

## GFMD 2019 First Meeting of the Friends of the Forum

Thursday, 21 February  
10h00 – 13h00  
Salle XXI, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Building E  
Palais des Nations

### Summary Report

#### I. Welcoming Remarks

1. The first meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Friends of the Forum (FOF)<sup>1</sup> under the Ecuadorian Chairmanship was opened by **Ambassador Santiago Javier Chávez Pareja**, Vice Minister for Human Mobility, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of the Republic of Ecuador, 2019 Chair-in-Office of the GFMD.
2. Joining the GFMD 2019 Chair at the podium were **Mr. Andres Montalvo**, Head of Ecuadorian GFMD Task Force; **Ambassador Emilio Izquierdo**, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UNOG; **Ms. Irene Biontino**, representing the German Co-Chair of GFMD 2017-2018; **Mr. Ahmed Skim**, representing the Moroccan Co-Chair of GFMD 2017-2018; **Mr. Alejandro Davalos**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UNOG; **Mr. Maksim Roskin**, international adviser to the GFMD 2019 Chair; and **Ms. Marcia Porrás**, advisor to the GFMD Chair on migration and refugees; and **Ms. Estrella Lajom**, Head of the GFMD Support Unit.
3. In welcoming the delegates, Ambassador Chávez highlighted that the meeting was taking place only two months after the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in Marrakesh and a week before the scheduled “Migration Week” in New York, 26-28 February. In this context, the Chair emphasized the importance of the GFMD as a transparent and inclusive space for all concerned stakeholders to debate policy questions, share lessons learned, and build support networks.

#### II. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

4. The [Provisional Agenda](#) of the meeting, which was circulated on 11 February 2019, was adopted without any comment or reservation.

#### III. Outcomes of the Eleventh GFMD Summit in Marrakesh

5. As a matter of tradition, the first Friends of the Forum meeting under a new GFMD Chairmanship was kick started with a presentation of the highlights and outcomes of the last GFMD Summit Meeting. In this regard, **Mr. Ahmed Skim**, representing the Moroccan 2019 Troika, [presented the](#)

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<sup>1</sup> The first FOF meeting of 2019 attracted 113 State Members, and roughly 20 Observer organizations.

results of the 11th GFMD Summit in Marrakesh held on 5-7 December 2018.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Skim stressed that at the session on the Future of the Forum, discussions called for further reflection on how the GFMD can establish close links with the UN Migration Network, and how the GFMD Platform for Partnerships (PfP) can be leveraged in the development of a UN capacity building mechanism. [The GFMD Common Space](#), comprised of a Davos-style panel session and four parallel thematic sessions, speakers, representing various stakeholders, articulated institutional perspectives on how global commitments contained in the GCM can be amplified through their already existing initiatives on the ground, and in cooperation with the UN Migration Network. Meanwhile, the GFMD Business meeting emphasized the need for businesses to be more vocal and visible in encouraging a positive narrative on international migration.

#### IV. GFMD 2019 Chairmanship

##### *(a) Presentation of the GFMD 2019 Concept Paper and Work Plan*

###### *GFMD 2019 Concept Paper*

6. The Chair presented the substantive agenda and work priorities of the GFMD 2019 Chairmanship which will be organized under the overarching theme, “*Sustainable approaches to human mobility: Upholding rights, strengthening state agency, and advancing development through partnerships and collective action,*” leading to the Twelfth GFMD Summit in Quito. As outlined in the draft GFMD 2019 Draft Concept Paper, the Quito Summit will feature six Roundtable Sessions:<sup>3</sup>
  - Roundtable 1 - *Joint responses to mixed migration flows: Partnerships and collective action to protect Rights*
    - Roundtable session 1.1: Providing regular pathways from crisis to safety
    - Roundtable session 1.2: Facilitating social and economic inclusion
  - Roundtable 2 - *Migration narratives and communication: What role, responsibility and resources do governments have?*
    - Roundtable session 2.1: Shaping public narratives on migration and migrants
    - Roundtable session 2.2: Communicating effectively with migrants
  - Roundtable 3 - *Addressing human mobility as part of urban and rural development strategies*
    - Roundtable session 3.1: Supporting arrival cities through policy coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships
    - Roundtable session 3.2: Harnessing migration for rural transformation and development
7. The Chair also aims in 2019 to build upon the recommendations of the GFMD Ten-Year Review Report, to help define the relationship between the GFMD and the newly established UN Migration Network, and to position the GFMD within the new global migration governance architecture without losing its core identity.
8. FoF Members voiced their support for the Chair’s Draft Concept Paper for 2019 and welcomed the proposed thematic priorities. There was broad enthusiasm for the three major themes and the

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<sup>2</sup> Around 2000 participants from 135 Members States and 45 international organizations attended the inaugural session, including participation of Minister and Vice-ministers as well as high-level staff throughout the Summit. Members of civil society, the private sector and academics also participated.

