

## First Information Session on the Swiss Plans for the 2011 Global Forum on Migration and Development Organised at the Graduate Institute



On 18 March 2011, the Graduate Institute's Programme for the Study of Global Migration organised the first information session on the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) plans for this year. Switzerland being the Chair for 2011, this roundtable gathered representatives from the Swiss authorities, the United Nations system as well as the Civil Society. Created in 2006, the GFMD is an informal, non-binding, voluntary and government-led process which aims at

producing recommendations for governments to improve their policies and practices in favour of sending and host societies as well as the migrants themselves.

Eduard Gnesa, Swiss Ambassador Extraordinary for International Migration Cooperation, presented the innovative Swiss plan for this year's Global Forum, which focuses on 'action' and aims at drawing on the concrete experiences of practitioners on the ground and examining some practical applications of the Forum discussions. To achieve this aim the Swiss Chair intends to open a space for focused and action oriented meetings around the world. Far from undermining the global nature of the Forum, those thematic and regional meetings are intended as preparatory events for a final two-day extended meeting to be held in Geneva in early December, where regional results will be discussed in-depth.

Moreover, this objective is to be achieved in partnership with international organisations, especially the members of the Global Migration Group (GMG), and Civil Society stakeholders. Importantly, Amb. Gnesa called for "new forms of interactions", including a platform for exchange between governments and civil society stakeholders and provoking continuity and coherence between the 2010 and 2011 processes to bring about tangible and concrete results.

Given this session's focus on non-state actors, comments were then made by Ms. Saab of UNICEF representing the GMG Chair (1<sup>st</sup> Semester 2011), Mr. Thiam of the *Forum pour l'intégration des Migrantes et des Migrants* (FIMM Suisse) and Mr. Bingham of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), the Coordinator of the 2011 Civil Society programme as well as an audience of more than 80 participants. The discussion was moderated by Amb. Marchi, former Canadian Minister for Citizenship and Immigration.

In 2011, the GFMD process, especially the Swiss Civil Society initiatives, will be important for the activities of the Programme for the Study of Global Migration. In this context, close contacts with the Global Programme Migration of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation will be maintained.

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### Useful links:

Programme for the Study of Global Migration: <http://graduateinstitute.ch/globalmigration>

SDC Shareweb Migration and Development: <http://www.sdc-migration.ch/en/Home>

Switzerland's Concept Paper for GFMD 2011:

<http://graduateinstitute.ch/webdav/site/globalmigration/shared/GFMD-ConceptPaper-Switzerland2011-4march2011.pdf>

GFMD web site: <http://www.gfmd.org/>