



## **WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED IN GFMD?**

**Speech delivered by The Honorable Esteban B. Conejos Jr.,  
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Chair of Manila GFMD 2008**

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Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen.

I wish to commend the Greek Presidency for the excellent preparations of our meeting.

When the GFMD started three years ago, our energies were directed at ensuring that the GFMD becomes a living, vibrant and viable process.

Today, as we stand in the threshold of the third meeting of the GFMD, we pause and reflect on the question which I believe is foremost in our minds – what have we achieved so far in GFMD?

I think that after three meetings, we have the elements of an answer.

First, we have achieved a consensus of understanding on the fundamental postulate of the GFMD which is, that migration, if properly managed, can exert a positive impact on development.

Second, from a consensus of understanding, we are moving slowly but inexorably to a consensus of action.

From the many examples of cooperation among states which is the hallmark of the GFMD process, we have constructed a model of the policy and program environment conducive for migration to work for development.

In Brussels, we focused on labor mobility and the economic benefits derived from remittances and diaspora resources.

In Manila, we shifted the debate back to the migrant himself by shining the spotlight on the human face of migration.

In Athens, we underscore the importance of mainstreaming migration policies in development strategies for the benefit of all.

We look forward with much anticipation to Mexico to give the GFMD a fresh, sailing wind.

And, let us not forget the glue that binds the GFMD together, i.e., our ability to dialogue and cooperate with one another. In this regard, I recall the definition which one of the delegates in Manila gave to GFMD, and I quote, “The GFMD is about governments informing other governments of what they are doing, and how they are doing in cooperation with each other, the civil society, international organizations, and other stakeholders.”

So, even after we return home from Athens, let us continue the dialogue. In our interconnected world, we are only a click away from each other.

My friends, we have two exciting days ahead of us.

We have a powerful agenda. We have prepared for this moment for ten months. And, above all, we are in Athens, the birthplace of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Pray, may I ask, what can be a more exciting moment than now?

Thank you very much!