



# 4<sup>th</sup> GLOBAL MAYORAL FORUM

On Human Mobility, Migration and Development  
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*"MAYORS AS HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ACTORS –  
PREPARING, WELCOMING, AND INTEGRATING"*

**BERLIN GERMANY  
26-27 JUNE 2017**

***"Mayoral Declaration on Migrants and Refugees:  
Meeting Needs, Protecting Rights and Fostering Empowerment"***

*This Declaration, entitled the "**Mayoral Declaration on Migrants and Refugees: Meeting Needs, Protecting Rights and Fostering Empowerment**" ("Mayoral Declaration") is endorsed by the forty (40) cities represented during the 4<sup>th</sup> Mayoral Forum on Human Mobility, Migration and Development taking place in the City of Berlin and hosted by its Governing Mayor, on 26-27 June 2017.*

*It builds on previous statements issued by city leadership during Mayoral Forums: the Barcelona Declaration (2014), the Quito Local Agenda on Migration and Development (2015), and the Quezon City "Commitment to Action" (2016), the Local Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Guidelines approved in Quezon City (2016), the Paris Action Plan for Inclusive Growth in Cities (2016), and other relevant frameworks including the Nansen Initiative (2012), the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (2015), the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative (2016), the New Urban Agenda (2016), the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (2016), the Report of the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) on Migration (February 2017), and the UN General Assembly Resolution on the "modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration" (April 2017).*

*This Mayoral Declaration serves to inform national governments and inter-state deliberations on what cities are doing, outline existing and potential constraints to governing a more diverse citizenry and recommends possible actions and interventions to foster social inclusion and diversity.*

*The Declaration will be submitted to the preparatory processes for two distinct processes: the "global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration" (GCM), and the global compact for refugees. Within the consultative process underway towards the GCM, local authorities are invited to contribute their perspectives as first receivers of migrants (New York Declaration). This builds on recent calls for greater empowerment of cities and local authorities, including by ensuring their access to inter-state deliberations, and strengthening of the Mayoral Forum as a*

*mechanism to channel cities' key experiences into the consultative process for the Global Compact on Migration (Report of the SRSG).*

## **I-Values Guiding City Leadership**

We, Mayors and Governors from around the world, call attention to the fact that cities will be faced with addressing the needs of an additional 2.5 billion people by 2050. In doing so, we strive to “leave no one behind”, and to build our cities and human settlements to be “inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable” (UN Sustainable Development Goal, 11).

### ***Guiding city leadership to meet the needs, protect the rights, and foster empowerment of refugees and migrants, we are:***

*Committed to* meeting the varying needs and protecting the rights of our citizenry, including migrants and refugees, in the face of limited support and resources.

*Building* resilient communities prepared to handle sudden influxes of refugees and migrants caused notably by economic strains, conflict and/or natural disasters.

*Committed to* upholding values founded in an openness to plurality and cultural diversity, and an insistence on non-discrimination, which includes a dignified treatment and respect for all people, regardless of their origin and identity (as indicated in the Barcelona Declaration).

*Needing to strike a functional/workable balance* between promoting openness and social inclusion, promoting inclusive economic growth, and maintaining the quality of living and public safety for our citizenry.

*Actively engaging to* positively influence popular perceptions and shaping positive discourse on migration and displacement, including by challenging negative, discriminatory, and xenophobic rhetoric.

*Cognizant* that coherent policy-making will come from better coordination among policy fields; vis-a-vis other sub-national, national and rural counterparts; and from more systematic data collection (at national and local levels) in order to improve local and national migration outcomes fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

*Cognizant also* that strong relations between cities and regional and national counter-parts is reciprocal and mutually reinforcing: e.g. cities can act to attract migrants, fostering national economic growth.

*Working in partnership with* migrant, refugee and diaspora associations, civil society, research actors and the private sector to meet our objectives.

## **II- Areas of Responsibility and Actions taken by City Leaders**

Further, we outline herein the growing areas of responsibility that are those of city governments, and stress that each is undertaken within contexts of varying degrees of political strain, public discomfort, and material limitations.

***In meeting the needs, protecting the rights, and fostering the empowerment of refugees and migrants, we have taken actions to:***

***Promote social cohesion, making every effort to minimize the risk of creating a generation of excluded.*** This begins by facilitating access to schooling, housing, health, transportation services, in addition to the labour market, through non-discriminatory approaches and by cultivating engagement with local communities. It requires investments towards enhancing the capacities of local public servants to deliver services to migrant populations and intermediating with local society. Through participatory approaches such as local deliberative councils, migrants' and refugees' voices should be represented and heard. Acceptance of newcomers and of change is difficult and may necessitate governing a "culture of encounter" where city residents learn to live together over time. Working with educators and the young, building inclusive and participatory education systems should be a priority. Evidence suggests that urban planning privileging public spaces is beneficial.

***Assist with employment opportunities.*** Responding to labour market needs for natives and non-natives, in coordination with national and regional counterparts, is an important function of city administration. Often, cities provide information on employment opportunities, in partnership with the private sector, and can create employment opportunities through new approaches (e.g. LinkedIn Nordic employment platform). Both in communities of arrival and of departure, preparation is key. Cities can offer access to language training, in connection with employment opportunities; and where possible, skills and entrepreneurship training, and access to small and medium enterprise creation or transition. Some cities also support skills certification and recognition of skills.

