



International Organization for Migration Chairmanship Report 1 July – 31 December 2013

I. Introduction

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) held the chair of the Global Migration Group (GMG) from 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013. This was the second time IOM was in the chair of the GMG, following its chairmanship from January to June 2007. The period from July to December 2013 was dominated by activities surrounding the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) and the post-2015 UN development agenda. Under IOM's chairmanship, the GMG contributed substantively to both these processes, through policy recommendations, awareness-raising and advocacy efforts. It was also an opportunity for the GMG to consolidate its positions, further improve internal coherence by concluding its internal review, and enhancing interaction and coordination with external partners.

II. Workplan, objectives and thematic focus

In preparation for its chairmanship, IOM issued a workplan in spring 2013, which was distributed to the GMG working level by the then GMG chair, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), on 24 April 2013. The workplan was structured around three objectives which were aligned with GMG terms of reference, observed the functions of the chair as agreed at the GMG working level retreat in February 2013, and responded to the principal demands of the year, namely the HLD and the preparations of the post-2015 UN development agenda. Several activities were added to the workplan as the chairmanship progressed. While only a few planned activities could not be realised, the majority was achieved through the support and collaboration of the GMG members.

The three objectives were:

- *Objective 1:* Promote the wider application of international and regional instruments and norms relating to migration and promote the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 UN development agenda (“advocacy objective”)

- *Objective 2:* Steer the GMG as a coherent and unified group to and through the HLD towards post-2015 negotiations and strengthen cooperation between the GMG and other stakeholders (“coherence and cooperation objective”)
- *Objective 3:* Continue and concretize GMG review and implementation of reforms to help structure the GMG’s future work (“continuity objective”)

The thematic focus of IOM’s chairmanship was “migrants and development”, reflecting the year’s focus on the issue of migration and development as well as the chair’s and the GMG’s aspiration to call attention to the human dimension of migration, in particular to the human and labour rights of all migrants. The focus on the individual human being, and the relationship between development and human rights, were a consistent theme of the GMG’s communication and advocacy surrounding the HLD and post-2015 debates in 2013.

III. Activities and achievements during the Chairmanship

a. Institutional arrangements and organizational aspects

Between July and December 2013, IOM held seven working level meetings and one Principals’ meeting. For ease of planning, IOM issued the dates for all working level meeting at the outset of its chairmanship, which helped keep lengthy coordination of mutually agreeable dates among the working level to a minimum. The working level meetings were convened via teleconference (costs were covered by IOM), while members based in Geneva and New York gathered at IOM offices in the respective locations, contributing usefully to face-to-face interaction among members. Systematic minutes of the meeting, including resulting action points, were kept and disseminated for comments usually one week after the working level meeting. All minutes of the working level meetings, as well as the coordinated report of the Principals’ meeting, have been made available on the password-protected part of the GMG Website.

IOM also initiated and maintained a GMG calendar which compiled dates and events relevant to the group during the period July to December 2013. This tool, which was distributed periodically among the working level by email, proved useful and may be continued in the future. In addition, IOM regularly updated the GMG contact list given ongoing changes in agencies’ focal points to ensure smooth communication.

Moreover, IOM initiated a substantive update of the GMG website which had not been done since 2011, with the aim of streamlining some of the content, making the GMG website a more accessible repository of updated information and research on migration, and communicating more regularly about current GMG activities.

b. Activities and outputs

Under *Objective 1* (“advocacy”), the GMG under IOM’s chairmanship:

- Produced a joint [GMG position paper on the HLD](#) and an accompanying [press release](#), which were issued on 3 October 2013;

