

GCM Stocktaking Meeting – Puerto Vallarta, 4 December 2017

Opportunity

First of all, let me say that the Business Mechanism to the GFMD appreciates the opportunity to have contributed to the consultation phase of the GCM process as kicked off in New York last year.

Since its creation in 2015, the Business Mechanism has reached out to collect and represent the views of businesses large and small and from many sectors of the economy with respect to the opportunities and challenges of migration and labour mobility. Individual enterprises, employers' federations and business associations contributed to the process.

We would like to commend the GCM for the transparent, open and structured format which allowed for stakeholder engagement since the GCM process was kicked off last year.

We not only recognize the efforts made but strongly appreciate this invitation and hope that we can continue to contribute along with other stakeholders to the process as governments begin the next phase of negotiations.

With proper governance and enlightened leadership, migration can be an opportunity for all: businesses, destination countries, origin countries (particularly with appropriate circular migration policies which facilitate the return of skills to the originating economy) and, of course, migrants themselves.

Our goal is a regulatory environment where labour migration policies support business and economic development and growth. Our objective is to attain a balance between skills needs and the availability of relevant skills. This is a constant challenge in our fast moving, innovative economies and with changing business models which increasingly call for short term mobility.

We encourage governments to create orderly pathways of migration and mobility through sound policies. These policies and mechanisms will vary among countries based on their needs, histories and levels of development but the GCM provides the possibility for a non-binding framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migration.

Our recommendations as shared with the GCM fall within five categories:

- Skills mobility
- Innovations for migrants' access to labour markets
- Addressing irregular migration
- Responsible recruitment
- Promoting entrepreneurship

Moderator, you asked us to address any gaps we have seen in discussions over the last day. I believe we have overlooked the importance of entrepreneurship. Governments should seek to promote regulatory and social environments which promote entrepreneurship. It is an important aspect of both sides of the migration equation.

On the part of origin countries, the promotion of entrepreneurship can help to reduce some of the “push factors” which drive migration. Entrepreneurship is an opportunity. Entrepreneurship creates jobs and with good jobs people are less apt to opt for migration.

With respect to host countries, entrepreneurship is an excellent means of integration. Migrant owned and operated businesses not only create employment opportunities and help with the integration of migrants, but they also help to reinforce the narrative that migrants can often contribute to local communities and make a positive impact in the host countries. Migrant entrepreneurs are a real success story and can serve as models or mentors for the communities in which they operate.

In conclusion, we believe that the GCM should be an aspirational document that sets forth best practices for governments on the management of migration. The goal should be a document that offers suggestions for governments to adopt on a voluntary basis. We have an opportunity for increased exchanges among all stakeholders to identify and implement practices which promote migration policies addressing labour market needs through talent mobility, skills development and entrepreneurship.

In the next phase of the GCM process we call on governments to reach out to their national employers' federations, business associations and broader business community for their input throughout the negotiations. Dialogue is needed to understand economic and business needs as well as how new business models may affect migration policies. We would like a seat, if not at the table, at least near the table to contribute constructively during the negotiation process and in any follow up or review mechanism which may be put in place.

But for the moment, let it suffice to say that we commend all involved in the GCM for the outreach to stakeholders over the last year and welcome a transparent, open and inclusive process during the next stage of negotiations.