



**PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL**

**P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**THE PHILIPPINES HOSTS THE 2<sup>ND</sup> GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT (GFMD)  
MANILA, OCTOBER 2008**

NEW YORK – Preparations are underway for the Philippine hosting of the second meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), scheduled for Manila in October 2008. The Philippines is the Chair-in-Office of the GFMD, a global consultative process open to all Member States and Observers of the United Nations.

About ten percent (10%) of the population, 7-8 million Filipinos are living and working overseas and it is the Philippine Government's policy to promote the rights and protect the welfare of Filipino migrant workers. As Chair-in-Office, the Philippines will be able to take the lead in the key issues to be addressed, which would, as DFA Undersecretary Esteban Conejos explained "build on the Brussels Forum (2007), but would also place special emphasis on the 'human face of migration'".

The theme of the Manila Forum, "Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development", reflecting an understanding of the "shared responsibility" of both the host and the origin countries of migrants to ensure that the developmental benefits of migration go hand in hand with their protection and empowerment. The issues proposed for discussion in Manila are: "Migration, Human Rights, and Development"; "Secure, Legal Migration can achieve greater development impact", and "Policy and Institutional Coherence and Partnerships".

Undersecretary Conejos explained that the Manila GFMD would focus on the human rights and empowerment of migrants on the ground, with a view to governments sharing responsibility. Countries of origin like the Philippines are the "first line of defense", in avoiding and preventing exploitation before migrants leave.

Manila GFMD 2008 will also look at ways to open more legal avenues for migration while addressing the obstacles to regular, protective forms of migration, such as human trafficking and migrant smuggling. It will further consider the need for more reliable migration and development research and data and continue the debate on policy and institutional coherence in linking migration and development.

In May 2008, the second "Friends of the Forum" meeting will convene in which participating Governments and expert agencies are expected to prepare the thematic roundtable discussions in the spirit of practical partnership that sets this global forum apart.

The Philippine Consulate General New York invites the public's attention to the leadership role taken by the Philippines on the issue of global migration.