



## FIRST MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF THE FORUM

### *“Integrating Migration Policies into Development Strategies for the Benefit of All”*

(Geneva / 02 April 2009)

### Report of the Proceedings

The first FoF meeting to prepare for the Athens GFMD took place in Geneva on 02 April 2009. It attracted 139 delegates from 85 Member Governments and 19 Observers. The second meeting of the GFMD Steering Group on 01 April prepared the ground for the FoF discussion.

Athens GFMD Chairman Athanassios Nakos, Deputy Minister of Interior of the Hellenic Republic, was joined on the podium by Ambassador Anastase Scopelitis, Executive Director of the Athens GFMD, Mr. Peter Sutherland, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Migration and Development, and the other Troika members; former Chair Philippines was represented by Undersecretary Esteban B. Conejos Jr. while future Chair Argentina was represented by Ambassador Armando Dumont.

#### **I - Welcome Address** **- Statement by the Chair**

Deputy Minister Nakos opened the meeting with a welcome address, followed by statements from Mr. Sutherland, Undersecretary Conejos and Ambassador Dumont.

- A. In his welcome address, **Deputy Minister Nakos** congratulated the Friends of the Forum (FoF) for their efforts to promote the Forum as a significant platform for inter-governmental dialogue. He thanked the UN Secretary General for accepting the invitation to attend the Athens GFMD, as well as the UNSG’s Special Representative for Migration and Development, Mr. Peter Sutherland, for his continuing support and cooperation. He welcomed Argentina as the new Troika Member, as well as Spain and the USA as the new Steering Group members. He expressed gratitude to the ILO for providing the venue of the meeting.

While assuring that the Greek presidency will strive to achieve the ambitious goals of the Forum, Deputy Minister Nakos asked the FoF to strongly engage themselves and be committed to the process. He hailed the efforts by the Philippines to organize a successful second GFMD meeting. He announced that the Greek Presidency had started the preparations for the third GFMD meeting in Athens: a national team consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Interior, Foreign Affairs and other government organizations has been set up; the Athens GFMD website has been created; the GFMD Support Unit was established with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Philippines and the IOM in December 2008. Ms. Estrella Lajom Roman was elected to head this Unit and she is now based in Geneva. The Support Unit

has administrative duties that hopefully would substantially contribute to the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFMD and be a useful tool not only for the Greek Presidency, but also for future presidencies.

At the Manila GFMD, the Greek Presidency suggested an overarching theme, “Integrating Migration Policies into Development Strategies for the Benefit of All”. A survey was conducted on this proposed theme, which did not produce any oppositions. The Athens GFMD is based on the philosophy that migration is not a substitute for development, nor that development is a substitute for migration. Migration and development policies must work together and complement each other in order to improve standards of living and quality of life for all citizens throughout the world.

Among the issues that will be discussed in Athens are the root causes of migration, the impact of the current financial crisis, migrant protection so that they can contribute to development, managing migration, alleviating global poverty through new development and migration policies, etc. More importantly, migration must be based on choice rather than on necessity. To improve development and create a better world, governments will have to enhance choice, create more freedom, no matter where people reside or where they are coming from.

Deputy Minister Nakos called on all members of the FoF to contribute to the dialogue and maintain the independence of the Forum; their contribution can take many forms from intellectual to financial etc. He explained that the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFMD provisional budget has two parts - a national component estimated at 1, 285, 000 Euros and an international component estimated at 2, 668, 900 Euros – with a total estimated cost of 3, 953, 900 Euros. He thanked those countries that have already come forward to provide assistance to the Greek Chair.

- B. **Mr. Peter Sutherland** thanked Deputy Minister Nakos and the Greek Government for the support towards the Third GFMD. He said the GFMD is a unique structure with inherent challenges, linked to the UN but outside its formal structures in order to ensure a dynamic and results-oriented process. It is supported by a network of focal points, initiated by the Belgian presidency, for the purpose of identifying an individual with authority in each member state to draw together the different strands of government and ensure that the Forum can create actual results. He recalled the importance given by the former UNSG, Kofi Annan, which was committed to support the process. The present Secretary General continues to give wholeheartedly his commitment and support to the Forum, not merely by his attendance at the upcoming meeting, but also through the involvement of his Special Representative, Mr. Sutherland himself, in the process. He underscored the legitimacy given to the GFMD by the UN without the GFMD being hurt by processes or procedures that could be destructive to its practical oriented character.

Mr. Sutherland thanked future Chairs Argentina, Spain and Morocco for their continuing involvement and preparedness to step up and maintain the continuation of the GFMD process. The process is both informal and nonbinding, aimed at creating practical results, but also has the fundamental responsibility of being dynamic - moving forward with real proposals to address migration and development and their connections. Countries may differ on the pace, form or need for a connection with the UN. It is a consensual process and the majority has been overwhelmingly in favour of the approaches adopted by the Troika. In particular, Mr Sutherland recognized the efforts of the Philippines and, more particularly, former GFMD Chair’s Undersecretary Conejos. He praised the Steering Group for delivering consistent guidance; but also pointed out some challenges arising from the informality of the Steering Group, such as SG membership and the possibility of a future rotation system etc. These issues needed to be addressed soon in a reasonable way and those who have served for a time should be prepared to step down and allow others to come in, without reducing their commitment to the process.

Mr. Sutherland underscored two points about the conduct of the first FoF meeting: (a) participants should not read prepared speeches and repeat what has already been said and (b) owing to the state-led nature of the GFMD, the floor should be given primarily to Member States, without diminishing the role that UN organizations and others have played in this process. He saw a

special role for the chief representative of the GMG, since the GMG hopefully will develop as an assisting informal body bringing together relevant agencies of the UN.