<sup>3</sup> The titles of the six RT sessions have been adjusted based on the Final GFMD 2019 Concept Paper circulated on 1 April 2019.

Roundtable topics, and a number of states indicated that they might be interested in serving as Co-Chairs or joining as members of the various sessions.<sup>4</sup>

9. Many Members also complimented the Chair's determination to follow-up on the recommendations of the Ten-Year Review Report. They reiterated the value they perceive in the GFMD in the changing landscape of global migration policy, particularly its informal, state-led nature and its engagement with other stakeholders, including the newly incorporated Mayors Mechanism.

#### *Thematic Workshop on the GCM Implementation (March 21-22, Geneva)*

10. The first GFMD Thematic Workshop on the 'Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration at the national level' will be co-convened by the Philippines and Bahrain on 21-22 March 2019 in Geneva. The Workshop will focus on the implementation of the GCM at the national level, particularly Objective 5 (regular pathways for migration), Objective 6 (fair and ethical recruitment and decent work) and Objective 23 (international cooperation and global partnerships). The GFMD Chair emphasized the importance of the focus of this Workshop as the next logical step after the adoption of the GCM, and as part of the Chair's plan to further regionalize the GFMD.

#### *Operational implications of the Ten-Year Review Report*

5. **Dr. Steffen Angenendt**, representing the GFMD Year Review Report team, [presented](#) to the FoF the main elements and findings of the Review report, drawn from a 15 point questionnaire administered to all Friends of the Forum (FoF) and other stakeholders in 2018.<sup>5</sup> The report revealed that states value the informal state-led space that the GFMD provides, as well as its ability to discuss controversial issues with different stakeholders and facilitate partnerships and cooperation. However, there are some challenges that must be taken into account, including the Forum's limited structure and ad hoc nature. Some members opined that there was still insufficient follow up, learning, and sustainability between chairmanships. Some members opined that there was still insufficient follow up, learning, and sustainability between chairmanships. For this reason, Dr. Angenendt noted the need for the GFMD to adapt to emerging developments, to broaden ownership by States, and to refine its working methods and organizational structures.
11. **Mr. Stephane Jaquemet**, Policy Director of the International Catholic Migration Center, coordinating office of the GFMD Civil Society Process, presented the perspective of civil society with regards to the future of the GFMD,<sup>6</sup> highlighting the following main points:
  - (1) Civil society is absolutely convinced of the continued relevance of the GFMD, but it is necessary to emphasize the government-led nature of the process without losing its perspective of being truly open to civil society and other stakeholders.
  - (2) There is a need to balance the role of the GFMD as a laboratory, in which controversial and difficult issues are heard, and the need to produce concrete results.
  - (3) While last year was a year of standard setting with the adoption of the GCM, 2019 must be a year of implementation, not reopening the discussions on the GCM.
  - (4) It is important to work on creating spaces where all stakeholders can be in the room, at the global level, as well as at the national and local levels.

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<sup>4</sup> Some expressions of interest have changed since February 20. The latest Overview of Government-led Roundtable team members composition can be found [here](#).

<sup>5</sup> 65 governments completed the questionnaire, including 26 of the 30 members of the SG.

<sup>6</sup> First thanking the Governments of Morocco and Germany, as the former GFMD Co-Chairs, as well as the governments of Bangladesh, Canada, Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates for their financial support of the Civil Society process in 2018.

