



Meeting of the Friends of the Forum

Report of the GFMD Mayors Mechanism

Delivered by Sophie van Haasen - GFMD Mayors Mechanism Coordinator

22nd of July 2020

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, partners:

I have not formally introduced myself yet to many of you: my name is Sophie van Haasen, the newly appointed coordinator of the GFMD Mayors Mechanism. It's an honour to be with you all today, albeit virtual, and hope to meet you soon in person.

As you know, the GFMD Mayors Mechanism is jointly steered by UCLG, MMC and IOM. Its primary objective is to ensure meaningful engagement with local authorities in the GFMD process.

I'd like to give you a quick glance of the GFMD Mayors Mechanism activities the past few months, and to give you our sense of next steps and priorities the coming months.

Firstly, I'd like to react to the presentation made by the WG on COVID-19:

As COVID-19 has hit the world with speed and devastation, mayors, governors, and local administrations found themselves on the frontlines of response and recovery efforts. Many city networks have established opportunities to share expertise, but amongst cities there is also strong recognition of the GFMD being a unique space to come together with different actors, to look at what works, what doesn't and what we can do better in the future. This need was also reflected in the regional consultations. For example, we've heard multiple references to the Migrants in Countries in Crisis framework, in particular whether it is fit for purpose to respond to the pandemic. Also, cities have called for better international coordination to ensure inclusive response and recovery efforts and believe there would be interest to explore possibilities to assess and discuss MICIC from a local perspective for example.

This is to say that the GFMD Ad Hoc working group is an exciting development in which we'll participate with energy and commitment.



Ad Hoc Working Group:

A few words on our work co-chairing the Ad Hoc Working Group on Public Narratives.

We are honoured to be co-chairing this WG together with Canada and thank you Alexandra for sharing updates earlier in the meeting. Let me echo her call that the WG is very open to receive your active input and contributions to the WG activities.

When we talk to cities, they often remind us that migrants are first and foremost neighbours and fellow citizens in the city: working to leave no one behind is often a pragmatic response to their daily realities. Working to balance narratives is part of that response, but cities will be more effective when they work with others to learn, scale up and connect. This work is timely especially in light of COVID, which touches entire societies, meaning that narratives need to be imbedded in a sense of inclusive communities, down to the level of neighbourhoods. We will be connecting closely to the Ad Hoc Working Group on Covid-19 on our work going forward.

Regional consultations:

Over 60 city representatives joined us in the regional consultations. In mobilising them we've worked closely with existing regional city networks, which was key in order to build regional connections and continuity.

The regional consultations were a first time in many ways: they were the first efforts to organise preparatory discussions at regional level, covering the entire globe, first time these happened in a fully multi-stakeholder way and first time this all happened virtually. There are important lessons to be learned, for example on how to maximize participation of the full GFMD community. We would be very interested to hear from governments and the Regional Consultative Processes about their assessment and hope there is space this year to evaluate this important new approach.

From our side and taking into account these 'first time' elements, we felt the discussions were rich and substantive and we hope future Chairs will continue applying a regional lens to their activities. We also see particular value in the regional discussions as important work leading up to the Regional Migration Review Fora starting in Autumn, and we very much look forward to see both processes connect and feed into each other. We are also hoping that the multi-stakeholder nature of the GFMD will be an example and a lever for local governments to engage in the Regional Reviews.

You can access the city statements on the GFMD website, and we're drafting regional outcome reports with specific key messages under each theme, which we'll be uploading on our website over the summer. (website will be online shortly)

Let me zoom in on partnerships:

We've welcomed the focus of the Chair to steer the preparatory activities this year towards the concrete formation of partnerships. We felt the regional discussions included ample



ideas for joint work with local authorities. For example, we've heard the opening from regional organisations for a more structured engagement with local authorities, we've heard the willingness and need to work on access to localized data on migration, and we've heard very specific proposals or needs to improve national – local coordination to effectively protect migrants. Many of these ideas resonate with the thematic priorities in the Call to Action which we launched last year, which we will use to leverage concrete partnerships towards the Summit, and we'll be working with LaMP and others going forward. We do hope this process connects to the preparatory work of the roundtables, to ensure coherence and engagement the coming months.

GFMD SUMMIT AND LOGISTICS

We thank the Chair for having shared further details about the roadmap towards the summit. Building onto the important step taken by the Ecuadorian Chairmanship, our activities and vision for this Summit will entail a shift from a separate Mayoral Forum to a strategic and focused approach to include local authorities into GFMD Summit discussions. We look forward to working with the other mechanisms, the Chair's Team and the GFMD Support Unit to plan for Abu Dhabi.

Our budget currently covers for the coordinator costs and for bringing a number of city representatives to the GFMD Summit. We also call on national delegations to consider covering the participation of mayors and local governments at the Summit. Depending on concrete partnership opportunities – we will be seeking to fundraise for additional capacity. Understanding the difficulty to plan in the current context, we would welcome more information on a possible cut-off date on when a decision on the dates of the Summit will be taken.

Thank you for giving us the floor,