Mr. Sutherland observed that the Forum had struck a balance of substance by taking into consideration the concerns of all Member States – whether origin or destination countries for migrants or whether developed or developing countries. The Forum is developing in a reasonable way, taking into account, for example, the issue of rights and what role they should play in a discussion premised upon the connection between development and migration. The Forum has proven to be a practical and constructive means of generating debate and has already spawned numerous initiatives. It must be agile, recognizing that it has never been more relevant than today in the midst of a global financial crisis.

In his conclusion, Mr. Sutherland reiterated the continued involvement of the UN Secretary General. There will be a High Level Dialogue in the UN in some years' time. He expressed optimism that the rotation of Chair is working very well. He believed that the involvement of capitals remains crucial, and the focal points from the capitals must be involved in the process, or else the practical results will not be realized out of this dialogue.

- C. **Undersecretary Esteban Conejos** thanked the Chair for the courtesy extended to the former Philippine Chair to present to the FoF the report of proceedings of the Manila GFMD. The FoF meeting was the best place to present the Report – now available in English, French and Spanish - as it is a summary of the many and varied ideas shared in the Manila meeting. The Report is in paperback form and contains useful policies and programs. Mr. Conejos paid tribute to the members of the international part of the Manila GFMD Task Force, who compiled the report on the basis of the rich discussions in Manila: Ms. Estrella Lajom Roman, Dr. Irena Omelaniuk, Dr. Rolph Jenny, Mr. Francois Fouinat and Mr. Albert Moses.

Undersecretary Conejos recalled the structure of the Manila GFMD. Three Roundtables were organized around the central theme of *Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development*, anchored in the growing understanding that the developmental impact of migration is contingent on the degree to which migrants are protected and empowered.

1. Roundtable 1 on *Migration, Development, and Human Rights* was based on the assumption that migrants are able to contribute to development if they are protected and empowered socially, economically and in terms of their basic human rights.
2. Roundtable 2 on *Secure Regular Migration can Achieve Stronger Development Impacts* provided with the immigration and emigration policies most likely to be able to achieve the empowerment and protection objectives of Roundtable 1.
3. Roundtable 3 on *Policy and Institutional Coherence* tackled the foundations of the debate, without which the objectives of Roundtables 1 and 2 could not be achieved.

The Roundtables were not only consistent with the central theme, but also consistent with each other.

The report gives three answers to the question “*What has the Manila GFMD achieved?*”:

1. It affirmed the basic GFMD tenet that migration is a potent force for development.
2. It explored a new facet of the multidimensional reality of migration, namely the link between protection and empowerment on the one hand and development on the other.
3. It demonstrated the efficacy of the informal, practical, and bottom-up approach, to generate international cooperation, especially on issues as sensitive as migrant rights.

**Roundtable 1** covered some best practices of countries of origin and host countries, including the life-cycle approach to protecting migrants, i.e. having a protective mechanism for each and every stage of the migration process. Following the principle that “Protection begins at home”, countries of origin presented as many protective devices as possible. But, ultimately, it requires complementary efforts between origin and host countries. Delegates discussed the concepts of

“shared responsibility” and “shared interest” in protecting the rights of migrants, which was “not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do”.

Roundtable 1 also took the discussion about empowerment for development beyond just remittances and investments generated by migrants and diaspora, and examined the “enabling environment” for these in both host and origin countries. Without the enabling environment, development-oriented initiatives would never germinate. In the Philippines, for example, the migration of the past 40 years or so has not yet achieved the maximum development impacts. One important way of maximizing the benefits of migration was to tap into the wealth, not just the incomes of migrants and diaspora.

**Roundtable 2** looked at how to promote regular migration against irregular migration that can disempower migrants and reduce their potential gains for development. While irregular migration is often discussed in terms of trafficking of persons and migrant smuggling, it frequently starts at home with illegal recruitment. Illegal recruitment with exploitative practices from the part of recruiters is one form of irregular migration that should be addressed before it leaves the home shores.

**Roundtable 3** looked at policy and institutional coherence, which is essential but difficult to achieve. Without it, policies will continue to be ad hoc and uninformed. Mr Conejos pointed to the list of best practices in the Summary Report.

The Summary Report also covers the discussion of the Special Session on the Future of the Forum chaired by Mr. Sutherland, particularly will regard to the new Support Unit, the links with the UN and the Civil Society.

It also offers a full report on the Civil Society meeting in Manila, in recognition of the major contribution Civil Society has made to the GFMD; and lists the 3 key recommendations of the Civil Society.

Regarding the road ahead, Mr Conejos pointed to the list of 33 proposed outcomes from Manila included in an Annex. As Mr. Sutherland had said in Manila, Member States can benefit from the outcomes of the Manila conference firstly by what they took home from the meetings. Secondly, they can tie up with each other and try to pursue the follow-up projects together. Thirdly, the concept of ad-hoc working groups could allow groups of countries to further develop a theme that benefits them all.

Mr Conejos offered a special debt of gratitude to Mr. Peter Sutherland for his assistance and support throughout 2008, and to Ambassador Regine De Clercq, his “mentor” in the Global Forum. He also thanked the previous Troika leaders, Greece and Belgium, for their unqualified support to the Chair, the members of the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum. A final tribute was made to the Philippine Ambassador and Mission in Geneva, which hosted 6 of the Steering Group meetings and 3 FoF meetings last year.

- D. **Ambassador DUMONT** thanked the Chair and Mr. Sutherland for welcoming Argentina into the Troika. He affirmed that Argentina remains absolutely committed to the GFMD. The migration issue is very important not only for Argentina, but also for the Latin American region. He mentioned a number of initiatives, such as the Latin America and Caribbean Summit, the Ibero-America Summit and a meeting on migration in El Salvador in 2010. These meetings will examine migration issues at the highest level of authorities in the region, who are striving to achieve a global vision about migration in the context of human rights. The region is also mindful of the need to consolidate and realize in practical terms the results of the GFMD meetings.