He also highlighted the successful [GFMD Civil Society Days](#) held in Marrakesh, as well as the important role of civil society in the GFMD Marrakesh Summit.<sup>7</sup>

12. **Mr. Maksim Roskin**, international advisor to the GFMD 2019 Chair, explained the Chair’s plan on how to follow up on the GFMD Ten-Year Review report. The Chair has proposed to address the recommendations of the Report in three clusters: (1) vision, (2) finances, and (3) broadening ownership and user experience. These three clusters would be discussed separately throughout the year. The first cluster (vision) was discussed at the first meeting of the Steering Group (SG) on , and focused on recommendations regarding three pillars to be developed going forward (the ‘3P approach’): policy, partnerships and peer review.
13. Mr. Roskin also shared about the comments and suggestions made during the SG meeting. The SG urged the Chair to use existing structures rather than create new ones. To this end, there was general support for the suggestion that the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration (formerly Ad hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and GCM) should lead the follow up on the Review report. The SG also affirmed the potential role of the Platform for Partnerships in the GCM’s capacity building mechanism, welcomed a more systematic role for the academic sector in GFMD activities, and expressed support for the establishment of a peer review process that could feed into other relevant processes, such as the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

#### ***(b) Presentation of the GFMD 2019 Provisional Budget***

14. **Ms. Estrella Lajom**, Head of the GFMD Support Unit, provided a preliminary report with regards to the financial situation of the GFMD as of December 2018 (budget of USD 2.3 million, registered expenses USD 1.3 million, left over balance USD 712,472)<sup>8</sup> and the [Provisional Budget for 2019](#) (USD 2,430,678). The GFMD 2019 Chair sent a Note to all Friends of the Forum, with the details of the proposed budget for the core activities in 2019, plus the USD 400,000 seed funding for the GFMD 2020 Chair.
15. The Chair called on all FoF members to contribute financially and/or in-kind in order to implement the GFMD 2019 work plan.

## **V. GFMD and Related Processes**

### ***(a) Migration and the 2030 Agenda***

#### ***GFMD in the 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF)***

16. **Mr. Julian Pfaefflin**, representing the German Co-Chair in the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration, presented an overview of the [draft recommendations of the GFMD](#) to the 2019 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), upon the invitation of the ECOSOC President. The draft report outlines how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in focus at this year’s HLPF strongly link to migration issues. The SG members were

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<sup>7</sup> Over 300 civil society participants took part at the Civil Society Days, with over 45% also attending the first day of the GFMD government meetings. Participants included migrant, refugee, diaspora and youth representatives, representing all regions. Roughly 100 participants from developing countries received either total or partial funding.

<sup>8</sup> *These figures were based on a preliminary report. There will be an external audit at the end of March 2019. The left over balance may be carried forward to the GFMD 2019 depending on the agreement of the donor countries.*

invited to submit their comments and written inputs to the GFMD's report by 28 February. Thereafter, the report will be finalized and submitted to the HLPF on or before 15 March.

17. One FoF Observer reiterated the importance of the GFMD as a space for discussion and a depository of best practice with regards to the links between migration and development, and noted that it looked forward to engaging with the GFMD on labor rights regarding contribution to the HLPF (in reference to SDG 8.8).

#### *Briefing on how to prepare for Voluntary National Reviews*

18. Heeding the invitation of GFMD 2019 Chair, **Mr. Bela Hovy**, Chief of the Migration Section, Population Division of UNDESA, who joined the meeting by video link from New York, offered a **brief guidance on how to prepare for Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)** which form a cornerstone of the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda. In [his presentation](#), Mr. Hovy outlined the SDGs in focus for the 2019 HLPF and laid out the migration-related elements of these goals. He also stressed the relevance of migration to the VNRs, noting that 45% of VNRs in the past three years have included some reference to migration-related issues.
19. According to Mr. Hovy, there are some key considerations and elements that should be included in the VNRs. In particular, he offered three key recommendations to reporting States:
  - (1) Mention specifically laws which have been adopted; use percentages instead of total numbers; focus on substantive issues; and make verifiable statements. Noting that many countries do not provide adequate data or indicators, he informed member states of the [Tier system of SDG classification](#) which could assist in setting indicators.
  - (2) Relate issues being discussed with the SDGs and targets, using SDG indicators in order to illustrate progress made.
  - (3) Clarify the connection between the implementation of policies and achieving SDGs and targets.
20. Finally, Mr. Hovy pointed to a number of useful resources for VNR preparation, including regional preparatory meetings and workshops taking place prior to the HLPF;<sup>9</sup> the 2019 edition of the [Handbook for the preparation of VNRs](#); and the [VRN knowledge platform](#).

#### ***(b) Global Compact for Migration***

#### *Intergovernmental negotiations on the GCM Modalities Resolution*

21. Upon the GFMD 2019 Chair's invitation, **Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi** gave an informal overview of the highlights of the first intergovernmental consultations held February 13 on the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) process, which is co-facilitated by Ambassador Masud bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in New York. Some common issues in the IMRF negotiations which were highlighted included the desire to maintain the IMRF's non-binding, state-led character; maintain a 360 degree approach to migration; for the IMRF to promote best practices and innovative partnerships; and to build on existing mechanisms and platforms.

