

## JOINT LETTER FROM THE THREE GFMD MECHANISMS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GFMD STEERING GROUP

Dear members of the GFMD Troika and Steering Group,

We, the three GFMD mechanisms – Business, Civil Society and Mayors – write today to re-affirm our strong appreciation of and commitment to the unique value of the GFMD.

Over the years, the GFMD has proven to be a results-oriented global formula on migration and development. Results from the GFMD process have far exceeded expectations and include the achievement of migration-related SDGs, the Migrants in Countries in Crisis initiative, the New York Declaration and the Global Compact on Migration.

The current moment of focusing on recovery from the global pandemic and economic crisis presents precisely the kind of challenges that the Global Forum on Migration and *Development* was built for. As with the other challenges over the years, the GFMD has to dynamically and proactively perform its role now. The importance of continued workplan and activities of the GFMD in 2021-2022 cannot be overstated, when we are continuing to grapple with the impact of the global health crisis on skills mobility and migrants. Any hiatus may put at risk the very existence of the GFMD. This would have a serious impact on global migration governance and the organic link between migration and development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the GFMD as an informal, State-led and truly multi-stakeholder process even more relevant and critical. During a crisis of such magnitude, impacting lives, livelihoods and economies globally, international cooperation is of paramount importance. Partnerships developed around shared responsibility, honesty and transparency will yield better results and the GFMD can make a substantive contribution towards achieving such goals.

A temporary “caretaker” GFMD may send the wrong signal to the global community on migration and jeopardize most of the achievements thus far. Another compelling reason for the need to continue GFMD activities in 2021-2022 is the fact that both the regional and international reviews on the GCM implementation stand to benefit from the multi-stakeholder dialogue of the GFMD.

Reflecting on the achievements made during the past years and the very good dynamic and strong engagement during the January 2021 GFMD Summit, we would like to make the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. **Identifying a new Chair** until France takes over in mid-2022 should remain an utmost priority. Each of our mechanisms stands ready to continue to invest and contribute to the process this year, to offer our full support to any potential Chair during this vital period, and to work with our respective constituencies to ensure its success.
2. **Continuity** is one of the keys to the value and results of the GFMD. During the previous 13 years, a good part of the organizational heavy lifting for the GFMD was done by the

Support Unit. As repeatedly stated, each of the mechanisms has relied heavily on the Support Unit, in preparation for the multitude of activities on a daily basis. In addition, the Support Unit has ensured the necessary liaison between the different actors within the GFMD community, and has therefore been **essential to foster new partnerships**. It has also played a role of **institutional memory** for the incoming chairs when taking over their duties. Like their predecessors, GFMD Chairs need and greatly benefit from this wealth of institutional knowledge and capacity. We hope that a GFMD support structure can be reinstated swiftly to ensure that 2021 will have a number of meaningful and critical GFMD activities.

3. **Drafting a roadmap for 2021-Summer 2022:** The three mechanisms stand ready to support the organization of GFMD events and activities in 2021 and first half of 2022. Building onto the thematic discussions in 2020, and in search of solutions for inclusive socio – economic recovery from the global pandemic, we see many areas of common ground. The GFMD can play a pivotal role in advancing these conversations. A thematic roadmap for 2021-summer 2022, which could ensure this thematic dialogue continues even in the absence of a full GFMD Summit, could also offer support to the 2022 incoming Chair, including through regional or thematic webinars, and possibly a smaller scale event in lieu of a Summit (in-person or virtual) in November or December 2021. If you are in agreement, we could make a more detailed proposal for your consideration.
4. **Continuity of the Ad-hoc GFMD Working Groups** on Balancing Public Narratives on Migration and the Impact of COVID-19: The mechanisms will continue to actively engage in the GFMD Ad Hoc Working Groups, and as **Co-Chairs** of two of the three working groups, we have also committed to actively lead this thematic work – with governments – to ensure concrete and substantive results. For example, the *It Takes A Community* campaign is already an excellent example of continuing work of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Balancing Public Narratives, and we are very excited about the plans already in their development. The working groups illustrate the unique ability of the GFMD in connecting Governments with other stakeholders for joint actions, with a ripple effect far beyond the GFMD Community. However, for the working groups to achieve their objectives, we hope you continue to engage actively in the working groups. A GFMD support structure and clarity on the 2021 workplan, will also be essential to ensure successful continuation of the working group activities.
5. **Observers status for the three mechanisms in the GFMD Steering Group:** We have welcomed the inclusion of the mechanisms in previous ad hoc deliberations and planning of the GFMD, and believe we have brought valuable contributions through our active participation. While fully respecting the State-led nature of the GFMD, which should and must be preserved, we also note that during this transition period, the three mechanisms have had limited channels of information and communication with Member States, particularly within the Steering Group. Our contribution to ensure the long-term viability of the GFMD could not be formally included. We therefore ask to be granted observer status in the Steering Group. By observer status, we mean that

governments could keep having internal deliberations among themselves. The three mechanisms would be invited for a dedicated slot or items of the agenda of the Steering Group meetings, during which information would be shared, and the mechanisms consulted for inputs and proposals from their respective constituencies. Short of that or another consultative process, we fear that the GFMD may lose part of its unique and important multi-stakeholder DNA.

As mechanisms, we believe that it is our duty, to make concrete and substantive contributions during this transition period, and you can count on our support. We are also open to considering any proposal you may make to us.

With our warmest regards.

Geneva / Brussels, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**FOR THE BUSINESS MECHANISM: Stéphanie Winet**

**FOR THE CIVIL SOCIETY MECHANISM: Stéphane Jacquemet**

**FOR THE MAYORS MECHANISM: Sophie van Haasen**