## **II. - Presentation and discussion of the revised draft Themes Concept Paper - Reference to the preparations for the GFMD Meetings in Athens**

Ambassador Scopelitis explained the rationale behind the Greek central theme, “*Integrating Migration Policies into Development Strategies for the Benefit of All*”, and the selection of the proposed Roundtable themes. To support this overarching theme and link it to the previous Global Forum meetings, the Greek Government conducted in January a survey among Steering Group members which, according to the GFMD Operating Modalities, acts as an advisory body, firmly committed to offer sustained political and conceptual support to the Chair and to the Forum.

Some 18 governments, or 60% of the Steering Group, responded. These responses were summarized and used as the basis for the draft Themes Concept Paper, discussed in the Troika and Steering Group meetings in February.

The proposed Themes Concept Paper combines and balances the priorities of the Chair in line with the objectives of the Athens Global Forum, the majority choices made in the survey responses and the comments and suggestions of the Troika and Steering Group.

Some further points and suggestions were made at the second Steering Group meeting held on April 1, which the Chair would try to accommodate in the final version of the Themes Concept Paper. These include:

1. The Continuation of the use of the terminology “regular/irregular” instead of “legal/illegal”, as established over the past 2 years of the GFMD process.
2. A more balanced approach in Roundtable 1 to take account of both benefits and challenges of migration for both countries of origin and host countries.
3. Narrow down the scope of the discussion of Roundtable session 1.3.
4. More attention to gender in Roundtable 2.
5. Further definition of the concept of inclusion, which forms part of the title in Roundtable 2.

The proposed Themes Concept Paper is supported by the Troika and the Steering Group. The final selection of themes strikes a balance at a number of levels: between migration and development; between country of origin and host country perspectives; and between government policy and the situation of the migrants. The themes build on some of the key outcomes of Manila, but also bring new issues and renewed emphasis on development planning and the inclusion of migrants in that planning.

Under the General Considerations, the Chair emphasized development as key to ensuring that migration is based more on choice than on necessity. The individual is also defined as central to both migration and development. This flags the special attention Athens will pay to human rights, both generally and specifically in Roundtable session 2.1 on *Inclusion, Protection, and Acceptance of Migrants in Society, linking human rights and migrant empowerment for development*. This will also continue the legacy of Manila on these issues.

Ambassador Scopelitis presented the Roundtable themes sequentially, drawing comments from the floor for each of the main Roundtable themes.

A. Roundtable 1, “***How to Make the Migration-Development Nexus Work for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals***”, is intended to bring development back into the GFMD equation, identify practical ways to reinforce the interaction between migration and development and look at some living examples of development planning.

1. Roundtable Session 1.1. is the Greek Chair’s flagship session, in line with the overarching theme of the Athens Forum. It approaches the migration-development issue from the angle of development planning, and how national and international development strategies can take account of migration. The implementation of such development strategies may well offer the

best testing ground for the migration-development nexus, particularly in the broader pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals.

2. Roundtable Session 1.2 continues the earlier discussions in Brussels and Manila on the role of diasporas in the development of the country of origin. It will look at how migrants and diasporas can benefit all countries that they are linked to, especially after achieving a certain degree of integration in the host country. It thus has a useful connection to Roundtable 2 on migrant integration. It would be useful to see how countries of origin and host countries can support diaspora through specific partnerships. It is hoped that the session could result in the elaboration of some useful policies and operational tools to add to the GFMD repository of good practices.
3. Roundtable Session 1.3 is proposed in order to give fuller coverage to the flagship theme. It responds to the call of Steering Group members to have a third session on the impact of the current global economic crisis on migration, but also tackles some fundamental issues, such as the root causes of migration, which could be addressed through development initiatives. It would look at the impacts of the global economic crisis on some push and pull factors of migration, and the policy responses to such challenges with the aim of strengthening communities' capacities to adapt to such crises.

### **General Discussion on Roundtable 1:**

16 governments and 1 Observer expressed general support for the proposed themes, and hailed the Greek Government's efforts in drafting a thorough, balanced and well-structured concept paper, which focuses on integrating migration policies into development strategies and reinforces the practical orientation of the GFMD (i.e. by defining practical solutions to practical and concrete problems, especially in the context of the current global economic crisis).

One government proposed that RT 1.3 look at the effects of the international financial and economic crisis on migration and how these link to development rather than start up the discussion on root causes again, which was already taken care of in other fora.

One Observer raised the need to discuss capacity-building and how to promote international cooperation in addressing the challenges of the MDGs and the link of migration and development.

One government proposed a major change to the organization of Roundtable 1, so that the 3 Roundtable Sessions are defined on the basis of the development tools that exist in countries at different stages of development, i.e., least developed countries, middle income countries and developed countries. The RT on least developed countries could discuss poverty reduction and other MDGs like health, education, capacity-building and so on. The RT on middle-income countries could focus on social and economic development in the long term, while the RT on developed countries could examine the reciprocal impact of migration on the economies of developed countries. All concerns raised in the Roundtables could be discussed as cross-cutting issues: the role of diaspora, the effect of the global economic crisis etc.

Other key suggestions made for Roundtable 1 were the following:

1. A discussion on the hidden transfer fees of remittances;
2. Mainstreaming gender in each Roundtable;
3. Narrowing down more the focus of the Themes Concept Paper;
4. A discussion on the mutual effect between integration in the receiving country, on the one hand, and development and improvement of the economic situation in the origin country on the other hand. (i.e., the relationship between the status of integration of diaspora groups and their capacity to contribute to the development of their countries of origin);
5. Need for flexible, coherent and comprehensive policies to maximize the benefits of migration, protect migrants and take their needs into account when addressing the crisis.
6. Need for a balanced approach in relation to the contribution of migration for the development not only of home countries, but also, of host countries too.

