GFMD for the first time took up the issue of forced migration. We urgently feel the need for greater sharing of responsibility for protecting and caring for refugees, but we also recognize that there are millions of people who are compelled to cross international borders to escape the effects of man-made or natural disasters.

Turkey has followed the example of previous GFMD chairs and worked to include the private sector more fully into the GFMD. The role of employers and of entrepreneurs—especially those from migrant communities and the diaspora—is an important aspect of the connection between migration and development.

It is high time to mobilize our efforts for a concerted response to migration challenges. To this end, we hope that we will be able to build on the discussions held within the 8th Summit.

Dear Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope you have spent enjoyable time in Istanbul. We hope to meet you again in our country at the World Humanitarian Summit which is going to be held in May 2016.

We wish all success to the incoming Bangladesh Chair.

Dear colleague,

You can count on our support during your Chairmanship. We are ready to share our experience and extend our assistance.