

## **Roundtable 3: Policy and Institutional Coherence and Partnerships**

### ***Session 3.2: Regional and Inter-regional Processes and Fora***

#### **Background Paper**

*(Original version: English)*

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**Governments of Australia, Belarus, Ecuador, France, Indonesia, Moldova, Thailand  
and United States**

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## **Executive Summary**

Regional and inter-regional processes and fora for dialogue and cooperation on migration issues have been discussed at the meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in 2007 and 2008. Since then, some significant developments have occurred in relation to Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) and Inter-regional Fora on Migration and Development. These developments can help to (i) strengthen their roles and enhance exchange among them; (ii) further enhance the inter-action between RCPs and the GFMD; and (iii) provide some ideas on how the non-binding GFMD discussions and outcomes may be translated into action.

The first development is a global meeting of RCP chairing governments and secretariats that took place in Bangkok in June 2009 (based, inter alia, on a recommendation of the 2008 GFMD Manila). The meeting allowed representatives of the RCPs around the world to share experiences and exchange views on the value and advantages of facilitating regional dialogue and cooperation on migration through RCPs. Participants also examined the benefits and means for future exchange among RCPs. Lastly, because the Bangkok meeting was the first time that RCP representatives worldwide had gathered since the GFMD was established in 2007, it provided the first-ever opportunity for RCPs as a group to reflect upon possible interaction between the RCPs and the GFMD (cf. Annex I).

The second development is a study of RCPs currently underway in order to better understand the role they play in the governance of migration. The study will examine the impacts and outputs of the principal RCPs, looking at each RCP's own purposes and objectives as a basis against which to make the assessment. It will also identify the contributions of RCPs more generally to effective migration management. The results are intended to allow RCP participants and other groups and fora dealing with migration to benefit from the experiences of RCPs and the lessons they have learned regarding effective practices for inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration matters. The results of the study will be reported during RT 3.2.

In a number of inter-regional fora and RCPs further significant developments have occurred, including, inter alia, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development where 59 African and European countries met in Paris in November 2008 and agreed on a Three-Year Cooperation Programme; the South American Conference on Migration; the Colombo Process; the Abu Dhabi Dialogue; the Bali Process; and the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM) and its important last meeting held in Damascus in June 2009.<sup>1</sup>

## **1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

### **1.1 Rationale**

Governments and the international community at large are seeking better overall governance of migration at national, regional and international levels. If well managed, migration can be safe, orderly and mutually-beneficial for countries of origin and destination and individual migrants and their families. Furthermore, comprehensive approaches to migration governance can help ensure that the migration phenomenon contributes to policy objectives in related areas such as development, trade, human rights and human security. In focusing on the migration and development nexus, the GFMD furthers understanding of inter-linkages between these policy domains and assists in identifying concrete and practical means to realize the full economic, social and human development potential of migration.

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<sup>1</sup> Government representatives will present brief statements on these developments, for further discussion in the session.

A key element of efforts to improve migration governance are measures to improve inter-state dialogue and cooperation. It is in this context that regional and inter-regional fora for dialogue and cooperation on migration have figured prominently on the agendas of the 2007 and 2008 GFMD meetings, specifically at Roundtable 3.3 on “Regional Consultative Processes and Development: Advancing Cooperation” in Brussels and Roundtable 3.3 on “Regional Consultative Processes, Inter-regional Consultative Fora and Regional Organizations and Economic Integration Processes at the Interface of Migration and Development” in Manila.

Those GFMD Roundtables contributed greatly to raising awareness of the role and impact of regional and inter-regional fora in the context of migration and development. For instance, it was revealed that a number of RCPs and inter-regional fora and conferences have over recent years included development considerations in their migration agendas, in addition to issues related to migrants’ rights and human security. While some RCPs do not specifically incorporate migration and development in their agendas, they are engaged in areas that have had a significant impact on the ability of migration to effect positive development outcomes (e.g. labour migration, another priority area addressed by the GFMD). At the same time, several recent inter-regional initiatives have from the outset focused on the link between migration and development and have produced action plans that propose a comprehensive approach to addressing the development impact and consequences of migratory flows.