- Produced a [GMG statement on the HLD](#) which was delivered by Director General William Lacy Swing, IOM, in his capacity as GMG chair, in the HLD plenary on 4 October 2013;
- Supported government co-chairs of the four HLD round tables through input to background papers and panels (coordinated by UNDESA);
- Supported the UN Storify and #IAmAMigrant twitter campaign for the HLD as well as International Migrants Day, which through the collective action of GMG agencies and others has been tweeted over 4,000 times and reached over 8 million accounts (coordinated by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI));
- Provided inputs to the 2013 Secretary-General's report on International Migration and Development (coordinated by UNDESA);
- Produced a joint [GMG position paper on migration and the post-2015 UN development agenda](#) and an accompanying [press release](#), which were issued on 25 September 2013;
- Presented the GMG messages on migration and the post-2015 UN development agenda and disseminated the position paper at the UNGA High-level Event on post-2015 and the Millennium Development Goals on 25 September 2013 (represented by Director General William Lacy Swing, IOM, as GMG chair);
- Contributed to a side event on "Migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Global Partnerships, Targets and Indicators" organized by the Government of Sweden during the 6th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals on 10 December 2013;
- Produced three GMG issue briefs for thematic meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in September and November 2013, on [diaspora](#), [labour migration](#), and [migration as an enabler for social development](#) (coordinated by the GMG Chair and co-chairs of relevant GMG task forces / working groups);
- Produced a joint GMG [press release](#) on the occasion of International Migrants Day on the topic "Maintaining the Momentum after the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development: Give Migrants a Place in the Post-2015 Development Agenda", which was issued on 18 December 2013;
- Continued work on the joint GMG thematic report on "Adolescents, Youth and Migration" (led by UNICEF);
- Launched a survey to gauge if and how GMG members had undertaken information and awareness raising campaigns about migration;
- Updated the GMG website.

The activities under this objective served to focus the GMG's views on migration and development on common key messages and to use them for advocacy purposes in the context of the HLD, the GFMD and ongoing preparatory processes for the post-2015 UN development agenda. In terms of advocacy, the GMG has thus made progress by delivering consistent, collective messages on the links between migration and development, the way in which migration could feature in the post-2015 UN development agenda, and the importance of protecting the human and labour rights of all migrants. The strong support for an inclusion of migration in the post-2015 agenda at the HLD and the mention of migration in the report of the 6th session of the Open Working Group on

Sustainable Development Goals suggest that the GMG's advocacy effort, in combination with other factors and actors, has had some success.

In the original workplan, IOM had also planned to organize a GMG initiative on the perspectives of migrants for the HLD. This, however, could not be realised due to time constraints and a lack of available venues. Instead, IOM issued a survey to collect information of past or current experiences with information and awareness-raising campaigns about migration, for exploration of possible synergies in the future and with a view to item 5 – "Improve public perceptions of migrants" – of the Secretary-General's 8-point agenda for action launched at the HLD.

Concerning *Objective 2* ("coherence and cooperation"), the GMG under IOM's chairmanship:

- Held a meeting of the GMG Principals at the outset of IOM's Chairmanship on 3 July 2013 in Geneva, which concluded the GMG internal review process, and prepared an report of the Principals' meeting (available on the password-protected part of the GMG website);
- Communicated the decisions on the internal review taken at the Principals' meeting to States and civil society in writing and [made them available on the GMG website](#);
- Engaged in dialogue with civil society representatives ahead of the HLD through a discussion between the GMG working level and the civil society coordinator for the HLD, John Bingham of the International Catholic Migration Commission, on 9 September 2013 and an exchange of letters with civil society stakeholders;
- Engaged with the GFMD through an exchange of letters with the GFMD chair and by participating in GFMD thematic meetings in September and November 2013 (see also above), including a side event on "HLD – outcomes and outlook" in the margins of the GFMD Friends of the Forum meeting on 19 November 2013;
- Launched the publication of the UN System Chief Executives Board "[International Migration and Development: Contributions and Recommendations of the International System](#)" on 27 September 2013 in New York, with the participation of Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, Executive Director Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA, Director General William Lacy Swing, IOM, in his capacity as GMG chair, and John Bingham of the International Catholic Migration Commission;
- Coordinated the various side events planned by individual or groups of GMG members during the HLD to maximize synergies and minimise clashes;
- Held a GMG side event at the HLD on "[The Global Migration Group: Work, Priorities and Future Directions](#)" on 4 October 2013, with the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration Peter Sutherland, the GMG troika (consisting of Director General William Lacy Swing, IOM, Deputy Executive Secretary Antonio Prado, UNECLAC, and Director-General Guy Ryder, ILO) and Executive Director Yuri Fedotov, UNODC, and prepared an report of the side event (available on the password-protected part of the GMG website);
- Convened a panel of the GMG troika (consisting of Director General William Lacy Swing, IOM, Executive Secretary Sven Alkalaj, UNECE, and Director-General Guy Ryder, ILO) at the

