

“Enhancing the human development of migrants and their contribution to the development of communities and states”

First Meeting of the Friends of the Forum

**Palais des Nations, Geneva, Room XVIII
07 February 2012**

Chair: Mr. Ali Mansoor, Mauritius GFMD Chair

Mauritian GFMD Taskforce: Amb. Shree B.C. Servansing, Mr. Latanraj Ghoorah, Mr. Adam Koodoruth, Dr. Rolph Jenny, Dr. Irena Omelaniuk, Mr. Chukwu-Emeka Chikezie, Ms. Elizabeth Adjei, Ms. Estrella Lajom

Report of the Proceedings

1. Welcoming Remarks

Mr. Ali Mansoor, Mauritian GFMD Chair, warmly welcomed 141 delegates from 82 countries and 18 international organizations to the first meeting of the Friends of the Forum. The Chair was joined at the podium by the GFMD Troika – Mexico, represented by Mr. Guillermo Reyes; Switzerland, represented by Amb. Eduard Gnesa; and Sweden, represented by Ms. Eva Ackerman-Borje – and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Migration and Development (SRSG), Sir Peter Sutherland.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

When the Chair sought the adoption of the Provisional Agenda, Mr. John Bingham of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) requested to make a brief report and update to the assembly under the item “Any Other Business”. The request was granted. There being no other intervention, the Provisional Agenda was adopted.

3. Report on the GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate

Ambassador Eduard Gnesa, Swiss Special Ambassador for International Cooperation in Migration and Development and GFMD 2011 Chair, thanked all Friends of the Forum for making the GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate an overwhelming success and for the trust they had placed in Switzerland as 2011 Chair. He underlined that it was the commitment of participating governments and the dedicated support of non-governmental partners including the Global Migration Group (GMG), other international organizations, and the ICMC that enabled GFMD 2011 to have very constructive and outcome-oriented discussions.

The former Chair announced that the GFMD 2011 Report of Proceedings was in its final editing stage and will be made available on the GFMD website by mid-February. Finally, he vowed that Switzerland will uphold its commitment to the Global Forum and wished Mauritius all the success for its chairmanship this year. He expressed the hope that governments, international organizations and civil societies will give the Mauritian Chair the same support they had given to the Swiss Chair.

4. GFMD 2012 Concept Paper

The Mauritian Chair then presented the latest draft of the GFMD 2012 concept paper. He underscored the fact that this concept paper was a result of an on-going consultative process, the last phase of which was the first round of meetings of the GFMD Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum. Aiming to build on the excellent work done by previous GFMD Chairs, the concept paper was prepared on the basis of extensive consultations with the membership, diaspora experts, civil society and even the private sector in order to explore the themes and issues that were important to them.

Following such consultations, the Mauritian Taskforce selected the topics that gained widespread support which then made up the Roundtable themes for the GFMD 2012, namely: *Roundtable 1: Circulating Labour for Inclusive Development; Roundtable 2: Factoring Migration into Development Planning, Roundtable 3: Managing migration and perceptions of migration for development outcomes; and Roundtable 4: Gender, Human Rights and Migration*

The Chair then requested the four international advisers to introduce themselves and expound on the Roundtable sessions that they will be coordinating based on the feedback and proposals that have been received so far.

Roundtable 1: Circulating Labour for Inclusive Development
RT Coordinator: Dr. Irena Omelaniuk

Dr. Irena Omelaniuk informed the meeting that Roundtable 1 will continue much of the work that has been done since 2007 on the issue of mobility for development. It will continue to focus on areas of protection and empowerment, particularly of workers in temporary and circular situations. It will also look at labor and skills circulation in globalized economies, as well as policies aimed at improving the conditions of migrant workers which enable such circulation. Furthermore, it will look at the back-end of labour migration and examine how diasporas are able to invest these skills and assets in the development of their home countries.

The first roundtable session, *Roundtable session 1.1 Beyond-the-border Skills and Jobs for Human Development*, follows much of the work that has also been done by the GFMD ad hoc Working Group on Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development on lowering the socio-economic and other costs of migration especially for low-skilled mobile workers. The session will tackle the issue of more effective job matching with a specific focus on skills acquisition, recognition and certification in both the home country and country of destination. It will look specifically at empowering migrants to re-insert themselves back home within the job market or to invest in small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures. The Governments of Mauritius and the United Arab Emirates have offered to co-chair RT 1.1.