Consistent with the desire of the Greek GFMD Chair to build upon the previous GFMD meetings and to avoid repetitive discussions, this paper and the session will focus on recent significant developments, specifically (1) the global meeting of RCP chairing governments and secretariats in Bangkok in June 2009; (2) the study of the impacts and outputs of RCPs; and (3) the experience of inter-regional fora on migration and development and RCPs that are of particular relevance for the GFMD.

## 1.2 Definitions

As mentioned above, there are a number of regional and inter-regional fora for discussions on migration around the world, many of which also address the links between migration and development.

These fora can be grouped into three general categories:<sup>2</sup>

- Regional Consultative Processes on migration (RCPs);
- Inter-regional consultative fora; and
- Regional organizations and economic integration processes.

RCPs are State-led informal groups made up of representatives of States in a given region, or like-minded States in one or more regions with common migration interests. Each RCP also has partners or observers, which may include additional States, regional/sub-regional bodies, and/or international organizations. It should be noted that some RCPs might be more accurately described as “sub-regional” and others as “inter-regional” given the range of participating States.

RCPs were created specifically to address migration issues and do not necessarily focus on the migration-development nexus. They operate outside of any institutional framework and are characterized by repeated interactions as opposed to one-time events. Participants in RCPs come

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<sup>2</sup> Some fora cannot easily be placed into one of these three categories. The categories are nevertheless useful in helping provide an indication of the types of fora existing around the world that provide an opportunity for inter-state dialogue on migration (and development).

together in pursuit of informal and non-binding dialogue and information exchange, often resulting in coordination and in some instances coherence on migration issues. RCPs also provide a framework for capacity building and technical assistance.

Inter-regional consultative fora, which bring together countries of origin, transit and/or destination from different regions of the world, are distinct from RCPs in that they tend to be more formal, including with respect to their outcome documents and action plans, and usually meet at Ministerial level.<sup>3</sup> They provide a valuable venue for sharing information and experiences and exploration to find common solutions in the area of migration and increasingly also the migration-development context.

The fora in the third category are regional and sub-regional organizations and economic integration processes. As distinguished from RCPs and inter-regional fora, these more formal groups and institutions have been established for reasons unrelated to migration.<sup>4</sup> They generally seek to promote regional economic development through enhanced economic integration. As a means of deepening economic integration and development, some have created or are working to create regional free movement regimes for nationals of participating States, with a view toward permitting residence and work for nationals of all participating States throughout the collective territory. Furthermore, some have created their own bodies or fora to address migration issues.<sup>5</sup> Thus, those more formal organizations and processes that have added migration to their agendas can provide yet another venue for regional cooperation on migration, in addition to RCPs.

This paper primarily focuses on the first category, RCPs, as well as an example of a significant development in an inter-regional consultative forum on migration and development. The contribution that regional organizations and economic integration processes make to migration and development policies, while not addressed in this paper, are nonetheless noteworthy.

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<sup>3</sup> Examples of frameworks for inter-regional consultations on migration, and in some cases on migration and development, include the Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development and its “Three-Year Cooperation Programme” adopted in Paris in November 2008; the Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development (FIBEMYD); the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM); the European Union (EU)-Africa Summit; the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP); the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement; the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), including its Meetings for Directors General on Management of Migratory Flows between Asia and Europe; the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)-EU Summit; the EU-Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) Summit; and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries. Others exist but it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an exhaustive list.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of regional and sub-regional political organizations and/or economic integration processes include the EU; the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR); the Andean Community of Nations; the Organization of American States (OAS); the Central American Integration System (SICA); the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); ASEAN; the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); the African Union (AU); the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD); the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); the East African Community (EAC); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA); and the League of Arab States. Others exist but it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an exhaustive list.

