

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

Introductory statement by
MR. THOMAS STELZER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLICY
COORDINATION AND INTER-AGENCY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
UNITED NATIONS

**Global Forum on Migration and Development
Geneva, 1-2 December 2011**

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to address you today at the opening of this fifth annual meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development and to introduce a video message from the Secretary-General.

First, let me congratulate the Government of Switzerland and in particular Ambassador Gnesa and his team for their outstanding effort in chairing the Global Forum this year.

In organizing 14 thematic meetings, you pioneered a more focused and action-oriented approach to the Global Forum. While remaining faithful to the state-led nature of the forum, you collaboratively worked with international organizations and civil society in organizing these meetings and thus built synergies among us all.

Under your able leadership, the first phase of the Assessment was successfully completed. As the report clearly shows, the Global Forum has been very successful in advancing the informal and technical dialogue between Member States.

On 19 May 2011, the President of the General Assembly organized an informal thematic debate on international migration and development. Advances made by this Global Forum informed and enriched that debate. Countries showcased novel initiatives to lower the transfer costs of remittances, to engage transnational communities in development efforts, and to foster circular migration. The thematic debate demonstrated once again that a constructive dialogue on international migration and development can be held at the United Nations. Moreover the informal debate showed that the state-led Global Forum and the United Nations can mutually reinforce each other.

But more needs to be done. The Assessment indicates there is room to improve the exchange of best practices at country level and to strengthen partnerships between Governments and other stakeholders.

Here I believe the United Nations and the Global Migration Group can play key role.

The report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development, prepared for the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, illustrated how the GMG has, over the years, increased its efforts to implement Global Forum outcomes.

I believe it is now time for GMG to “move to the field”. GMG members with field presence should jointly assist Member States in examining the regional and country-specific aspects of international migration and its relations with development. The results of these consultations will greatly enlighten the High-level Dialogue in 2013.

Dear colleagues,

The 2013 High-level Dialogue is approaching fast. We need to accomplish much within a short period of time.

Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, will play a key role in preparing for the 2013 High-level Dialogue. I urge you to work very closely with him. The more we, as United Nations and as Member States, invest in collectively preparing for the High-level Dialogue, the greater the chances that we can replicate the success of 2006.

Late 2012, the General Assembly is expected to adopt a resolution on the modalities of the 2013 High-level Dialogue. I urge you to seize this crucial occasion to shape the organization of the 2013 High-level Dialogue, including its themes and outcome. I encourage you to start working through your permanent missions in New York in order to achieve results that concretely enhance the benefits of migration for development, that boost international cooperation and that improve the plight of the millions of migrants worldwide. An information note on the preparatory process for the High-level Dialogue is available in the back of the room.

I am confident that the outcomes of your deliberations during the next two days will represent an important contribution in this respect.

I wish you all success.