The second Roundtable session, *Supporting Migrants and Diaspora as Agents of Socioeconomic Change*, follows a session in 2009 on Engaging Diaspora and Migrants in Development Policies and Programs. It gives an opportunity for the Global Forum to see how the Handbook on Engaging Diaspora for Development Activities – a joint project of the IOM and the Migration Policy Institute and funded by the Netherlands and Switzerland -- may be piloted, tested and used in 2012. Additionally, the session may look at instruments like diaspora bonds and other mechanisms and instruments to leverage the assets of diaspora for development. A number of governments have expressed interest in being co-chairs for Roundtable session 1.2, including Ghana, France and Morocco.

Roundtable 2: Factoring Migration into Development Planning
RT Coordinator: Dr. Rolph Jenny

Dr. Rolph Jenny explained that Roundtable 2 aims at deepening the understanding of planning tools available to governments to factor migration into development planning and pursue more coherent and effective migration and development policies. This will include Extended Migration Profiles and Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning processes, as well as other development and poverty reduction strategies, such as PRSPs. Concurrently, RT 2 will address South-South migration and development policies, a topic to which the GFMD has so far paid insufficient attention.

Roundtable Session 2.1 on Supporting National Development through Migration Mainstreaming Processes, Extended Migration Profiles and Poverty Reduction Strategies will take a stock of concrete experiences made by governments that are actively engaged in implementing these planning tools, including challenges faced. Building on the 2011 GFMD Concluding Debate, the various 2011 workshops leading up to it, and the activities of the Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research, the session will also pursue the debate on the concepts and rationale underlying these planning tools, to promote their use with interested governments. The session will further look at initial results of the migration and development mainstreaming pilot projects, carried out in certain countries with the support of the GMG. At this stage, Switzerland has offered to be a 2.1 Co-chair while Sweden agreed to be part of the session team. Other governments are welcome to step forward as Co-chair and team members.

Roundtable Session 2.2 on Addressing South-South Migration and Development Policies will seek to shed more light on migrant stocks in developing countries and the various types of movements that occur between developing countries. Most South-South migration is for labour and employment purposes, and the session will look at the social, developmental and economic impacts of such movements on countries of origin and destination, including gender implications and effects on the situation of families left behind. At the same time, the session will discuss South-South movements spurred by environmental factors, in situations where migration becomes an adaptation strategy. It will further deal with data collection and how to address government capacity gaps in this and other areas. The preparation for the session will also involve relevant GMG and other international agencies, as well as African Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and Regional Consultative Processes (RPCs). So far, no government has offered to co-chair session 2.2, but Switzerland has announced its willingness to be part of the government team. Other governments are welcome to step forward as Co-chair and team members.

Roundtable 3: Managing migration and perceptions of migration for development outcomes

RT Coordinator: Mr. Chukwu Emeka-Chikezie

According to Mr. Chukwu Emeka-Chikezie, Roundtable 3 will address two separate but interrelated themes: a) how to manage public perceptions of migrants and migration, which can influence the protections and support given to migrants and consequently their capacity to contribute to development; and b) how to ensure that migration management policies and programs adequately protect migrants and their families in vulnerable circumstances. The Roundtable sessions would build upon discussions begun in Puerto Vallarta in 2010 and taken further in the Swiss thematic meetings in 2011, particularly in the context of irregular and involuntary forms of migration that can severely hamper the human development capacities of migrants.

Roundtable 3.1 session on Shaping Public Perceptions of Migrants and Migration will examine the relevance of public perceptions of migrants, both immigrants and emigrants, and migration for successful development outcomes of migration. It will also explore how different facets of migration, especially irregular migration, influence and shape public perceptions, and the political and policy measures most effective in creating an open space for a healthy and depoliticized public discourse on migration. Concrete outcomes could include a) model programs and practices at national and local levels in developed and developing countries that engage migrants, diaspora and the host communities in mutually beneficial ways; e.g., through innovative media programs, including using social media, that broaden public understanding and appreciation of the contributions migrants make to their home and host countries; b) shared understanding of the critical role that political leaders play in framing debates about migrants and migration; and c) strategies by countries of origin to shape in positive ways the public image of their émigrés while abroad and after return.

The countries that have expressed interest in co-chairing this session are Mexico and Philippines, while the GFMD awaits further confirmation from Russia and Turkey. On the other hand, the United States has expressed interest in joining the government team.