<sup>5</sup> For example, the Heads of the CIS Member States established the Council of Heads of Migration Bodies of the CIS Member States; SICA led to the Central American Commission of Migration Directors (OCAM) and a special commission for Ministers of Tourism and Migration Directors; and an initiative of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat led to the Pacific Immigration Directors Conference (PIDC). Others exist but it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an exhaustive list.

### 1.3 Assumptions

The GFMD could learn from the experiences of the many successful regional and inter-regional processes, and *vice versa*.

Furthermore, regional and inter-regional fora – particularly those engaged on migration and development issues – may find that certain of the good practices and practical solutions identified at the many GFMD Roundtables could inform their own discussions and efforts. In addition, some RCPs and inter-regional fora may even be interested in helping implement certain GFMD recommendations and follow-up actions. In this sense, the GFMD and regional and inter-regional fora could be mutually-reinforcing.

While the objectives and degree of formality of the various regional and inter-regional processes and fora vary, the government policy-makers and practitioners involved should have information about the discussions and outcomes of the GFMD, and *vice versa*. Information exchange between the different regional and inter-regional fora and the GFMD is welcomed.

### 1.4 Objectives and key propositions

As a States-led, informal and non-binding dialogue on migration and development-related matters outside of any institutional framework, the GFMD -functioning at the global level- shares many similarities with RCPs and inter-regional fora on migration and development. In light of this, the GFMD and interested RCPs and fora could learn from each other about good practices and lessons learned in pursuing this type of dialogue. Furthermore, many of them could share with the GFMD their experiences with moving from non-binding dialogue to action at the national, bilateral and/or regional levels.

Roundtable 3.2, through this paper and the presentations and discussions in Athens, will inform participants about the new knowledge that has been gained regarding the important role played by RCPs and inter-regional fora on migration and development in facilitating multilateral dialogue and cooperation on migration, including the sharing of best practices and lessons learned. This new knowledge, which *inter alia* results from the aforementioned global meeting of RCP representatives in Bangkok and a study examining the impacts and outputs of RCPs, can also help inform efforts to translate the non-binding discussions at the GFMD to practical and concrete actions, while retaining the GFMD's essential informal and non-binding character.

## 2. POLICIES AND PRACTICES

As mentioned above, since the discussions at the Manila 2008 GFMD Roundtable 3.3, some significant developments have occurred in the realm of RCPs and inter-regional fora. These have resulted in a better understanding of RCPs, including their good practices and lessons learned relating to constructive inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration. The discussions at Athens Roundtable 3.2, which will build on this background paper, will seek (i) to strengthen the role of RCPs and inter-regional fora in the context of the GFMD and enhance exchange amongst them; (ii) to further enhance the inter-action between them and the GFMD; and (iii) to see how the government expertise of RCPs and inter-regional fora in transforming non-binding dialogue into action could also serve as a model for the GFMD's non-binding dialogue and its stated purpose of leading to concrete impacts and outputs.

## 2.1 Global meeting among RCPs

A “Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs)” took place in Bangkok on 4 and 5 June 2009.<sup>6</sup> The meeting was hosted by the Royal Thai Government in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with funding from the Governments of Australia and the United States of America. The chairing governments and secretariats of the world’s principal RCPs had only come together once before, in the framework of the April 2005 meeting co-organized by the former Global Commission for International Migration (GCIM) and IOM. Consequently, the 2009 meeting was the first of its kind to occur since the GFMD was established in 2007 and thus it provided the first-ever opportunity for RCPs as a group to reflect upon possible interaction between the RCPs and the GFMD. The convening of this meeting furthered the GFMD recommendations made in Brussels in the context of Roundtable 3.3 and Manila in the context of Roundtables 2.2 and 3.3 that such a meeting be held.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of the Bangkok meeting was to draw together representatives from the major RCPs around the world to share experiences and exchange views on the value and benefits of facilitating dialogue and cooperation on migration and capacity development through RCPs. RCPs shared information about their respective activities and achievements, including in the area of migration and development.

