

*"Civil Society Organisations proclaim human rights, and the United Nations defends human rights, but it is in Cities that human rights are realized or not."  
M. Rojas, Bogota*

## I. SUMMARY OF MAIN PRIORITIES AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

### Introduction

#### The Quito Mayoral Forum

Overwhelmingly, those gathered at the Second Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development that took place in Quito Ecuador on 12-13 November 2015, agreed on the positive elements of greater diversity in city centres. The City of Quito's Mayor Mauricio Rodas Espinel emphasized that greater mobility rather than a negative fact of life, opens the door for many opportunities both for his City and for others across the globe. What these opportunities are and how they must be translated into concrete action is one of the goals of the Mayoral Forum process. As he stated, this requires a new understanding of "co-existence", what we mean by "us" and "them", leading through solidarity and mutual support.

Mr. Rojas of Bogota warned that there are multiple challenges facing cities internally not least urban change, housing, social segregation, poverty and violence but also challenges with international implications such as climate change and international migration. Cities' role in addressing these issues is unfolding, and the Mayoral Forum can play a major supporting role in asserting cities' influence on the international stage, but also in leading a city-to-city dialogue focused on implementation. Important supporter of the Mayoral Forum, the Government of Switzerland declared that the annual gathering represents an urgently needed space to *"provide dialogue, share best practices, and launch new initiatives"*.

A global dialogue amongst cities must also take account of regional migration dynamics. In the region hosting the Second Mayoral Forum, cities including Buenos Aires, spoke of considerable South-South migration, with "active flows" from Paraguay, Peru but also from China which are on a steep incline (doubling in the last 5 years to 550,000), and from Lebanon and Syria as well.

#### **Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The Quito Local Agenda on Migration and Development**

The Quito Local Agenda on Migration and Development outlines cities' current and potential role in the implementation of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs reflect the international community's commitment to priorities stemming from urbanization and migration both considered major development priorities of the 21st Century. It will be imperative to address these in a comprehensive manner.

Elaborated through extensive consultations that took place globally in September

and October 2015, this outcome document was endorsed by the 86 participants at the Quito Mayoral Forum. It centres around 11 Action Items for Cities:

### ***The Quito Local Agenda on Migration and Development***

***Action 1: Making cities inclusive***

***Action 2: Ensuring cities are safe***

***Action 3: Fostering cities that are resilient and sustainable***

***Action 4: Guaranteeing access to health for all***

***Action 5: Guaranteeing access to quality education for all***

***Action 6: Promoting human development and economic prosperity***

***Action 7: Working towards planned and well-managed implementation of immigrant policies***

***Action 8: Promoting global citizenship and an appreciation of cultural diversity***

***Action 9: Promoting the rule of law, equal access to justice, accountability and transparency***

***Action 10: Delivering effective protection to the forcibly displaced including refugees***

***Action 11: Building the evidence-base in cities on the impact of migration***

The Quito Local Agenda is being widely disseminated, and will serve to enrich inter-governmental discussions in particular in relation to the New Urban Agenda to be agreed by the world during the UN Habitat III Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development that will take place Quito on 17-20 October 2016. In expressing its support for the vision outlined therein, the Government of Switzerland also affirmed its commitment to disseminating its outcomes in order to ensure its global impact in particular in relation to the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

### **Looking Ahead: Third Mayoral Forum**

Mayor John G. Bongat, the Mayor of Naga City Philippines announced (on behalf of the Mayor of Quezon City) that the Third Mayoral Forum will take place in Quezon City on 20-21 September 2016. Its focus still unfolding will centre on working with diaspora to further development in communities of origin with a view to supporting the attainment of the SDGs.

*With the financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)*

2

**Five major themes** emerged from the exchanges at the Quito Mayoral Forum. These are:

### **Inclusive urban planning**

What some described as at the centre of the urban diversity puzzle: how cities are designed is still a major obstacle to ensuring the active inclusion of newcomers. Models of social segregation have failed and continue to isolate and marginalize future generations. In a city like Bogota for instance, 50% of migrants are displaced by violence and reside on the peripheries. Their needs must be factored into urban planning beginning with dignified housing conditions. Indeed, the issue of housing was highlighted multiple times and described as “*the hidden, not debated issue*” and yet fundamental, one that must be a central focus of the UN Habitat III Conference.