7. Reconciling the concept of migration as a choice and not as a necessity depends on where you stand. From the perspective of developed countries or countries of destination, migration appears more as a possibility to pick and choose among migrants, which might lead in turn to brain drain, especially of highly qualified migrants. But, from the developing countries' point of view, migration can look more like a necessity rather than a choice.
  8. Climate change as an issue that impacts upon small developing island states in the Pacific, which is also a push factor in migration.
  9. Addressing the imbalance that may exist between the benefits received by home countries and host countries: the need for positive discrimination to benefit the most vulnerable countries whose inhabitants have to leave out of necessity and not by choice.
- B. Roundtable 2, ***“Migrant integration, reintegration and circulation for development”***, complements the development orientation of Roundtable 1 by focusing on migration policies that can secure the situation of migrants in both host and home countries, in this way strengthening their potential contribution to development. The focus is on migrant “integration” in the broad sense of inclusion, access and socio-economic stability, reintegration when migrants return home, and the policy environments that support and enable migrants and their families to contribute to development after they return home.
1. Roundtable Session 2.1 looks at the situation of migrants in the host country, and how those who are included, protected and accepted in their host societies may be better able to contribute to development in both host and origin countries. The session recognizes that all persons living and working abroad need a certain level of social and economic support and empowerment to be able to contribute to development. For this reason, the term “integration” was paraphrased to mean “inclusion, protection and acceptance of migrants”.

Some good integration practices already exist for both permanent and temporary migrants, which can offer useful lessons to other interested countries. By focusing on the situation of migrants in the host country this session offers a natural complement to session 1.2 on diaspora. It also builds on the discussion in Manila on protecting and empowering migrants for development.

2. Roundtable session 2.2 looks at the situation of migrants who return home, either as a one-off event, or repeatedly as part of a more circular pattern of migration, and the policy environment that can support and enable them and their families for personal and broader development outcomes. Policy strategies to attract migrants and diaspora to return home, or circulate themselves or their skills or capital between host and home countries, are often the same strategies used to ensure that returning migrants reintegrate in ways that enable them to use their new skills and assets productively back home.

The session could continue and expand on the discussion begun in Brussels and Manila on circular migration. Some pilot circular migration programs have commenced, in accord with the European Union's agenda on circular migration.

## **General Discussions on Roundtable 2:**

Four governments expressed comments (in addition to those that alluded to RT 2 in the RT 1 discussion). One government expressed concern over the phrasing of the term “integration” and the risk of limiting the scope of “protection” to economic support only. It was stressed that migrants must enjoy human rights because they are universal and indivisible. A good practice was cited, where one government extended to its migrants the civil right to participate in municipal elections. Two governments raised the need to address the problems of transit countries, and the burden caused to such countries. Another government suggested that session 2.1 tackle what policies would be most useful in the field of inclusion, protection, and acceptance, to increase the developmental impact of migrants in host countries.

- C. **Roundtable 3 “Policy and Institutional Coherence and Partnerships”** will continue as a mainstay of the GFMD to underpin the work of all other thematic Roundtables. A principal function of the Roundtable should be to assure the evidence-based nature of the GFMD. The session will attempt to carry forward in concrete ways the efforts in Brussels and Manila to identify: first, the data and research policy makers need in order to develop coherent policies; second, how to make more coherent and linked-up the fields of development and migration policy-making and to promote institutional arrangements and partnerships; and, third, the contribution that regional and inter-regional processes and fora can make to promote such coherence.

All governments that responded to the survey favoured the continuation of the discussions of Roundtable 3 on Data and Research, Policy and Institutional coherence and regional and inter-regional processes and fora. Two sessions were decided.

1. Session 3.1 on *Policy and institutional Coherence – Latest Data and Research Findings* will focus the discussion more on concrete steps been taken by governments since the last GFMD and the identification and dissemination of best practices on policy and institutional coherence.
2. Session 3.2 on *Regional and inter-regional processes and fora* will review progress made by regional and inter-regional processes and fora in linking migration and development concerns more productively.

To avoid repetition of last year’s discussions, the work of Roundtable 3 sessions will tie more closely to Roundtables 1 and 2.

### **General Discussions on Roundtable 3:**

Three governments submitted their comments (in addition to those that alluded to RT 3 in the earlier discussion). The representative from Thailand announced that his government will host a meeting of the heads of the regional consultative processes in Bangkok on 4-5 June 2009 as a follow up to Roundtable 3 session in Manila, the outcome of which will be reported on in Athens. A delegate from Latin America requested the inclusion of the Puebla Process in the discussion on the regional and interregional processes. Another delegate gave his government’s view that Roundtable 3 should focus on evidence-building, to address concerns raised in Manila.

### **III. Reference to the preparations for the GFMD Meetings in Athens**

The Chair concluded from the reactions that the Themes Concept Paper was endorsed. The Chair announced that the necessary adjustments based on comments would be done in order for preparations to move forward.

The next steps would be the forming of government teams to prepare the Roundtable sessions, develop the background papers and organize the actual session panels. The session teams should principally consist of governments interested in the theme, able to contribute their experiences and good practices, and prepared to partner with other governments in the discussion. Non-governmental experts could be an important addition to the teams because of the broader evidence and analysis they bring to the discussion.

The Chair introduced the Roundtable Coordinators: Mr. Romeo Matsas for Roundtable 1, Dr. Irena Omelaniuk for Roundtable 2, and Dr. Rolph Jenny for Roundtable 3. The special session on the *Future of the Forum* will be coordinated by Mr. Francois Fouinat. He also mentioned two other members of the international component of the Athens GFMD Task Force: Ambassador Regine De Clercq, who provides the Greek Chair with general intellectual input and Mr. Albert Moses, who helps with coordination issues, funding and liaising.