The discussions were dynamic and interactive, with the participants showing great interest in listening to and learning from one another. Participants clearly acknowledged and validated the important role that RCPs play in migration management. They expressed great appreciation for the opportunity for interaction among RCPs and explored means for future cross-fertilization. They also discussed *linkages between RCPs and the GFMD*, and identified expertise that RCPs could offer to the GFMD.

Concerning these linkages between the GFMD and RCPs, participants were reminded that the Brussels and Manila GFMD meetings each held a roundtable session on regional consultations on migration and were provided with a list of the GFMD recommendations and proposed follow-up actions related to RCPs. They were also informed of the topic of this RT 3.2. The yearly emphasis by the GFMD on RCPs was seen as recognition of their important role in facilitating inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration.

Participants discussed how the work of RCPs could be properly represented at the Athens GFMD, particularly RT 3.2. Participants felt that the Bangkok meeting represented a significant development in the RCP realm that should inform the Athens discussions. Furthermore, they observed that as an informal, non-binding dialogue on migration and development matters outside of any institutional framework, the GFMD shares many similarities with RCPs. In light of this, participants thought that the GFMD could learn from RCPs about good practices and lessons learned in convening this type of dialogue. In particular, many RCPs could share their experience with translating non-binding dialogue into action at the national, bilateral and/or regional levels without the forum itself becoming binding or formal. “Action” in this context did not necessarily mean “projects” – in fact, some RCPs do not have an operational element. It could mean for instance the direct or indirect impacts on laws, policy or practice that result from participation in an RCP.

Participants in a few RCPs hoped to establish a common position of the RCP’s participants that could be put forward at the GFMD. In certain regions, RCPs had expressed an interest in making a

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<sup>6</sup> The list of RCPs represented in Bangkok figures in Annex I of this paper.

<sup>7</sup> The subject of Roundtable 2.2 was “Managing Migration and Minimizing the Impacts of Irregular Migration”.

statement at the GFMD on behalf of their region to other regions, with a view to having their perspectives heard at the global level.

While several participants emphasized that RCPs provide a valuable mechanism for regional cooperation and that they do not want them to be coordinated by or subsumed into a global process, a two-way information flow between the RCPs (on one hand) and the GFMD (on the other hand) was generally seen to be beneficial. It was noted that RCPs could be better informed of the discussions at the GFMD, for instance through dissemination of the Report of the GFMD proceedings. One participant suggested that RCPs might be able to help implement certain GFMD recommendations.

The specific outcomes and recommendations resulting from the discussion on GFMD-RCP linkages were the following:

- the discussions and outcomes of the Bangkok “Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs)” should feed into RT 3.2 and the Summary Report of that meeting should be made available to GFMD participants;
- the RCPs could share their expertise and lessons learned relating to informal, non-binding dialogue on migration at the GFMD, particularly with respect to translating dialogue to action;
- the Report of the GFMD could be made available to the RCPs for their information and possible consideration; and
- the upcoming study of the impacts and outputs of RCPs (described below) should feed into RT 3.2.

The Bangkok meeting resulted in several further outcomes, which are described in Annex I of this paper. For the Summary Report of the meeting, please consult the IOM website at [www.iom.int/2009globalrcpmeeting](http://www.iom.int/2009globalrcpmeeting) or the GFMD website at [www.gfmdathens2009.org](http://www.gfmdathens2009.org).

## **2.2 Study of RCP outputs and impacts**

While most RCPs have been in existence for at least five years, and some considerably longer, there has not yet been a comprehensive study of their outputs and impacts. Such a study is key to better understanding the role that RCPs play in the governance of international migration. At the first-ever global meeting of the chairing governments and secretariats of the world’s RCPs co-organized by the former Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) and IOM in 2005, participants discussed their views on the value of conducting external evaluations of RCPs. No external evaluations existed, and participants expressed a degree of scepticism about such an undertaking, particularly given the uniqueness of each RCP; their nature as non-binding processes; and their flexible character whereby priorities evolve to meet the changing interests and needs of their participants.

