Ladies and Gentlemen,

Holding the Chairmanship of the Budapest Process since 2006, Turkey is closely involved in the global debate and international cooperation in the area of migration management, from a security and control oriented approach to a more comprehensive, holistic concept of migration governance.

Turkey is willing to engage more in the area of migration governance, in line with the dynamic role it is expected to play in the future of migration management in the Eurasia region.

Turkey has decided to take on the challenging task of chairing the GFMD in 2015 not only because of its' increasing significance in the area of migration, but also because of our increasing commitment to development issues. Turkey has vast experience to share in the area of migration and development.

We are in the process of determining our game plan for our Chairmanship. Naturally, there is still very much to do. We will assume the priorities of previous Chairs, whose work we appreciate wholeheartedly. On top of their work, we will be adding our own contribution.

In this context, I can say that our additional points of concentration will be promoting mobility (bringing down the obstacles such as visas and similar barriers); ensuring human rights of the migrants and cooperation in combating illegal migration; abolishing the notions of racism, discrimination and xenophobia; creating international mechanisms that will secure the transfer of social security benefits, if necessary concluding an international agreement for this purpose and utilizing the Turkish experience on the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMI’s), which is considered one of the best means of development as well as the success story of conversion of Turkey from a source country to a destination country.

Recognition is the fundamental need of all migrants. Through recognition in the countries they are migrants in; first and foremost they would be able to access the basic services such as health, education and social security. This would enable them to better integrate and contribute to their host communities as well as to their own. This would lead turning them into development agents without additional effort.
Remittances is another important point. People migrate to earn income for making a better life. Migrant workers send the money back to their families. Enabling cash transfers with a minimal cost would lead to improve the use of remittances for the benefit of the sustainable economic and social development of the countries of origin. Turkey can offer a vast experience to share in the area of making better use of remittances in contributing to development.

Given the fact that a holistic approach is critical in migration management, keeping a balance between security and human rights will be a crucial aspect of Turkey’s future migration governance. This should be done with an emphasis on the needs and rights of migrants.

We also believe that all aspects/dimensions of migration at national, regional and global level are interlinked and cannot be addressed in isolation. For example, rather than reducing the issue of irregular migration to a security perspective, we believe that development policies, that focus on the reasons pushing persons to irregular migration, will lead to more durable solutions for both sending and receiving countries. Irregular migration can be best avoided by providing mechanisms for legal migration in addition to the conventional mechanisms in combating migrant smuggling.

The fifth Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process held on 19 April 2013 gathered 28 Ministers/Deputy Ministers, 230 delegates from 52 participating and observer countries and relevant regional and international organisations.

The "Istanbul Ministerial Declaration on a Silk Routes Partnership for Migration", having a specific priority area of Migration and Development, with the goal of strengthening the positive impact of migration on development, both in countries of origin and of destination, is a strong indicator of the link between the future work of the Process and the goals and aim of the GFMD. The Istanbul Declaration has already been referred to as one of the most balanced and far-reaching documents in the field of migration adopted by such a wide range of countries.

In the Declaration a wide range of activities are foreseen such as mainstreaming migration into development planning as well as taking into account the development issues when elaborating migration policies; promoting sustainable, comprehensive, balanced and efficient policies on migration and development; ensuring a multi-actor approach, inviting relevant development stakeholders, including public and private sector to engage in dialogue and concrete cooperation; facilitating circular migration and active engagement in development; engaging with diasporas towards making better use of their contributions; improving the use of monetary and social remittances for the benefit of the sustainable economic and social development of the countries of origin; fostering sustainable reintegration; counteracting possible negative effects of emigration on the countries of origin; addressing the gap between emergency relief, humanitarian assistance and sustainable development, exploring and addressing development-related causes of migration and developing and strengthening small and medium migrant entrepreneurship.

The operational cooperation foreseen in the Declaration in six priority areas: migration and mobility, integration, migration and development, irregular migration, trafficking in persons, international protection are all relevant to the 2013 UN General Assembly High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development.

Thank you... -----