The Roundtable Coordinators will guide and work with the government teams. As with the previous GFMD meetings, each team will have two co-leaders representing both the developed and developing

country perspectives. While there is no limit on team membership, it is more efficient to have a small core team of active governments and a larger group of team members that contribute with their input and advice on substance.

All Roundtable background papers will need to be completed and submitted for review to the Taskforce by around mid-July. The Athens GFMD Task Force aims to post all background papers on the GFMD website 3 to 4 weeks before the Athens meeting on 4-5 November. Session teams are strongly encouraged to cooperate with non-state experts in preparing the background papers, which should be brief, offer an overview of current global knowledge and work in the thematic areas, and stimulate a results-oriented debate in November.

As the team work commences in the coming weeks, the Chair will send out guidelines on the format of the background papers, and the role of the chairs and panel members for each session.

The Chair called on interested Friends to come forward and take part in the preparations of the Roundtables, emphasizing that only through a strong and combined commitment can this global process move forward. Where there are more than 2 contenders for the same chairmanship, the Chair requested that the matter be sorted out among the contenders, taking into account the need for geographical balance and balance between developed and developing country representations.

The Chair named some governments that have already indicated their interest in participating, as co-chairs or team members. Mexico and the Netherlands offered to co-Chair RT Session 1.2, while Argentina, Spain and the UAE were interested in co-chairing Roundtable 2.1. Regarding Session Team membership, France expressed interest in RT 1.1 and 3.1, the Netherlands in RT 2.2, Mexico in RT 2.2, while Indonesia, Morocco and Norway were interested but had not yet decided on a session.

Lastly, the Chair reminded the FoF that the Athens GFMD 2009 website was already on air and its address is [www.gfmdathens2009.org](http://www.gfmdathens2009.org).

Following are the main comments made by participants with regard to the Athens preparations:

1. A request from several countries to include Arabic as an official language of the Forum.
2. A request by one delegate for Russian interpretation, citing the global nature of the GFMD, and the need to follow the standards applied in the United Nations.

In response, the Chair pointed out the limitations of the GFMD. It is not an international organization and is an informal process. Even if the geographical groupings would want to bear the cost of interpretation, this would result in polyphony and possibly cacophony. Having all languages would run counter to the spirit of togetherness that the GFMD is trying to promote.

3. One delegate commented that insufficient time was given in order to consult the capital on possible contributions to sessions.

The Chair assured delegates that the Taskforce would wait for a fortnight to receive expressions of interest, until mid-April.

4. Mexico confirmed its interest in co-chairing RT 1.2 with the Netherlands and interest in being a member of RT 2.2 on reintegration and circulation; and announced that Mexico will be hosting an international meeting in July or August as a preparation to the Roundtable, in coordination with Netherlands.
5. Lastly, the Chair stated that the revised Themes Concept Paper will be circulated, and a copy will be made available on-line as soon as possible, to allow interested Friends to reflect on it and decide about their possible intellectual contributions towards the Forum.

#### ***IV. GFMD Budget and fund-raising***

Deputy Minister Nakos reconvened the FoF meeting after lunch for a discussion on the Athens GFMD Budget. An indicative budget had been provided earlier, to cover the costs and activities that would ensure the proper organization and conduct of the 3rd GFMD. This preliminary draft contained 2 parts: a national element, to be financed by the Greek government, which amounted to EUR 1, 285, 000 or USD 1, 746, 000. This included the national contribution to the Civil Society, overall organizational and office costs, etc.

The second part of the budget, which amounted to EUR 2, 668, 000 or the equivalent of USD 3,652,000, included costs of preparatory activities such as transportation and accommodation costs for representatives from developing countries; meals and catering for all participants, rental of the conference centre, interpretation and translation of all documents, international consultants' fees; and unforeseen expenses. Some of the expenses, of the international part of this budget, such as the rental costs for the preparatory activities and the cost for the conference centre itself, as well as meals and catering, will be covered by the Greek government.

Deputy Minister Nakos announced that some costs have already been covered, for instance the costs of the international taskforce. Australia, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the IOM have already committed resources toward this direction. He called on other possible donors to come forward and contribute, in order to strengthen the co-ownership of the Forum and preserve its independence. These contributions or donations can be made in either intellectual or financial ways. But the Greek Government counts on the contribution of the FoF in covering transportation, accommodation costs of delegations from developing countries, as well as translation and interpretation costs, and costs related to preparatory activities.

Some governments expressed their intent to contribute financially to the organization of the Athens GFMD. These included:

1. Spain - no specific amount indicated;
2. Netherlands – no specific amount indicated, but requested a downsizing of the budget;
3. Sweden – earmarked for participation of developing countries;
4. United Kingdom - costs of travelling for participants from developing countries;
5. Denmark – EUR 100, 000 for participation of delegates from least developed countries;
6. Norway – no specific amount indicated; also for the participation of delegations from developing countries.

A number of delegates expressed concern over the size of the proposed budget. Several delegates asked for a more realistic budget plan, considering, among other factors, that international travel to Greece will be less expensive than it was to Manila. Another delegate opined that the budget should reflect the informality of the GFMD, to keep it at a working level.

In reply, Deputy Minister Nakos explained that they expect more participants in Athens than in Manila, and that, unlike the Philippines, there are no public conference venues suitable for a GFMD meeting.

After the comments from the floor, Mr. Sutherland made a plea to other developed countries present in the meeting to also make contributions for the development and future of the Forum. He reminded the Friends that the GFMD has avoided from the beginning an institutionalized system of financing. To keep going, however, it is necessary for others to contribute, not just the usual suspects who have been doing so for so long. He pointed out that, like other countries, Greece is also going through financial difficulties. The contributions being requested are not enormous. Hence, he urged the Friends to consider with their capitals the possibility of making a financial contribution to the Athens GFMD, in particular, and to the future GFMD meetings as well.