The issue of evaluation of RCPs was raised again at GFMD RT 3.3 in Brussels, and the following recommendation resulted: “To encourage a systematic evaluation of RCPs’ achievements and impacts in the fields of migration and development in order to promote a better understanding of the contributions of RCPs to managing migration for development.” Professor Randall Hansen (University of Toronto, Canada) is currently undertaking a study of the outputs and impacts of RCPs, with the support of IOM and funding provided by the MacArthur Foundation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Additional information on the study is provided in Annex II; the study will also be addressed by Professor Hansen during the 3.2 session.

### **2.3 Example of inter-regional fora on migration and development: Second Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development, Paris, 25 November 2008 <sup>9</sup>**

The first Ministerial Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development held in Rabat in July 2006 was followed up by a second ministerial conference in Paris, on 25 November 2008, under the presidency of France. 59 States were represented, including 32 African States and the 27 member States of the European Union, as well as the European Commission.

A Steering Group responsible for the preparation of the conference included France, Italy, Spain, Burkina Faso, Morocco and Senegal, as well as the European Commission and the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS). The preparations focused on the Global Approach to Migration promoted by the European Union since 2005, which builds on dialogue and partnerships between countries of origin, transit and destination in the areas of legal migration, combating illegal migration and the link between migration and development.

This conceptual framework significantly contributed to strengthening the EU dialogue with third countries, notably African and Mediterranean countries, and progressively defines policy orientations shared by all countries.

The Ministers and High-level representatives of the 59 countries, as well as the European Commissioners responsible for migration issues, development and external relations, agreed on a Three-Year Cooperation Programme which includes more than 100 recommendations for more effective action in the three areas of the Global Approach to Migration and, in particular, for the purpose of strengthening the focus on the link between migration and development.

The European Union-Africa partnership on ‘Migration, Mobility and Employment’, adopted at the EU-AU Summit in Lisbon in December 2007, is currently being implemented with the support of the Paris conference Steering Group and takes full account of the Paris conference conclusions.

## **3. SUGGESTIONS AND PROPOSALS TO POLICY MAKERS**

### **3.1 Remaining/emerging issues and challenges**

Given the range of fora around the world dealing with migration matters, it is a challenge to devise effective methods for exchange of information, good practices and lessons learned among them. Nevertheless, there is considerable potential to benefit from interaction on specific migration topics as well as organizational and working methodology.

In addition, one challenge faced by the GFMD is how best to benefit from the wealth of experience and activities of the various regional and inter-regional fora, particularly those active in the migration and development area.

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<sup>9</sup> Key aspects of the Second Euro-African conference conclusions and the Three-Year Cooperation Programme are reflected in Annex III. For the full conference report please see <http://www.eu2008.fr>.

#### 4. QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE ROUNDTABLE 3.2 SESSION DISCUSSIONS – POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

##### 4.1 Questions

- **What can be learned from the experiences of RCPs and other regional and inter-regional migration dialogue fora that would help to strengthen future arrangements for inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration and development? Also, how could the RCP approach of translating non-binding dialogue into action serve as a possible model for the GFMD?**
- **What is the best means for information exchange between the GFMD and RCPs, other regional bodies and inter-regional fora; and among RCPs, other regional bodies and inter-regional fora, to support and enhance development of best practices?**
- **How best can outcomes of such dialogue be articulated and disseminated for the possible use and benefit of others?**
- **To what extent have RCPs and other regional and inter-regional fora helped promote internal policy coherence within governments at the national level, i.e. by bringing together relevant ministries to prepare and coordinate positions? What are the key challenges and opportunities in this regard?**

##### 4.2 Possible outcomes

*The “possible outcomes and ways forward” that follow are offered for consideration and discussion. They build on the questions posed above and are offered with a view towards facilitating the work of delegates participating in RT 3.2 to identify practical and action-oriented outcomes. They are not intended to preclude different or additional outcomes.*