Meanwhile, *Roundtable session 3.2 Migrant Protection as integral to Migration Management*, will look at ways to balance the obligations states have to protect migrants, whether regular or irregular, some of whom may find themselves to be in highly vulnerable situations with states' desires to manage migration, protect borders, and achieve law enforcement objectives. The goal of the session would be to generate information on tools that GFMD member states could voluntarily employ, either unilaterally or in partnership with other interested states, in order to achieve overall migrant protection and migration management objectives. The Governments of Australia and Indonesia have expressed interest in co-chairing this session, with the United States as an interested government team member.

Roundtable 4: Gender, Human Rights and Migration

RT Coordinator: Ms. Elizabeth Adjei

Ms. Elizabeth Adjei will coordinate this proposed roundtable in response to repeated calls by several governments to continue to mainstream the gender agenda, especially the case of women migrant workers with specific migration issues with regard to reproductive health, childcare provisions and other social dimensions. It will also highlight some policy challenges and governance gaps in the protection of domestic care workers.

Roundtable 4.1 session, Enhancing legal, social and financial protection of women migrants and their families, seeks to foster understanding of the gender dimension of international migration and highlight the vulnerabilities of female migrants to discrimination, exploitation and abuse throughout the migration cycle. Some of the target outcomes for this session include gender-sensitive protection policies, law-enforcement capacity-building for Ministries of women and labour issues, and cooperative initiatives between destination and origin countries in developing mechanisms seeking to address abuses against migrant women.

The Roundtable 4.2 session on Migrant Domestic Workers will focus on policy challenges and governance gaps in the protection of domestic care workers. Moreover, the session will examine some good regulatory practices and promote further discourse and action among governments towards the implementation, enforcement and monitoring of the ILO Convention 189. The session intends to result in new models of legal and health protections available for domestic workers. It also aims to finalize and utilize the gender-sensitive checklist and ensure that international domestic work is factored into national migration policies, for example by using the Migration Profiles as a tool for appropriate policy formulation.

The Co-chairs and government teams for Roundtable 4 have not been identified yet. At the first meeting of the GFMD Steering Group held on 6 February, some governments proposed to reduce the number of roundtables and to simply mainstream the Roundtable 4 topics in Roundtables 1 to 3. Another suggestion was to organize a third session on domestic workers under Roundtable 3, which deals mainly on the issue of protection of migrant workers. But a few governments cautioned against diluting the emphasis on gender and human rights issues.

The Chair opened the floor for further comments on the draft concept paper and the organization of Roundtables, particularly Roundtable 4. Fourteen (14) governments and two Observers intervened, all praising the Mauritian GFMD Chair and the Taskforce for the excellent draft concept paper.

The following specific points were articulated:

On the Draft Concept Paper

- One delegate noted with appreciation the greater emphasis given on the specific needs and challenges of African countries.
- One delegate was disappointed that the issue of Climate Change and Migration has not been taken up even though it has been the subject of successful roundtables in the past GFMD meetings. A suggestion was made to include this topic under Roundtable 2 session on Factoring Migration into Development Planning.

- One Observer complimented the Chair for the strong reference made on the role of Civil Society in this process, as well as the new focus given to South-South migration in Roundtable 2.

On the Organization of Roundtables

- All interveners agreed that the issues of gender and human rights are crucial, and should be mainstreamed across all roundtables. However, one delegate raised caution that the Roundtable 4 topics might not get the attention they deserved if these were simply mainstreamed. In this regard, a suggestion was made by another delegate to keep the 4 Roundtables as proposed in the current draft.
- At least two delegates proposed that the issues of gender and the human rights of migrants be tackled under Roundtable 3 on Migrant Protection as integrated to Migration Management, emphasizing the gender and human rights aspects of protection.
- Two other delegates believed that the issue of domestic workers is important and complex enough to deserve a separate roundtable session under Roundtable 3. This view was supported by one Observer who added that maintaining a specific focus on migrant domestic workers would make a tremendous sense to the civil society actors in the Global Forum.
- A practical solution was offered by a delegate to use the common space session to deal with the important topics of gender, human rights and migration.
- Other delegates expressed flexibility on how to treat the Roundtable 4 topics. While not proposing any definitive solution, they stressed the need to keep the issues of gender and human rights on the agenda, particularly in the case of domestic workers.
- Some delegates urged the Chair to look at the practical aspects of organizing the Roundtables and how to ensure that delegations will be able to cover all simultaneous sessions during the final meeting.