Thanking Mr. Sutherland for his intervention, Deputy Minister Nakos assured the Friends that the draft budget is the maximum budget as it takes into account maximum costs and ways could be found to further reduce it.

## ***V. Manila GFMD: Evaluation of Meeting; Follow-up of its outcomes***

The Chair prefaced the discussion on the outcomes of the Manila GFMD by requesting the Friends to submit in writing their assessment of the themes, preparatory procedures, format of discussions, and the outcomes of the GFMD meeting. There was insufficient time to hold an evaluation in the FoF meeting itself.

The Chair then raised the issue of ad-hoc GFMD working groups, referring to the Operating Modalities, which provided for the Steering Group to create ad-hoc thematic Working Groups.

The first proposal was made by Undersecretary Conejos on the establishment of an ad-hoc Working Group on *Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development*. The second proposal was drafted by Dr. Jenny and concerns the creation of an ad-hoc Working Group on *Data, Research, and Policy Coherence*. Both proposals were presented to the Steering Group the day before, but no consensus emerged from the meeting. While nobody spoke against the principle of establishing such ad hoc working groups, the proposals needed some further clarification. It was agreed that further informal consultations would take place. At some point, the Chair would know the outcomes of these informal deliberations and would relay them to the Steering Group and the Friends.

The Chair explained his vision for such ad-hoc Working Groups. First, they should be ad-hoc, i.e., working groups established for a limited time; and, second, they must be task-oriented. It is not the intention of the Greek Chair to seek to establish permanent or long-term structures that live beyond its Chairmanship. If such ad-hoc Working Groups were successful, it would be up to future Chairs to consider, or reconsider, the renewal of their mandate. As task-oriented groups, their terms of reference should be endorsed and should be precise.

One government delegate stated that the Working Groups were the clear outcomes of Manila and not just the ideas of certain individuals. Recalling the discussions in Manila, member states thought in those sessions to come up with some concrete ideas that could be followed up by Working Groups. In addition, the GFMD is a state-led process; hence, any number of States may decide to organize something among themselves, organize it, pay for it, and make it their own outcome as a result of a GFMD meeting. This is especially true in the context of Mr. Sutherland's call for clear results out of the discussions in Manila. A two-day meeting will not give such results, but a Working Group could come up with something. The delegate announced that his government is prepared to finance some of the studies to improve the preparation of migrants for their migration. Something on this was tried with another government last year, which did not work out, but could be tried again this year and reported on in Athens or later in Buenos Aires.

One delegate opined that it would be extremely important to differentiate between a follow-up task and preparations for the next roundtables. In some cases, links can be made between the follow-up outcomes in Manila and the preparations of Roundtables in Athens, but this is not clear with the Working Groups, particularly the one proposed on Protecting and Empowering Migrants. The proposal must be revised, as it approaches the issue of migrant rights narrowly compared to what was discussed in Manila. It was suggested that the 2 proposals be studied carefully, and allowed to evolve, without any formal endorsement from the FoF. For this purpose, Mexico, UAE, Ecuador and the Philippines just started their discussion on the working group on Protecting and Empowering Migrants.

## ***VI. The Civil Society Meeting and engagement with the GFMD***

Ambassador Scopelitis reminded the FoF that the Greek Government entrusted the organization of the Civil Society Days to the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation. He then called on the representative of the Foundation, Mrs. Marianna Moschou, to give a brief update on the preparations of the Civil Society Meeting in Athens.

Mrs. Moschou reported that the Onassis Foundation is undertaking the organization of the Athens GFMD Civil Society days very seriously. She thanked the Greek Government for its technical and financial support, and expressed hope that their positive cooperation with the Greek Chair and the Athens GFMD Taskforce will prove productive. She also expressed appreciation for the assistance given by the previous Civil Society Days organizers, the King Baudouin Foundation and the Ayala Foundation.

The Athens GFMD Civil Society preparations are now in full swing. The following have been achieved:

- a) The establishment of a National Organizing Committee;
- b) The creation of a website (see [www.gfmd2009.org](http://www.gfmd2009.org)). An online dialogue has just started and the first topic of discussion are the effects of the global economic crisis on migration;
- c) The development of a list of roundtable themes for the Civil Society Days (CSD), based on the 2 previous GFMD events, and the role of the Onassis Foundation on how to chart a future path for the Civil Society Days to effectively address migration and development challenges, especially in view of the economic downturn;
- d) Communications with Civil Society organizations around the world, including all members of the previous advisory and expert committees;
- e) The establishment of the International Advisory Committee – a body that will be in charge of shaping the Agenda and identifying the best possible delegates to represent the Civil Society next November. Its composition will be posted on the website very soon.

The Onassis Foundation intends to embark on the following activities as well:

1. The first Advisory Committee Meeting in Athens will take place in 24 April 2009. One fundamental objective of this meeting is to promote an enhanced form of dialogue between governments and Civil Society.
2. To expand on the idea of a government and Civil society interface - an experiment successfully started in Manila. The Chairs of the CSDs Roundtables could be present as observers at the Roundtables of the government meeting. It is also suggested that a limited number of CSDs representatives be allowed to participate.

FoF delegates were asked to share any ideas on how the interaction could be improved, the dialogue enriched, and transparency guaranteed through frank, in-depth, and open exchange of ideas. Online input could be given directly to the CSDs organizers or through the Chair within a certain time period, to help finalize the modalities of the interface.