- a) Explore ways to create linkages between the GFMD and interested RCPs and inter-regional fora.
- b) Identify mechanisms for communication between the GFMD and interested RCPs and inter-regional fora.
- c) Explore how the approach by RCPs and inter-regional fora of translating non-binding dialogue into action could serve as a model for action-oriented GFMD outcomes and related follow-up by interested GFMD participating governments; and assess whether RCPs and/or inter-regional fora would be interested in individually and/or collectively supporting implementation of any of the recommendations and follow-up actions emerging from GFMD meetings.
- d) Consider mechanisms for GFMD to share information on RCPs and inter-regional fora, for example by creating a special section on the GFMD website, taking note of the recommendation made in Manila to rely on the GFMD website for ongoing information exchange on the activities of such fora that have migration and development on their agendas. Such information would be voluntarily provided to the GFMD Support Unit for

posting on the GFMD website. This would help ensure that basic information on interested RCPs and inter-regional fora, including links to their own websites (if they are interested and where they exist) could be found in one common location. A link would also be created to the enhanced IOM website section on RCPs.

e) The GFMD should take note that:

- it was agreed during the Bangkok Global Meeting of RCPs to hold meetings among the chairing governments and secretariats of the principal RCPs on a regular basis, i.e., approximately every two years;
- it was agreed in Bangkok that enhanced information sharing among RCPs that have migration and development on their agenda (or are interested in adding it) will contribute to the sharing of good practices and lessons learned.

## Annex I

### **Other relevant issues addressed at the Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs)” held in Bangkok on 4 and 5 June 2009**

#### *Introduction of RCPs to one another*

Approximately 65 people participated in the meeting, composed primarily of representatives of the Chairing Governments and/or Secretariats of the principal RCPs around the world (listed in [Annex D](#)). The RCPs introduced themselves and explained their respective structures, thematic priorities, objectives and goals, as well as challenges they faced. It became clear that while each RCP is unique, they share several common characteristics, which can be summarized as follows:

#### Purpose:

- they were formed specifically to address migration issues;
- they facilitate dialogue on migration, primarily among States but also involving regional and/or international organizations and in some cases civil society; and
- they promote sharing of information, experience and good practices in migration management.

#### Operating principles:

- they operate as processes outside of formal institutional frameworks;
- they are owned and led by States;
- they respect the prerogative of each sovereign nation to manage migration;
- their discussions are confidential, informal and non-binding;
- their substantive focus is flexible, according to the participating Governments’ priorities; and
- they operate according to a principle of equal footing for all participating States, regardless of factors such as size, influence and wealth.

#### *Thematic focus, including treatment of migration and development issues*

Most RCPs deal with a variety of migration topics. The discussions confirmed that some RCPs have defined migration and development as a priority area; other RCPs have held discussions on this topic on a more *ad hoc* basis; and some RCPs have not yet dealt with it. A few participants believed that their RCPs might focus more on this issue in the future.

While some RCPs have had meetings and workshops on migration and development and a few had undertaken migration and development-related operational activities, questions remain regarding the extent to which this topic is addressed at a practical level. It was noted that challenges to integrating migration and development into RCP agendas persist, including because of the complex nature of the migration and development linkages and because historically ministries with responsibility for development have not participated in RCPs. Furthermore, several participants expressed the view that migration and development should not artificially be forced onto the agendas of RCPs. It would be a decision for the participating States in each RCP to determine whether and when migration and development might be a priority.

#### *Challenges*

One challenge faced by RCPs of particular relevance to this RT 3.2 is how RCPs can avoid duplication with other fora and identify possibilities for enhancing appropriate linkages and synergies between RCPs and other fora. Duplication can be a problem vis-à-vis other RCPs, for

instance in a region with two RCPs that have some overlap in terms of “membership” and perhaps also topics of discussion. Duplication of the work of regional organizations and regional

trade/integration regimes that are not primarily focused on migration yet have included this topic in their agendas, as well as duplication of the work of inter-regional fora addressing migration issues, can also be concerns. One concrete suggestion was that RCPs could offer their expertise with migration issues to assist regional organizations and regional trade/integration regimes that are not primarily focused on migration with their efforts to develop and implement migration-related objectives and policies.

