

GFMD Business Mechanism Thematic Meeting Monday, 18 July 2016 – NYC (United Nations Headquarters)

Concept Note

Objectives and Background:

The July 18 meeting of the GFMD Business Mechanism will provide a forum in which business leaders can engage with governments, as well as with members of UN organizations and civil society on migration issues focused on the needs of the labour market. This is an opportunity to articulate business priorities and bring business expertise to the table in service of the mutual interest among governments, the private sector, and civil society, in promoting more transparent, effective and humane migration policies.

The GFMD Business Mechanism was launched in 2015 at the 8th GFMD Summit Meeting in Istanbul, chaired by Turkey. It aims at enhancing public-private dialogue on migration and development through both broadening and deepening the engagement of companies from around the world. The International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration (WEF GACM) coordinate the work of the GFMD Business mechanism, with its Secretariat housed at the IOE in Geneva. Links to documents providing further detail can be found at the end of this paper.

The July 18 meeting is the second to be held by the Business Mechanism. Its outcome will be a position paper to be presented at the 2016 GFMD Summit in Dhaka, Bangladesh (10-12 December). The active engagement of companies representing all regions, sizes and sectors, is key to making a comprehensive business case for migration.

The Program: Morning Plenary

Panel discussions will address various topics related to labour migration, with an emphasis on the importance of well informed and constructed migration policies to well- functioning labour markets, competitiveness and productivity. Given the political sensitivities around this subject in many parts of the world, demonstrating return on investments in labour migration is an urgent priority. This requires dissemination of best practices, as well as evidence-based regional and global data indicating benefits from labour mobility and talent flows.

Panel 1: Preliminary observations of the GFMD Business Advisory Group – how should business be involved?

Demographic trends are increasingly confronting labour markets worldwide with skills shortages at all levels. Facilitating the mobility of labour is one way to fill these gaps, and alleviate the growing global competition for skills. Removing barriers to mobility both for skilled and low skilled workers requires close collaboration between governments and employers. Mr. Austin Fragomen, Chair of the GFMD Business Advisory Group will introduce preliminary observations in this regard. Attendees will be invited to bring their insights on how business should be involved in shaping migration policies.

Panel 2: The need for international skills mobility

Skills and workforce mobility are key to global economic growth and prosperity, as well as business competitiveness. Mobility and diversity are key features of today's successful workplaces. This panel will explore ways in which closer public-private collaboration can serve to remove barriers to mobility both for skilled and low skilled workers. Supply and demand matching processes for skills as well as long-term skills development is key within any labour migration policy. Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) especially lack knowledge of overseas recruitment and capacities for company-owned training.

The Program: Afternoon Breakout Sessions:

Roundtable 1: Business Experience and Labour Mobility

Coherent migration policies that adequately acknowledge labour market and business needs are necessary, but often the views and expertise of business are absent from the policy debate. Cooperation between governments and businesses is critical to designing legal and regulatory regimes that meet a variety of needs. For example, public-private effort is important to regulations affecting the recognition of skills, qualifications, and/or professional experience. This panel will address the relationship between corporate needs and government policy in accessing talent. Participants will address the following questions:

- From the viewpoint of companies, what are the most pressing issues related to talent and skills mobility?
- How could regional and international institutions be better geared towards cooperation on transparent and coherent labour migration policies?

Roundtable 2: Access of refugees to the Labour Market

The private sector has a critical role to play in helping governments provide for immediate humanitarian needs of refugees, as well as supporting refugee resettlement and integration. Most importantly, private sector involvement in skills recognition and training programs is a key component of the long-term solution. Greater private sector involvement would add much-needed resources and enhance the targeting and efficiency of projects. A coordinated response would contribute in ways that benefit businesses, refugees, and host societies alike. Participants will address the following questions:

- What experiences do governments have in developing active labour market policies (training programs, reducing the waiting time to access work, language tuition)?
- How could the private sector's engagement in the current crisis be beneficial to the development of the currently devastated States in the long term?

Roundtable 3: Fair and ethical recruitment

Too few Governments have well-regulated systems for the legal movement of lesser skilled workers, thus putting vulnerable populations at risk of becoming victims of abusive recruitment practices. In worst cases, for example where victims incur huge debts after paying exorbitant fees to unregulated intermediaries, and/or have their passports confiscated, recruitment abuses may be tantamount to forced labour. In all cases, including those involving skilled workers, contract transparency is essential. In short, responsible employers of both unskilled and skilled labor must find ways to ensure that those they are recruiting are not subjects of

trafficking, and that they have accurate information about expectations, compensation and benefits, as well as their rights and obligations in the host country. A large number of public and private sector initiatives are working to address these issues. For example, the IOE and the International Organization on Migration (IOM) are working together to develop IRIS- the International Recruitment Integrity System. The ILO has also launched the Fair Recruitment Initiative which aims to prevent human trafficking, promote safe migration and reduce the costs of labour mobility. This Roundtable will address the question of how do we ensure better synergy and effectiveness among numerous and diverse initiatives.

Roundtable 4: Entrepreneurship, development and circular migration - success stories

Migration promotes entrepreneurship and business development in both home and host countries. Migrants send remittances that not only support families, but fund businesses, schools and training institutions. Circular migration enables migrants to acquire skills and experience abroad, and then use them to foster development at home. A big challenge is how to reduce the cost of remittances, and facilitate circular migration to enhance the contribution of migrants to both host communities and countries of origin. Participants will explore the following questions:

- How can managed circular migration encourage entrepreneurship development?
- What evidence can be brought to demonstrate the extent to which migrants have contributed to the creation of high growth firms and innovative enterprises in both their home and host countries?

Related links:

GFMD Business Mechanism at a glance: [link](#)

GFMD Business Mechanism Background paper: [link](#)

GFMD Business Mechanism Awareness meeting (Geneva): [link](#)

IOE Position Paper on International Labour Migration: [link](#)

WEF Business case for Migration: [link](#)