

Final Conclusions and recommendations of the Chair, Ambassador Regine De Clercq

1. General findings

The meeting of the last three days was a landmark in the migration and development debate, with frank and interactive discussions, useful and interesting exchanges of experiences and many concrete suggestions for further actions.

Further, while clearly the Global Forum is work in progress, this first meeting and the process leading up to it, have also helped establish a structuring framework for addressing migration and development issues.

This **structuring framework** comprises:

- i) a **global survey** by which governments define their thematic priorities for the Forum;
- ii) a **global network of focal points** that brings together different ministries and departments from various parts of governments;
- iii) the **Friends of the Forum** that acts as a sounding board and consultative body;
- iv) the **team building of developed and developing countries and international expertise where available**, around themes of mutual interest; and

v) the **operating modalities** for the continuation of the Forum, including its link with the UN and the beginning of a support structure .

Our discussions have helped us to start shifting the paradigm of the migration and development debate. We now understand better how migration policies can contribute to development and to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and we all recognize migration as an opportunity, not a threat. We have also come to understand how development policies can harness best the potential benefits of migration.

Migration is a global and growing phenomenon, whose effects are felt in the North as well as in the South, driven by increased globalization and demographic changes. More dynamic and linked up policy responses are required to keep pace with this phenomenon and to enhance its benefits for all concerned.

Migration is still the least addressed part of globalization but it is also the most complex one, because it involves people. Policy making must pay attention to this human dimension.

In the past three days, we spoke about migration and development in the same breath. In fact, we moved development to center stage in the migration debate. This new approach opens more space for both development and migration policy objectives to be reached.

Governments agreed that migration should not become an alternative to national development strategies in the developing countries. Nor should it become a substitute for commitments to development by the donor countries. There may be scope for looking at the development challenges of

regions with high out-migration pressures, to ensure that people are not driven to migrate out of necessity and despair.

2. Conclusions and recommendations

The thematic Roundtables – on human capital development and labor mobility, on remittances and other diaspora resources, and on enhancing institutional and policy coherence and promoting partnerships – generated several useful findings, outcomes, and suggestions for concrete action. These recommendations will lead to short, medium and longer term actions; many of them are in the realm of national policy and can be unilaterally implemented, others will require bilateral and/or multilateral action. Their implementation will involve governments at different levels as well as international organisations, the civil society including the academics and the private sector.. The full report will be provided with the full detailed of proposed actions.

A common theme running through the roundtable sessions was the need for **capacity building**- for data collection on migration flows and development impact analyses; to identify diaspora partners; to device policy tools, and provide training for their implementation.

Many countries – in particular countries of origin, but also in many destination countries in the North as well as the South – simply do not have the knowledge or the tools to address migration and development issues. Such tools have to be crafted. The Forum discussed many good practices with respect to regulation as well as facilitation of remittances, recruitment, use of new technologies, transparency in financial and labor markets, protection of migrants, retention and return of skills, and circular migration.

The Forum looked at ways and means to allow migrants and their families to play a role as actors of development. For this to happen migrants have to be respected, empowered, informed and organized. Policies that are insensitive to individual motivations are likely to create distorted and often painful outcomes.

Policy coherence was central to our debate. It is an issue which will remain with us for a long time, and it was suggested that it be taken up further in Manila. It concerns all levels of governance and a broad range of policy areas. Focal points will have an important role to play and they should be invested with this mission.

Respect for **human rights** and **gender equality** should be mainstreamed throughout the migration and development debate.

Good governance requires that the effects for the migrants of government initiatives taken in the field of migration and development be closely monitored..

Within the framework of the Forum, several countries have indicated their interest to move forward some of the concrete proposals that came out of the sessions: ranging from

Some countries have volunteered to move forward and implement **some pilot projects ranging from Finland who wants to take forward the discussion on the issue of measuring and analyzing impacts further, to Bangladesh who proposes a feasibility study of private sector based financial support concerning the reduction of the up front cost of migration, to Mauritius and the EC organizing a working session before the end of this year on circular migration, to Sweden who will continue to actively contribute to the GFMD process as a whole and policy coherence in particular .There were many more initiatives**

announced which would be too long to enumerate now but which you will find back in our full report... ..:

New partnerships under the leadership of governments have been forged during the preparatory process and we hope that these partnerships will go on after Brussels up to Manila. In this context we were pleased to see how in the 32 meetings at the **Marketplace** facilitated by UNDESA, a great number of business transactions were conducted. Governments as well as international organizations across a range of continents discussed concrete proposals for information, advice, training, equipment, capacity building, project development and other initiatives to enhance the benefits of international migration for development. This has offered another means for the Forum process to gain momentum and bring partners together on concrete projects, funding however is a critical issue in this respect and we appeal to possible donors for reflecting on ways to respond to it. It is important for the Forum to learn more about the results and the lessons learned from this cooperation in future meetings and to have the Marketplace continue beyond this meeting. Another useful possibility put forward was to include in the Marketplace website the operational outcomes of the Forum so as to generate proposals for continued action.

The **future of the Forum** was also discussed, and the following modalities were agreed upon for the continuation of this process:

- a **troika** consisting of the past, present and future chair will steer the process,
- a regionally balanced **steering group**,
- the open-ended **Friends of the Forum**, and
- a **support structure/task force** attached to the chair-in-office.

For the GFMD to really change things we need the following:
– governments need to appropriate the results and outcomes of the Forum, they also need time to digest the results and to act on them

- information about what we achieved has to circulate widely in the public opinion and the press has been very helpful in reporting about this event.

- we need to continue to exchange expertise and to benefit from the lessons learned ...

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The usefulness of the role of the focal points has been acknowledged as an immediate success of the Forum process. Their role and function should be strengthened both in terms of intra-government information, dissemination and coordination on the Forum as well as communication with the Forum, including on national initiatives in follow up of the Forum meeting. They should also become the vehicle for interaction with regional processes.

Regional initiatives and inter regional conferences such the AU/EU should benefit from the forum outcomes and vice versa.

The Forum is a long term process whereby we try to develop a more common global vision on migration and development. This process has some features of the other debates such as the one on trade and development in the 1980s and early 1990s, or the more recent and ongoing debate on climate change. Could it be that migration like trade becomes part and parcel of our daily life and societies over time? Now we wonder why in the previous century so much money was spent on customs control, and why we took so many years to break the trade walls. Could it be that 20 years from now we

might wonder why we were spending so many resources on controlling immigration – often with so little success? Could it be that we would some day break down fences and build bridges instead, in the realization that bridges, not fences, make good neighbours?

It is fair to say that our meeting of the last 3 days heralds a new common vision on migration and development, based on cooperation and partnership, rather than on confrontation.

Migration is more often a consequence, than a cause, of lack of development. If you draw a line in the sand, the wind will sweep it away in a matter of hours. If you build a fence through a globalizing labour market, will it withstand the pull and push forces on *both* sides? We should therefore, as we have heard yesterday morning in the general debate, address the root causes of migration and pay more attention to development.

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