103rd session of the IOM Council in Geneva on 28 November 2013, and shared a report of the panel with the GMG working level;

- Produced a two-page information document of “GMG highlights” since 2006 which was distributed at the GMG side event at the HLD and the IOM Council;
- Held a discussion with Gregory Maniatis, assistant to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration, and an initial brainstorming at working level on follow-up to the HLD, in particular GMG contributions to the Secretary General’s 8-point agenda for action;
- Produced a matrix to monitor the GMG’s follow-up to the Secretary General’s 8-point agenda for action and informed the Secretary-General in a letter on the GMG’s plans for follow-up to his agenda (the letter is available on the password-protected part of the GMG website);
- Participated in the first teleconference between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration Peter Sutherland, Eva Åkerman-Börje representing the chair of the GFMD, and the chair of the GMG (represented by Director General William Lacy Swing, IOM), as requested by the Secretary-General at the HLD;
- Responded to outstanding requests for association / cooperation with the GMG.

The activities under this objective contributed to greater coherence within the GMG and responded to the need and request for greater interaction with other stakeholders, principally States and civil society.

Concerning coherence and coordination, the GMG Principal’s meeting in July 2013 served to conclude the internal review process that had been initiated in 2012 and carried forward during the Regional Commission’s chairmanship (represented by UNESCAP). The GMG Principals adopted recommendations that had been agreed at a working level retreat in February 2013. The Principals’ meeting also ensured that the GMG Principals were in agreement on the workplan for the second half of 2013 and able to guide the working level on the main positions to be taken by the GMG vis-à-vis the upcoming events and processes.

Concerning cooperation with external stakeholders and processes, IOM placed high priority on the GMG’s interaction with States, a request frequently made by States in the past and underlined in the HLD Declaration (paragraph 32), as well as with other partners, including the GFMD. The GMG achieved greater transparency and created spaces for interaction: for example, the GMG side event at the HLD and the GMG panel at the IOM Council enabled States and others to better understand the GMG’s working modalities and thematic priorities, while communication efforts through joint statements and press releases also played a part in creating greater awareness of the GMG’s work. States and others have recognized the progress made by the GMG, also through the steps taken in the internal review. Likewise, IOM drew the GMG’s attention to the need for more systematic interaction with civil society as well as mechanisms to respond to requests for GMG membership or other forms of association or collaboration. Initial discussions were held with the civil society coordinator for the HLD, with the aim to create coordination channels between GMG working groups / task forces and civil society focal points for the “5 year 8 point plan” in the follow-up to the HLD. To ensure coherence with other stakeholders in the UN system, under IOM’s chairmanship the GMG also engaged in more regular dialogue with the Special Representative of

the Secretary-General on International Migration Peter Sutherland, who contributed to the Principals' meeting in July, to the GMG side event at the HLD in October, to the GMG panel at the IOM Council in November and whose staff briefed the GMG on follow-up initiatives to the HLD.

IOM had also foreseen to convene a second Principals' meeting at the end of the year to take stock of the HLD outcomes and implications for the GMG. IOM decided to cancel this meeting following doubts raised by working level members regarding the need for and timing of such a meeting.

Under *Objective 3* ("continuity"), the GMG under IOM's chairmanship:

- Continued and finalized the GMG internal review;
- Continued working group and task force development and activities, including:
 - i) Hosting a knowledge workshop organized by the Task Force on Capacity Development together with Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) in New York on 15 November 2013;
 - ii) Developing a proposal for a *Practical Guide on Measuring International Migration and its Impact on Development* by the working group on Data and Research together with the KNOMAD Thematic Working Group on Data on Migration and Remittances Flows;
 - iii) Holding a first meeting of the working group on human rights, gender and migration, which also took the lead in preparing the GMG's issue brief for the GFMD on "Migration as an enabler for social development" (mentioned above).

As mentioned above, the GMG internal review was finalized in July 2013. In order to advance on its implementation, in October IOM nominated a full time staff member for the newly created GMG support team and initiated discussions with ILO as the incoming chair and with UNDESA on their 20 per cent contribution to the support team to ensure a smooth handover and timely start of the support team's activities in January 2014. IOM also followed up with UN Women who had voiced interest in assuming the GMG chair in 2015 in order to establish a functioning troika.