Business advisory group | on migration

14th GFMD Opening Ceremony

Geneva, 22 January 10:00 – 11:45

Lindiwe Sephomolo's speaking notes

Thank you Brice and good morning, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Brice, I would like to spotlight the private sector's priorities that I believe resonate with the shared values and aspirations of everyone in this room.

How can people hope for a better life abroad, if legal pathways to migrate are not available to them? How can businesses keep running if they do not have access to the talents they need, which can at times only be sourced from abroad?

Migration is a business necessity and legal pathways are essential . This is why we consistently advocate for efficient, predictable and effective legal pathways to enable employers to secure the talents when and where needed.

A second priority for business—as I believe for all other stakeholders here— is fostering responsible recruitment. We call on governments to establish legal frameworks that are conducive to responsible recruitment, which protect vulnerable workers, help create a level playing field for the recruitment industry and provide the necessary assurances to responsible employers.

A third objective and shared aspiration, which I believe resonates with us all, involves harnessing the full potential of technology. Undoubtedly, technology stands as the linchpin for enhancing migration governance, offering the transformative capability to streamline and expedite migration processes for the benefit of all. A small advertisement: Please make sure you visit the Tech Garden at the Summit! Meet the 10 innovative start-ups selected as the finalists of our 4th Migration Challenge. Tomorrow, they will make their pitches in front of a distinguished group of judges at 9:00 a.m. in this room. Come and see who emerges as the leader.

And lastly, let us, all stakeholders, collaborate closely with governments, hand in hand, as we combat the corrosive narrative surrounding migration. We believe that improving the narratives can help ensure the adoption of legal frameworks conducive to both protecting the rights of migrants and facilitating the labor migration we all need for the prosperity of our economies.

Brice, distinguished colleagues

France has been an excellent GFMD Chair, and its leadership has allowed for constructive engagement at this Summit. We aim to continue building bridges and a common understanding between the private sector, civil society, youth, and national and local governments. The GFMD is a unique and valuable forum. The safe space that it offers provides us with and opportunity to talk to each other, to learn about each other's positions and priorities, and to find common ground. This is not always easy, but today's opening is the best example of great cooperation between the various s

stakeholders of the GFMD. We look forward to continuing this engagement under the Colombian Chair.

Let me conclude with a call to action: in an increasingly complex and dangerous world, business needs to continue creating quality jobs, fostering innovation and producing the goods and services required to raise standards of living and allow societies to prosper. At the same time, we need to ensure the well-being of our employees and a smooth transition to a low-carbon economy. Attracting and retaining the best talent is key to these endeavors—and regular, safe and orderly migration is key to attracting and deploying this talent. Thus, we rely on our governments to implement effective, efficient and agile legal frameworks that will allow businesses to prosper, spur development and enable our economies to thrive.

Please join us this afternoon at 2pm at the Government and private sector session as we will be presenting our priorities in depth.

Dear Monique, as businesses, we know how important cities are in this big puzzle. Can you tell us what your constituency's top priorities / and expected achievements are for this 14th GFMD Summit?