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<sup>9</sup> Regional meetings include: UN ECE, 21 - 22 March 2019, Geneva, Switzerland; UN ESCAP, 27 - 29 March 2019, Bangkok, Thailand; UN ESCWA, 9 -11 April 2019, Beirut, Lebanon; UN ECA, 16-18 April 2019, Marrakech, Morocco; UN ECLAC, 22-26 April 2019, Santiago, Chile. More information can be found on the VNR knowledge platform website.

22. One State Member of the FoF noted that the outcomes of the first IMRF consultation anticipated a strong role for the GFMD and regional processes; however, these platforms must remain non-binding, minimize burden on states, and focus on voluntary and state-led reporting.

*Briefing by the UN Network on Migration*

23. **Ms. Nyari Chari-Imbayago**, representing the UN Network on Migration Secretariat, provided an overview of the Network's immediate priorities and next steps, which include staffing up the Secretariat, developing a work plan, establishing the Migration Compact Fund, and supporting the IMRF Co-Facilitators in their activities. The Network was still finding its feet and thus was unclear about how institutional relationships would work in the future. Nonetheless, a number of possible modalities exist through which the relationship between the GFMD and the Network might be strengthened, such as:
  - (1) Through the participation of the UN Network in GFMD activities, including attendance at FoF meetings (as in this case) and other channels such as the GFMD Migration Labs or proposed Marketplace.
  - (2) Through GFMD's attendance at the Network's annual meeting of stakeholders (the exact time and modalities of which are yet to be defined).
  - (3) Through engagement between the Network's capacity building mechanism, specifically the connection hub and knowledge platform, and GFMD initiatives including the Platform for Partnerships.
24. Following this presentation, one FoF State Member proposed that the GFMD and the UN Network should hold regular meetings in order to create a sustainable partnership and avoid the layering of responsibilities and funding requests.

## **VI. GFMD Mechanisms – Priorities and Roadmap**

25. -Owing to its state-led nature, the primary purpose of the Forum is to facilitate a constructive dialogue between governments. However, another important objective of the Forum is to enhance coherence in policy making and institution building, and so the GFMD has also consistently engaged with different actors as important contributors and partners. Recognizing the crucial role of these partners, the Chair invited representatives from GFMD's civil society, business and local authority partners to inform the FoF about their work plans and thematic priorities during Ecuador's Chairmanship.

### *(a) Civil Society Process*

26. Due to time constraints, Mr. Jaquemet did not add to his earlier comments. However, his complete statement is available [online](#).

### *(b) GFMD Business Mechanism*

27. **Ms. Stéphanie Winet**, Head of Stakeholder Engagement of the GFMD Business Mechanism, announced that the Business Mechanism in 2019 will focus on regional activities by organizing two business workshops, tentatively planned to be held in Dubai and Buenos Aires; by publishing two research papers, and by hosting two informal lunch meetings in New York and Geneva. She also reported that the Mechanism has now consolidated a business network on migration with a

governance structure, to be led by a steering committee comprised of a diverse range of stakeholders. The full statement of the GFMD Business Mechanism to the FOFs has been made available [online](#).

*(c) Mayors' Mechanism*

28. In his [statement](#), **Mr. Mohamed Boussraoui**, Executive Officer of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), briefly recalled the systematic participation of local authorities in the GFMD that began in 2017, when the Mayoral Forum in Berlin was held in conjunction with the Berlin GFMD Summit. Last year, aside from holding the Mayoral Forum in Marrakesh back-to-back with the Eleventh Summit, GFMD participating Member States endorsed the establishment of a Mayors Mechanism in the GFMD, thus giving full recognition of the role of local authorities in migration management. On behalf of the Mayors Mechanism, he welcomed the thematic priorities set by the Ecuadorian Chairmanship for 2019, and stated that the next Mayoral Forum will be held in Quito alongside the GFMD Twelfth Summit.

**VII. Any Other Business**

29. The Chair invited all Friends of the Forum to attend the first Government-led Roundtable consultations in the afternoon, following the FOF meeting. Thereafter, the meeting was adjourned at 13h14.

*Prepared by the GFMD Support Unit  
23 April*