3. To broaden the representation of Civil Society, the CSDs organizer is looking at how the diasporas, development organizations and the private sector could be included in Athens. For example, while it is clear that cooperation between the private sector and governments of origin and destination is critical, the private sector still needs to be better integrated into the GFMD process, e.g. through direct participation in the CSDs or a parallel process of consultation between businesses and governments etc. Among the common themes of such a consultation are recruitment practices, migrant integration, circulation policies, training in countries of origin, language barriers, etc.
4. A possible workshop organized this summer by IMEPO (Hellenic Migration Policy Institute), to bring together business leaders with policy makers and experts. Among the issues that this workshop could tackle are:
  - a) how governments and the private sector can work together to improve education and training systems in countries of origin;
  - b) responsibilities of the private sector and destination governments;
  - c) impacts of the economic crisis on migration; and
  - d) how the private sector can better engage with the policy makers on migration and integration.

As the CSDs organizer, the Onassis Foundation aims to include specific recommendations supported by best practices and research, so that governments can make effective use of them in deciding their respective policies. They have already raised the funds for the aforementioned workshop, which could help set the research agenda in the migration and development field.

Mrs. Moschou underscored the fact that they share the same principles and agree on the necessity to give a more qualitative dimension to the dialogue. She would like to hear from the FoF on how governments have engaged with Civil Society on the issues to be addressed in Athens. She encouraged the FoF to contact the CSDs organizers, send their ideas and post feedback on the CSDs website.

In opening the floor for comments, the Chair said the Friends could give their views on the preparations of the CSDs.

Nine governments gave their comments. One delegate agreed to commit his government to immediately interact with the CSDs organizer on the preparations his government will make to engage the Civil Society locally and prepare for the Athens meeting.

A number of governments welcomed the idea of broadening the participants' base in the Athens CSDs to include the private sector. Other ideas were likewise welcomed to develop a closer CS relationship with the governmental part, such as having more experts participate in the Roundtables, and attend the government meetings as observers, subject to available facilities, and wider participation of CS in the elaboration of the Athens GFMD agenda. At the same time, other governments appeared less inclined to a wider participation of Civil Society to the governmental meeting as they saw the GFMD as a state-led process.

**Mr. Sutherland** opined that, to date, the Civil Society had been singularly unsuccessful in making a real contribution to the debates of the GFMD. Whether this is a structural or a process-related problem - such as how to select the individual NGOs that should participate, the NGO community could and should make a real contribution. If properly selected, the CS participants could provide expertise which could contribute significantly to the debate of the government meeting. To date, there have been a lot of rhetorical or generalized statements, which are not very helpful to the process. The CSDs organization should result in concrete, specific and effective recommendations that could form the basis of discussion among member states. Rules of engagement should be established for the NGOs, to ensure that they are aiming for the same concrete results that governments are aiming for.

Another delegate made a 3-point suggestion on how to structure the CSDs: (a) hold the NGO meeting a number of months before the actual government meeting so that the outcome of the NGO meeting can be used to prepare documents and discussion of the government meeting; (b) develop a national process for working with NGOs and Civil Society by consulting with them and asking them for inputs to the government papers, e.g. through a workshop; and (c) organize an interface like the one held in Manila for one afternoon, on each of the 3 Roundtables.

The delegate disagreed with Mr. Sutherland's suggestion for constructive participation in the sessions themselves. His statement was seconded by four other delegates.

Another useful suggestion was made to establish a web forum or some other means to enable governments to have background notes on CS inputs well before the GFMD.

The Swiss delegate explained the two points contained in the Swiss proposal. The Platform for Partnerships was intended to better involve Civil Society in the GFMD. The Swiss were not proposing that the Chair of the Civil Society Forum should also be the Chair for the government meeting. Instead, the Chair of the CS Forum should be invited to the government discussions, either as an observer or as a participant, without redefining the state-led character of the GFMD. Civil Society is a natural partner when governments implement ideas and projects in the field of migration and development; and the participation of Civil Society would strengthen the aim of the GFMD to address practical issues and not just make political statements.

Asked by one delegate about the modalities for the selection of the Civil Society delegates (i.e. should the host country decide or will there be consultations with the countries where the NGOs hail from?), Mrs. Moschou explained that the selection will be handled by the International Advisory Committee (IAC). At

its first scheduled meeting on 24 April, the IAC will set the selection criteria. But it will be the responsibility of the organizing committee together with the international advisory committee, as has been done before in Brussels and in Manila.

## ***VII. Any Other Business***

### ***- Establishment and operation of the GFMD Support Unit***

The Chair narrated the steps taken in establishing the GFMD Support Unit. Following endorsement of the creation of the Support Unit at the Manila GFMD, the IOM Director General and the then Philippines Chair signed a MOU on the hosting of the Support Unit on 15 December 2008. On the same day, the Troika selected Miss Estrella Lajom Roman as Head of the Support Unit. She assumed her duties in early February 2009. The Support Unit is now operational, undertaking administrative tasks and helping the Chair. Hopefully, with the passing of time, it will prove to be a valuable tool, not just for the Greek Chair, but for future Chairs as well. It is too early for any evaluation of the Support Unit which could be done in Athens in November.

Asked by a delegate whether the budget of the Support Unit (SU) has already been covered and for how long, the Chair answered in the affirmative, saying that the SU budget has been covered for one year.

Another delegate raised some practical issues:

- a) When would the permanent website, or at least the permanent entry of different websites for the GFMD, be ready?
- b) What is the situation with the recruitment of the second person for the Support Unit?
- c) Is there already a bank account for the Support Unit, to which governments could transfer their contributions, not only for the GFMD in general, but also for the funding of some activities of one of the Working Groups?
- d) What will be the process of the evaluation of the Support Unit?

The Chair stated that the GFMD website was now up and running. He also confirmed that there will be an Administrative and Financial Assistant for the Support Unit, which selection should follow a very transparent and open procedure. He likewise announced that there is a bank account which is dedicated precisely for the Support Unit. However, regarding the transfer of contributions through the Support Unit, the Chair explained that there was some confusion. Preparations had already begun 8 or 9 months before the Support Unit came into effect. The Greek Government passed a law regarding contributions to the Forum, which is difficult to retract and may assuredly not be breached.

