

“Unlocking the potential of migration for inclusive development”

**Second Meeting of the Steering Group
La Salle XI, ILO Building, Geneva
21 May 2013**

**Summary Report
(Revised as of 25 June 2013)**

1. Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje, GFMD Chair-in-Office, welcomed delegates to the second meeting of the GFMD Steering Group (SG) under the Swedish. Joining her at the podium were: the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative for Migration and Development (SRSG), Mr. Peter Sutherland; Ms. Sofia Östmark, Senior Policy Advisor of the Swedish GFMD Secretariat; Ms. Esen Altug, Minister Plenipotentiary, representing Turkey, incoming GFMD Chair; and Ms. Estrella Lajom, Head of the GFMD Support Unit (SU).
2. The Provisional Agenda was adopted.

Updated GFMD Budget for 2013-2014

3. The updated GFMD Budget 2013-2014 had been circulated ahead of the meeting on 13 May, together with a note from the Chair. Four changes were highlighted: 1) Costs were further specified to accommodate some of the questions and based on the model of a standardised GFMD budget. 2) The costs of preparatory activities and the final meeting in Stockholm went down by 6% and 2% respectively, after adjusting estimates for IOM travel facilitation. 3) The SU operational budget decreased by 5% due to inability to hire the positions suggested earlier. 4) Contingency has been adjusted to 3% from only 2.5%. These changes resulted in a 3% reduction in the overall budget, which now stands at USD 3.203M.
4. The Chair gave more information about the Swedish contribution to the proposed budget. This will include, inter alia, shouldering the costs of the Swedish Secretariat comprised of six staff members working full time on the GFMD, a contribution of \$100,000 towards the civil society process, and covering the cost of venue of the GFMD 2014 Civil Society Days.
5. The Chair thanked and acknowledged the countries that have already pledged to provide financial support to the proposed budget, namely, Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. She also thanked France, India, Liechtenstein, Norway, Spain, Turkey, and UAE for agreeing to realign unspent contributions from GFMD 2012 towards the 2013-2014 budget. Additional financial contributions would be welcomed to cover the on-going costs of the SU, preparatory work and thematic meetings for 2013.
6. During the discussions, additional pledges from the Governments of Belgium and Mexico were indicated and some other governments mentioned they might be able to support the GFMD 2013-2014. A delegate raised the issue of comparability of GFMD budget from one year to the next.
7. The Chair explained that the GFMD budget is an evolving issue, and it is difficult to compare budgets across chairmanships given the varying costs in the host countries. Budget-setting needs to strike a fine balance between allowing for continuity of both institutional and substantive aspects of the Global Forum and flexibility to enable the Chair to introduce its own programme, as outlined in the concept paper.
8. Mauritius brought up the issue of the left over contributions from GFMD 2012 which they would like to see supporting the Intra- African Mobility/talent mobility project, a project which was initiated by Mauritius during their chairmanship. Two other countries were supportive of Mauritius’ proposal and raised the issue of whether or not GFMD should be funding projects. The Chair underlined that this is a matter of principle that

must be discussed further, as it is not currently covered in the Operating Modalities of the Global Forum. The Chair pointed out that the GFMD process has never managed or funded projects as part of its own budget or work programme. There are, nevertheless, a number of projects that directly or indirectly follow from the GFMD deliberations. It was highlighted that GFMD is not institutionally equipped to handle projects at this stage.

Long-term financing framework for the GFMD

9. A paper on “More Predictable Funding for the GFMD” had been circulated ahead of the meeting. This proposal is in line with the recommendation in the assessment report and a priority of the Swedish Chairmanship to have a more durable Forum, with a multiannual work plan supported by a multiannual funding mechanism.

10. The Chair described the current informal and voluntary financial system of the GFMD which poses some crucial challenges to the process. It creates insecurity and instability, and does not allow financial predictability, especially at the start of a chairmanship. Fund-raising absorbs GFMD resources that could be better used for other purposes. The system also affects a state’s possibility to take on the role of Chair especially for low income countries.