Additional Confirmation of States

By the end of the open debate, a number of countries confirmed their participation in the Roundtable Sessions. Ethiopia expressed flexibility by agreeing to co-chair in any of the thematic Roundtable sessions. Kenya offered to co-chair Roundtable 1.2. France offered to be a government team member for Session 1.1 and as a Co-chair for Roundtable 1.2. Morocco re-affirmed its interest to co-chair Session 1.2 and another session under Roundtable 2. Finally, Philippines expressed interest in becoming a government team member for Roundtables 1.1, 3.1 and 3.2 in addition to their possibly co-chairing the separate Roundtable session on Migrant Domestic Workers.

5. GFMD 2012 Calendar of Key Activities

The Chair made reference to the Provisional GFMD 2012 Calendar of Activities which was distributed during the meeting and posted on the website. He saw no need to discuss

it in detail, but commented that a special round of meetings of the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum may be called after the second Assessment Team meeting in March in Geneva, if the budget issue remains unresolved. The GFMD will then have to take a collective decision on where to cut spending or from which sources to derive revenues.

6. GFMD Assessment Phase 2 Process

The Chair called on Ambassador Shree Servansing of the Permanent Mission of Mauritius in Geneva to discuss the Assessment Team's work plan for 2012. Amb. Servansing, who will lead the second phase of the GFMD assessment in 2012, reported that the February 6 meeting of the Assessment Team discussed how to operationalize the work plan endorsed by the Friends of the Forum at the Concluding Debate in December 2011. A revised work plan will be circulated to the members later, defining the modalities and concrete steps to be taken forward and targets set within the agreed timeframe.

The Assessment Team will endeavour to be transparent by keeping both the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum fully informed about the progress of the assessment work. From February to June, the Assessment Team will discuss specific areas that concern possible improvements of the way the GFMD operates as a process, leading towards recommendations for the future. A discussion paper will be prepared by the Assessment Team, to be presented to the GFMD Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum for their consideration. On the basis of their comments and inputs, a more consolidated paper will be drafted which will again be discussed in preparation for the November meeting in Mauritius. In addition, the Assessment Team's work from June to December will focus on how to interface with the United Nations and the UN High Level Dialogue in 2013.

Amb. Servansing urged all delegates to submit inputs on the Assessment Team's work to the Chair as soon as possible. He was prepared to taking on board any comments and including the participation of interested governments in the work of the Assessment Team.

7. *GFMD 2012 Budget*

The Chair did not dwell on the issue of the GFMD 2012 budget. He said if necessary, he would call on the Friends of the Forum in March to discuss and address this matter.

8. *Any Other Business*

Mr. Mansoor invited the SRSG, Sir Peter Sutherland, to offer a few words. The SRSG expressed his belief that the GFMD must be the most cost-effective inter-governmental process ever to take place. The Assessment (Phase 1) exercise showed that it was valuable; thus, it was not unreasonable to expect financial contributions to keep it going. However, the continuing short list of donor governments vis-à-vis the very small budget that the Global Forum requires is testimony to the fact of inadequate engagement. He appealed to governments for generous and early contributions to the 2012 Global Forum, including the Support Unit operations. He highlighted the big commitment that Mauritius has taken, notwithstanding its small population and per capita income. Moreover, the SRSG expressed the hope that the GFMD will have a structure in the future which will

allow it to tap into the intellectual resources of the different organs of the GMG which have a direct concern with the issues of migration and development.

The final speaker, Mr. John Bingham of ICMC, drew attention to the short document made available in the room which breaks out in simple format the recommendations and outcomes of the 2011 Civil Society Days- including recommendations for which civil society acknowledges its own responsibility and not just responsibilities of states or international organizations. He was pleased to report that ICMC was able to organize the civil society process of last year's Global Forum within a budget that was 1/3 the cost of the prior year (2010).

He also reported that for the first two months of the GFMD 2012, ICMC pursued several funding opportunities for civil society activities related to the Forum. It also participated actively and moderated during the January 2012 brainstorming meeting among non-state actors in Mauritius. Finally, civil society has begun thinking in earnest about the future of the Forum and the High Level Dialogue next year.

Mr. Bingham ended by affirming ICMC's trust in the value of the GFMD and in the importance of assuring its impact. He acknowledged that it was the civil society's role to step up to and into what is possible, in order to really achieve the value and impact of the Global Forum for the benefit of migrants, their families, communities and states.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:55 noon.

*Prepared by
GFMD Support Unit*