Furthermore, the Chair argued that there has to be an evaluation, inasmuch as the Support Unit is a new entity. At the meeting in November, the Chair will give a report on whether or not the Support Unit has been useful. However, the parameters for the evaluation have not yet been defined.

A delegate argued that, in order to be able to evaluate the Support Unit, we have to make it work in the first place. He mentioned his willingness to assist the Chair in setting up the evaluation either based on the SU's terms of reference or by starting a little group to think about the evaluation process, in order to present a report in November. He underscored the fact that the establishment of the Support Unit was a decision taken by the FoF, which must be taken seriously.

Another delegate opined that there was not much transparency in the setting up of the "Support Unit" and expressed hope that more information on its activities would be given. He reminded everybody that the agreement in Manila was to have a very light Support Unit, but his impression sometimes was that a new institution is being built. He wanted to make sure that this is not the case. He thought that the small unit would be extremely useful as a focal point, as a place to refer to, which can support the Chair. He felt that the main reason for the creation of this unit was the failure of the Global Migration Group (GMG) to coordinate. In this regard, he asked the Chair if help was being received from the GMG. Otherwise, the situation must be taken back to the General Assembly, which passed a resolution asking the GMG to support the process. He noticed that the International Taskforce had grown, but he did not see any representative of the GMG in it.

**Mr. Sutherland** echoed the disappointment with the GMG, although UNDESA has been consistently supportive to the process. DESA was represented at the meeting by Ms. Henning from New York, who reiterated its willingness to have a marketplace set up. He also recognized the active participation of UNITAR. He gave a guarantee that the Support Unit will remain a small unit that will conduct purely administrative, as opposed to policy, matters.

Mr Sutherland clarified that the Support Unit's use has been confused to some extent by the Greek Presidency setting up its own administrative operation in advance of the creation of the Support Unit. Firstly, the Greeks created their own bank account under a law which requires all GFMD monies to go through it. Secondly, a website was set up by the Greek Presidency. Some discussions were held earlier in the day about maximizing the positive relationship between the Support Unit and the Presidency. He expressed hope that the Support Unit, which to his mind is currently effectively led, will be of great help, not merely to Greece but to future presidencies

Another delegate stated that they have always been in favour of a small-scale unit responsible for various financial and administrative tasks, independent of the Presidency, but closely linked to the GFMD process. He said they were delighted to have Ms. Estrella Lajom Roman, who is very familiar with the work of the GFMD, as the Head of the Unit. He echoed the point raised earlier about the need for feedback on the Support Unit's usefulness for the presidency. He proposed to have a document at the next FoF meeting, that could go further into the work of the Support Unit.

The Chair said that it is difficult to undertake an appraisal when the Support Unit has only been operational for less than 3 months and expressed hope that by, next July, the Steering Group and FoF meetings, will have more information on the topic of the evaluation.

#### ***- Participation of the Global Migration Group (GMG)***

UNCTAD intervened as the previous GMG Chair. The representative recounted their contributions both at the Brussels and Manila GFMD in terms of comments, inputs to various background papers and by acting as Rapporteurs. At their last GMG Meeting at the Heads of Agency level, they had invited Undersecretary Conejos and a representative from the Greek Mission in Geneva to give a briefing on the Athens GFMD. He reiterated the readiness of GMG members to contribute to the GFMD as requested and through their respective areas of mandate.

On the suggestion to meet with the GMG, particularly UNITAR as it resumes the presidency of the GMG in June, the Chair remarked that he had no objection to meet with the various organizations that form the GMG.

The representative from UNITAR then took the floor and shared its plan as head of the GMG from early June. UNITAR will propose to review some of the objectives of the GMG. UNITAR will propose to work on the global financial and economic crisis and its impact on migration policies; enhance understanding of the contribution of international organizations, more particularly, GMG members, to migration issues; and increase the level of collaboration within the GMG in order to articulate common positions and elaborate more substantive contributions to the GFMD, or create a momentum conducive to producing solid partnerships between GFMD and other stakeholders, including Civil Society, migrant organizations, and the private sector.

The UNDP delegate took the floor on behalf of the European Commission/ United Nations Joint Initiative on Migration and Development, which is being jointly implemented by a number of GMG members (UNDP, IOM, UNHCR, UNFPA and ILO). It is an example of how the UN system, in partnership with the European Commission, is being mobilized to undertake concrete initiatives in the field of migration and development. With funding of EUR 15 million, this major initiative will implement a number of activities, in particular a fair on migration and development, along the lines of the market fair in Brussels, and similar to what the Swiss delegation has suggested to better mobilize Civil Society organizations.

Finally, the ILO representative pointed out the contributions of GMG member agencies to the preparations and the conduct of the GFMD, first in Brussels and then in Manila:

1. For the Roundtables: texts for the background papers and comments on papers sent by the Roundtable Coordinators: ILO was active in this regard because the defense and protection of the rights of migrant workers is inscribed in the ILO Constitution;
2. For the Civil Society Forum: ILO, for instance, coordinated a Roundtable at the Civil Society Forum;
3. On logistical matters in the Philippines, such as the translation of papers into the different languages in which they were published.

***- Tentative Schedule of GFMD Meetings for 2009***

Before closing the meeting, the Chair pointed out that a tentative schedule of meetings for GFMD 2009 was distributed earlier. He announced that the Chair would try as far as possible to stick to this schedule. Additional meetings may be called if the need arises for reasons beyond the Chair's control.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the FoF for their constructive presence and expressing the hope that he would see them all at the next FoF meeting on 2 July 2009.

The MEETING adjourned at 1700 hrs.