11. Building upon the earlier 2011 proposal of the SRSG and Switzerland the Chair proposed setting up a standardized GFMD budget and a long-term, multiannual funding mechanism for the GFMD. Advice was sought on whether or not figures should be indicated in the budget template, considering that costs vary between countries, and if a standard contribution to the civil society should be included as a line item in the GFMD Chair’s budget. The Chair also asked for guidance on whether or not the GFMD should introduce an annual fee or continue with the current voluntary funding structure, or both. Finally, the Chair raised the issue of DAC-ability of GFMD contributions – i.e., to count GFMD contributions as development aid.

12. There was a rich discussion on this issue. All the delegates who took the floor agreed in principle on the need for a more reliable, sustainable and predictable funding structure. However, several objected to the idea of imposing an annual fee which runs counter to the voluntary nature of the process.

13. All speakers supported the Chair’s proposal for a standardized budget and a multiannual work program. Most of them did not see the need to include figures in the standardized budget to afford the Chair enough flexibility. They also agreed that the GFMD should continue to broaden the donor base and get more, smaller contributions without reducing member state participation. A few requested more information on the issue of DAC-ability to enable them to draw conclusions.

14. There were different views expressed on the issue of a standard contribution to civil society process in the GFMD standard budget. All, nonetheless, reiterated their support for CS participation in the process. Some pointed out that there is need for civil society to have its own independent process. There being no clear consensus, the Chair suggested to reflect and discuss the issue further.

15. The Chair promised to revert at the September meeting with a proposal for a multiannual funding mechanism that can support a multiannual work plan.

Enhancing the Working Methods of the Steering Group

16. Following the recommendations in the assessment report, one of the Swedish Chair’s priority actions is to enhance the working methods of the Steering Group. The Chair would like to maintain continuity of the process with a sufficient number of governments ensuring efficiency, flexibility, and transparency. Members should contribute actively and concretely to its work. The aim is to avoid duplication and facilitate complementarity with other GFMD frameworks.

17. To this end, the GFMD Secretariat earlier sent a request in April for views on its working methods, size and efficiency, as well as expressions of interest in continued membership. Twelve (12) of the thirty-seven (37) Steering Group members had sent a response to the request. Eleven reconfirmed their interest in participating;

one country expressed a wish to step down. A majority thought that the group was too large to be a manageable strategic body and that the size should be reduced or at least not expanded. The idea of rotating membership interested several countries. There was a common agreement on the need for regional balance with different migration perspectives. Many promoted a more strategic role for the SG to avoid overlaps with the Troika and FOF. Others urged for strong commitment and active participation in the group.

18. During the open discussions, eight (8) delegates reconfirmed their government's interest in continuing as members of the Steering Group. Many suggested developing criteria for continued membership and affirmed that conceptual advice and financial support are concrete and expected forms of contribution while serving in the SG. Some delegates asked for elements to guide the decision-making process; a few felt the Troika should play that role, reviewing SG membership annually and speaking with inactive governments.

19. In regard to size and composition, different views were held. Some believed that 37 is a manageable number for the Steering Group. A suggestion was made to create smaller working groups within the SG to tackle specific topics. Many were interested in a rotation system for membership.

20. A suggestion was also made to hold separate, not back-to-back meetings of the Steering Group with the Friends of Forum meetings. This way, SG feedback can be provided and set the groundwork for the ensuing discussions at future FOF meetings.

21. The views put forward would be synthesized, together with submitted written contributions. Additional written comments would be welcomed following the meeting. The Chair reiterated that both financial contributions and active engagement are equally important. The Troika's role in looking more at this issue should be further explored. The chair concluded with mentioning that the issue will be discussed further at the September or November meeting.

Set-up of the GFMD 2014 Stockholm meeting

22. Amb. Åkerman Börje expressed the enthusiasm of the Government of Sweden and the GFMD Secretariat in welcoming delegates to Stockholm in May 2014. The proposal is to start the opening of the Forum at 13h00 Wednesday 14 May for about one hour. The common space would then commence from about 14h00 until 18h00 followed by a reception for all participants. The Government meeting is then proposed to continue from Thursday morning until around 14h00 on the Friday.

23. The Chair underlined that they had been looking at a proposed set-up that would allow sufficient time for the common space but at the same time would allow for government officials to fly in to Stockholm on the Wednesday and leave Friday afternoon (flight schedules permitting).

24. The Chair asked for reactions, but nobody intervened.

Prepared by:

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