Another challenge mentioned by representatives of several RCPs was how to ensure that their RCP remains relevant, effective and practically-oriented. This challenge could often be addressed at least to some degree through the flexible, evolving nature of RCP agendas. In addition, several RCPs had undergone or were undergoing what their representatives referred to as periods of reflection, reorientation, and/or revitalization, which included changes in priorities, objectives and/or organizational frameworks. Many participants remarked that the knowledge they had acquired during the Bangkok meeting regarding the approaches, structures, experiences and lessons learned of other RCPs would assist the efforts of their own RCP to improve and evolve.

#### *Contributions of RCPs to more effective migration management*

Participants clearly expressed their conviction in the value of RCPs. Several key contributions of RCPs to effective migration management were identified. First, RCPs are seen to play an important role in **facilitating inter-state cooperation** on migration-related issues, both within and outside of the RCP framework. They do so by (i) fostering common understandings of migration realities; (ii) helping States identify common interests; (iii) building trust among participants and confidence in the feasibility of inter-state cooperation; and (iv) forming networks of counterparts. The confidential, informal and non-binding nature of RCPs and the recurring interactions among RCP participants is credited with making this possible.

The type of cooperation sought within the RCP framework depends on the RCP. It may be limited to exchange of information on migration legislation, policy and practice and sharing of good practices and lessons learned. In the case of some RCPs, there is also an intention for the RCP to facilitate policy coordination and/or operational cooperation.

RCPs also have a **capacity building function**. It was observed and generally agreed that RCPs contribute not only to building the capacity of developing countries, but also that of developed countries. They do so by facilitating the sharing, collection and/or dissemination of migration information and migration data. Furthermore, they provide a venue for sharing good practices and lessons learned in migration management. Many RCPs have held trainings and workshops specifically aimed at building capacity to manage migration, involving a range of topics. Through workshops or other methods of consultation, some RCPs have developed capacity building tools, many of which can also facilitate and support inter-state cooperation.

Many participants also emphasized that RCPs **help improve policy coherence** at the national level and tend to result in harmonization of migration and/or asylum policies across the participating States. Some RCPs have a specific objective to contribute to policy coherence – for example, two RCPs in Europe support their participating States in aligning their national migration laws, policies and practices with the European Union *acquis*.

Furthermore, two RCPs in Africa have linked their policy coherence objectives with, and helped contribute to, the migration positions and policies developed by the AU and/or relevant regional economic community. Even where policy coherence is not one of the RCP's specific identified goals, participants observed that a degree of *de facto* policy harmonization often results from the sharing of information, good practices and lessons learned that takes place in RCPs.

### *Cross-fertilization among RCPs*

Participants showed strong interest in increasing interaction and information exchange among RCPs. They identified a number of valuable insights or ideas gained from the global gathering of RCPs – such as other RCPs’ experiences regarding methods of organizing themselves, carrying out their work and achieving their goals – which could help inform and strengthen their own RCPs. They noted that exchange among RCPs could be particularly interesting (i) between RCPs located along common migration routes, (ii) between RCPs that explore similar migration topics, (iii) between RCPs in different regions as a way of facilitating inter-regional consultations.

To advance future cross-fertilization among RCPs, participants:

- agreed that consideration should be given to inviting representatives of other RCPs to their respective RCP meetings in appropriate situations;
- agreed to hold meetings among the chairing governments and secretariats of the principal RCPs on a regular basis, i.e. approximately every two years;<sup>10</sup> and
- agreed that the existing section of the IOM website dedicated to RCPs ([www.iom.int/rcps](http://www.iom.int/rcps)) is a valuable tool and means of sharing information among RCPs, and asked that it be made more robust and include more information (while linking directly to RCPs’ own websites where they exist).