***Ensure human rights protection.*** Cities ensure effective access to protection for the forcibly displaced, and others have engaged in city-to-city refugee resettlement. Cities have put in place mechanisms that provide access to justice, and systems that help identify and afford special protections for migrants and refugees in vulnerable situations, such as separated and unaccompanied children. Special safeguards in the context of emergency preparedness and response need to be developed as is the case in some cities. Firewalls should be established where needed. Ensuring human rights protection (and more systematic and effective monitoring) is a long-term investment and applies to all citizens. Cities' efforts to enforce rights protection in the workplace also benefit migrants.

***Foster sustainable development (economic, environmental and social).*** It is worth considering the role played by cities in fostering "the right to remain", its scope of influence in making migration a "choice" not a necessity, and related efforts to secure livelihoods. The SDGs have drawn the link between the benefits of migration, and the need to reduce its costs to migrants and by extension, the communities they often support (both at origin and at destination). Evidence abounds of cities' efforts to regulate recruitment, and reduce the costs of and ensure more efficient remittance transfers. As noted, cities can also assist in providing an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and innovation, emphasizing the positive contributions of migrants to development. Cities also play a key role in providing access and participation in financial systems, building financial identities, and achieving greater financial security for migrants and refugees. What is more, cities are investing in sustainable housing solutions creating new residential areas attractive and affordable for different social groups. Migrants and refugees contribute to communities at origin and at destination, often through collaboration with diaspora, chambers of commerce, the private sector and other stakeholders.

**Combat racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.** Local government administrations must combat discrimination and xenophobia through a panoply of means including through the education system, through partnerships, and by developing positive messaging. The European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) has expressed its unwavering commitment to an “anti-racist welcoming culture”. Discrimination reinforces attitudes that constrain certain identifiable groups to marginalized roles and poor conditions. The results of consistent denial of employment opportunities, relegation to ghettos, lack of education or training opportunities, absence of police protection, and multiple sources of discrimination in community life are exclusion and ultimately, breakdown of social cohesion. Discrimination has a double impact on refugee and migrant women.

### III- Requests from Cities

Finally, our actions are not performed in a vacuum. Quite the contrary, they depend on alliances within government, with other cities, with civil society, with the private sector, with the broader public and with the international community. In stressing the work that still needs to be carried out, and the potential channels that have yet to be explored, we call on relevant partners to mobilise and partner with us:

***In striving to implement these actions, and where work is still needed, we call for:***

***Greater policy coherence on migration and sustainable development:*** National governments and local counterparts should work to incorporate migration as an important factor into sustainable urban, development and sectoral planning. The New Urban Agenda (2016) commits to strengthen(ing) synergies between international migration and development, at the global, regional, national, sub-national, and local levels by ensuring safe, orderly, and regular migration through planned and well-managed migration policies and to support local authorities in establishing frameworks, which enable the positive contribution of migrants to cities and strengthened urban-rural linkages (as indicated in the New Urban Agenda). This could be carried forward possibly through the use and application of the Migration Governance Framework (MIGOF).

***Greater policy coherence on forced displacement:*** Local authorities should be systematically included in humanitarian response and preparedness mechanisms and more specifically in the management of the forcibly displaced (refugees, persons displaced across borders in the context of disaster and climate change, and internally displaced). Such coordination can assist with the humanitarian - development divide not least in identifying sustainable development solutions such as providing access to work and education for refugees and other forcibly displaced (as indicated in the Quito Declaration).

***Better coordination across levels of government:*** Much of this work depends on a “whole of government” approach founded in solid partnerships with national and sub-national counterparts. Coordination with higher levels of governance can increase consistency between national and local inclusion policies; help local governments stay informed about changes of national immigration legislation; and ensure that local governments are adequately resourced to support inclusion (as indicated in the Quezon City Call to Action).

***Greater resources to build capacities:*** Cities often act without the resources or tools required. They must have the competencies and capacities to implement migration and refugee policies. Cities would benefit from direct access to national and international programmes and funding

mechanisms (as indicated in the Quito Declaration). They can also benefit from multi-stakeholder partnerships that support local communities, migrants and refugees. This is true for all migration contexts: from the pre-decision/pre-migration phase, to the integration phase, and in situations of displacement resulting from disasters or armed conflicts (as indicated in the Quezon City Call to Action).

The growing emergence of city-to-city networks - both within a given country and across international borders - is helpful for the exchange of good practices, and for solutions to current challenges, such as expanding resettlement of refugees, and facilitating the portability of social benefits of migrants.

**Greater access to where policy decisions are made:** Bodies responsible for the management of migration have tended to make decisions without considering their impact on the local level. Cities experience the complexities of human mobility, but have had little or no voice in global forums where priorities on the agendas of human mobility are determined at the national, regional and the international levels. Cities can and must be considered an integral partner in migration-related decisions that will ultimately be implemented by them (as indicated in the Barcelona Declaration).

**Greater understanding of existing and emergent mobility trends:** Given future trends, cities must have the capacities, resources and tools to plan and prepare for different migration contexts. Greater understanding is needed on a number of factors including the impacts of environmental change on the movements of persons. The sharing of good practices and relevant research amongst cities, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, can help to further improve how cities address a more diverse urban citizenry (as indicated in the Quito Declaration).

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*Text developed by C. Thouez, with inputs from the City of Berlin, IOM, UNHCR, UNITAR, UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative, World Bank KNOMAD, OECD, UNESCO, and the Columbia University Global Policy Initiative.*



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