REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF THE FORUM SESSION

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For those of who were not at this session, let me say as I said there that it was extraordinarily rich and I cannot do justice to it in a few moments. But I will try to mention some of the salient highlights:

The continued relevance of the working modalities of the GFMD and the way that it has worked with maximum flexibility, was widely accepted as being correct. The fact that it is a state-led, voluntary, non-binding and informal forum therefore remains part of its future for this time.

A number of thematic issues were raised. There was a strong call for the GFMD to continue engaging with the 2030 agenda; that it can play a particular role as it did in the formulation of that agenda to include migration in ensuring that the various aspects of the agenda which has now been adopted, become practical expressions of the will of states to use migration in a way that is consistent with the principles of the UN, the project of development, and the development of, in particular, countries in crisis and difficulty.

There was an endorsement of an idea to form an ad hoc working group on the role of the GFMD in the implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. This group is formed, I would suggest, under the guidance of the incoming GFMD Chair Bangladesh and the GFMD Troika. It should start its work as soon as possible, at the Friends of the Forum, I would say. It was also suggested that the GFMD could engage with the work to develop indicators related to the 2030 agenda; that this could be a useful contribution to making it a living commitment.

There were calls for the GFMD to enhance its work on the development aspects of the migration and development nexus, but that's reflected in the points that I have just made, and to make further efforts to engage development actors and not merely migration actors, and to bring both together.

There was widespread support for the GFMD to continue to engage with the issue of forced migration. I personally would go further than that and say that the absolutely vital distinction between refugee and non-refugee migrants, whilst it must be retained to ensure the sanctity of the commitment to offer protection and asylum to refugees, should not blind us to the fact that we also have obligations in human rights terms and in every other sense, to those who fall into the very broad description, which seems to be everybody else, described as economic migrants, and this must require the development of new instruments and mechanisms including visas, including dealing with issues which are central, like the family, and allowing family reunion and humanitarian visas and rotational circulation visas and so on.

The root causes of migration, however, remained a topic which was considered to be very important during the discussion of the future of the forum, as well as bridging humanitarian and development cooperation, which was raised as an issue as well.

Gender dynamics of migration was also emphasized by a number of delegates, who called for attention to this particular issue, and the issue of gender will remain an important issue, just

as the issue of family reunion and so on as an important element in society and migration will remain important.

Institutionally, the work of the Turkish Chair to intensify cooperation with other stakeholders, which has been so exemplary on the part of the Turkish Chair, was supported. The incoming Chair was encouraged to continue on the good partnership with the GMG and its agencies. The GMG remains a work in progress. It should play, as it has, in various respects, with various components of it, an important supportive role in terms of the intellectual formation and conclusion of debates in the GFMD.

The Turkish Chair was commended for bringing migration into the agenda of the G-20, a partnership that the GFMD should build upon.

The gradual progress of the dialogue with civil society was supported, and should be continued, while maintaining the state-led format of the GFMD. That has been a gradual progress, and a progress which needs to be maintained, not least because civil society is such an important element in articulating the fundamental values that underpin the whole migration debate.

The working arrangements with the private sector proposed under the leadership of Switzerland and Turkey were presented. They were presented without objections, and I am looking forward to its implementation under the Bangladesh Chairmanship. I think we can assume therefore its endorsement by acclaim, so to speak.

The continued work in the 2030 agenda, which has already been referred to, presents an opportunity for building on all the partnerships that have been formed.

Regional dynamics were mentioned, and the importance of recognizing, whilst this is a global forum, that a lot is happening regionally and inter-regionally. Shortly we will have the Valetta conference on the 11th of November, between Africa and Europe, which should be an interesting and positive example of how inter-regional debate can be developed at a time of crisis. We will see.

The need to improve cooperation with regional organizations and consultative processes were mentioned in this context.

I was also encouraged to hear that the reinforcement of the Support Unit -- this tiny unit which has done so much to facilitate this meeting – is taking place, including the recruitment of a project officer. This will be of great value to the incoming Chair.

The progress on the long-term financing, as well as the communication and outreach of the Forum, were also addressed; and this work will continue.

With the forbearance of the Chair, and I am not going to address you for long, I have done too much perhaps in this conference already, but this is the last time I will speak because I have to leave after this contribution.

I would like to take this opportunity, and I am going to do it more rapidly than it deserves, to thank Turkey. We have a formula, I have discovered, in all UN-type relations, that there is an interminable list of Thank you's; sometimes they are deserved, sometimes one must question

whether they are. In this case, I want to emphasize that the Thank you which I wish to express is deserved. It has been reflected in the commentary of a lot of people, so I would like on your behalf to thank the Turkish Chair and the membership of the Turkish Team for all they have done -- Mehment, in particular, for leading it. A round of applause here might be appropriate.

I am going to abuse the privilege I have for two more seconds, in one case to thank somebody who is here and who is no longer going to be engaged with us, as he and his organization have been from the beginning. Many of you may not even know the name. John Slocum of MacArthur Foundation. The MacArthur Foundation has been a steadfast and significant financial supporter of this whole process from the beginning. They have done so solely out of the mandate that MacArthur has, which is to do good for people, and they have seen this from the beginning as an example of something that is positive and cannot be criticized. So we have hopefully conformed with their mandate and responsibility. They have gone further than they have gone in the past in terms of extending that support beyond the normal rules applied by MacArthur for a very prolonged period, and they have kept us going at times when it was not easy to keep going. So I would like to thank John Slocum very much for what he has done.

Finally I have already referred to the Support Group. There is another final and very personal Thank you I would like to express to my own team. Frankly, I am the puppet on the end of a string, who gives voice to the ideas and articulates the concepts that are worked on with me by my own team. I would like to thank Francois, Gregory, Justin and Pam in particular for all their help over the years. We are all trying to do it largely in our own time as best as we can. Thank you very much indeed.