### **RCPs represented at the Bangkok Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of RCPs<sup>11</sup>**

- the Söderköping Process (a/k/a the Cross-Border Cooperation Process) in Central Europe;
- the Budapest Process in Europe and Central Asia;
- the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM or Puebla Process) in North and Central America;
- the South American Conference on Migration (SACM);
- the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM Dialogue) in Europe and North Africa;
- the Migration Dialogue in West Africa (MIDWA);
- the Migration Dialogue in Southern Africa (MIDSA);
- the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Regional Consultative Process on Migration (IGAD-RCP) in Eastern Africa/Horn of Africa;
- the Inter-Governmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants (APC);
- the Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia (Colombo Process);
- the Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin and Destination in Asia (Abu Dhabi Dialogue);
- the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime in the Asia-Pacific region;
- the Inter-Governmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC) including countries in Europe and North America as well as Australia and New Zealand.

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<sup>10</sup> At that time, participation could be reviewed to determine whether new RCPs have come into being that should be included.

<sup>11</sup> The only RCP that was invited but regrettably not represented was the Regional Ministerial Conference on Migration in the Western Mediterranean, known as the 5+5 Dialogue on Migration.

## **Annex II**

### **Study of RCP outputs and impacts**

The study will look at each of the principal RCP's own purposes and objectives as a basis against which to assess their respective outcomes and impacts, rather than imposing external notions of what RCPs "should" achieve. Recognizing the differences in migration circumstances and challenges between the regions, as well as the unique character of each RCP, the study is not intended to measure the RCPs against one another or to identify a "model" RCP. Rather, it seeks to identify elements that contribute to and hinder the ability of RCPs to achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

Furthermore, the study will consider the extent to which RCPs more generally contribute to, and are successful in:

- creating networks of individuals involved with migration matters;
- building trust among participants and confidence in the possibilities for inter-state cooperation on migration;
- increasing understanding of migration phenomena;
- building capacity to manage migration; and
- shaping migration governance (understood as the national, regional and international policies and practices that govern migration).

The study will involve review of RCP documentation such as Declarations, Action Plans, meeting reports, and similar texts. It will also include interviews with selected RCP stakeholders and other experts, which will be conducted on a confidential basis.

The results of the study are intended to allow RCP participants and other groups and fora dealing with migration to benefit from the experiences of RCPs and the lessons they have learned regarding effective practices for inter-state dialogue and cooperation on migration matters. When the study is completed, its results will be made available on the IOM website at [www.iom.int/rcps](http://www.iom.int/rcps) and the GFMD website at [www.gfmdathens2009.org](http://www.gfmdathens2009.org) and will be reported during RT 3.2.



### **Annex III**

#### **References to the Conclusions and Three-Year Cooperation Programme of the 25 November 2008 second Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development in Paris**

The Declaration and Action Plan of the First Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, held in Rabat on 10 and 11 July 2006, had laid the foundations for a close partnership between countries of origin, transit and destination located along the West African migratory route. At the core of this partnership were also integrated the three tracks of the "Global Approach to Migration" addressing migration flows under all their aspects and enabling a balanced dialogue for the benefit of migrants and of the countries participating in the Euro-African Process on Migration and Development, i.e. synergies between migration and development; organisation of legal migration; and combating irregular migration.

The 2008 Second Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, by adopting a Three-Year Cooperation Programme, embarked upon a new phase aimed at clarifying the areas of action and defining concrete measures intended to be implemented from 2009 to 2011. This Three-Year Cooperation Programme provided the basis for multilateral and bilateral actions to be taken by the countries and institution involved in the Euro-African Process on Migration and Development, focusing on the following areas:

- Strengthening the synergies between migration and development
  - Supporting employment and social and economic development policies for the countries of origin
  - Promoting migrant remittances and their use for development purposes, having full regard to their private nature
  - Promoting development by strengthening the links between diasporas, countries of origin and destination countries
- and
- Facilitating the emergence of legal migration opportunities
  - Strengthening institutional cooperation and information on legal migration
  - Establishing a comprehensive approach to the fight against irregular migration
  - Improving the quality of civil status registries and combat documentary fraud
  - Strengthening the control of borders, the fight against migrant smuggling and the fight against trafficking in human beings, without infringing on the competences of States
  - Improving readmission and promoting voluntary return.

For more detailed information please see <http://www.eu2008.fr>.