Local administrations must work to overcome such challenges through resources, public and political will. As immigrant policy is affected and affects a wide range of issues and policies, those who govern will have the most impact if they include powerful stakeholders in other areas of governance ranging from trade unions, chambers of commerce, land developers, health care providers, etc. They should also introduce incentives such as tax breaks in order to coax such sectors to adopt inclusive approaches and policies.

Central to this effort must be the inclusion of migrants and refugees in order to factor their evolving needs and contributions. Indeed, not all migrants want the same things nor have the same objectives. For some, the intention may be to settle permanently while for others there may be a desire to foster “trans-localism”. This fact will entail different considerations with regard to housing, health services, and education.

Importantly, given that solidarity in cities necessarily entails involving all its residents (not just migrants and refugees), it is important to develop non-discriminatory policies that also take into consideration the needs of the urban poor. As Professor Loren Landau emphasized: “*If we do not want the poor to turn against migrants, we must not turn our back on them but rather create conditions favourable for a ‘pro-migrant constituency’ by ensuring that local politics is also about creating incentives to incorporate migrants. We must ‘target places, not people.’*”

### **Modeling social inclusion**

A senior city senior administrator from Bologna suggested that the “Latin American model” of social inclusion is one from which European cities can learn. Quito’s Mayor described this model as based on “*a culture of openness (that) breeds quality services, decent work, necessary infrastructures to meet diversity head on*”.

The challenges of social inclusion were discussed writ large but also in the specific

case of Syrian refugees and their resettlement in Brazil and Argentina.<sup>1</sup> And, while the definition of “diversity” was considered an important factor requiring clarification, it was stressed by some that achieving social cohesion needs to be articulated “transversally” and will necessarily entail actively promoting a culture of inclusion, indeed as argued by Sao Paulo, its “institutionalization”, “one based on ‘equal rights and non-discrimination’ – nothing more” (ICMC).

The question was raised in this context on how to frame the rights and obligations of all city dwellers around the concept of social inclusion (Buenos Aires) with others suggesting that models of justice in other areas such as climate change could serve as a useful reference in this regard (Bogota). In concrete terms, a number of cities described legislation (ordinances) in place to promote diversity through for example, as described by Buenos Aires, multiple and periodic commemoration celebrations, and Barcelona’s now well emulated “Anti-Rumor” campaign.

Social inclusion also consists in actively countering discrimination (Quito). An important emerging dynamic in this regard is the negative attitudes that older generations of migrants may exhibit towards the newer generations such that these can be most resistant to accepting what the new face of diversity means in a given city (Buenos Aires). Some elicited examples of the exploitation of migrants by other migrants, and the need to study this issue in more detail and address it systematically. Another consideration relates to what was described as discrimination towards the visibly different. A number of representatives also spoke out against the violence against women in migrant communities; and the fact that black, migrant women have three discriminatory obstacles to overcome.

What is more, city leaders declared that migrants’ political participation is fundamental to securing social cohesion. This can entail, for instance, as in the case of Sao Paulo establishing “*consejo participio (for migrants)*” such that migrants can contribute directly to public policy in addition to the work of the non-governmental sector.

### **Provision of and access to services in destination communities**

In terms of accessing basic services, it was stressed that different categories of migrants will have different sets of needs. The City of Ibarra highlighted the particular challenges relating to refugees from Colombia. The City of Buenos Aires described the plight of victims of trafficking who in some cases do not want to return to their country and for whom municipalities at destination often work to provide necessary assistance (including as required, through diplomatic channels). Municipalities in Morocco, Senegal, and the City of Ibarra spoke of the particular challenges of returnees mainly from Europe. A pressing challenge for municipalities in Morocco involves the return of migrants (mostly from France), as these are often illiterate, without information or access to pension benefits. Municipalities in Senegal see returnees as qualified contributors to their home

---

<sup>1</sup> Others also indicated the arrival of Syrian refugees including in cities in Morocco

communities albeit institutionalised municipal support to ensure “reinsertion” is nevertheless deemed essential.

Of note, a number of cities such as Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Ibarra, emphasized that services are offered by the City regardless of whether a migrant is documented or not. Like for services offered by the State of New York (United States), services are delivered regardless of status; assistance is rendered in the regularization process; and efforts to reduce or eliminate the threat of deportation are in effect.

Specifically on the subject of protection, it was considered that there is a need to build “public spaces”, to provide conditions that are conducive to dignified housing, integrating human rights and the particular needs of specific categories of migrants including women, indigenous, youth, children, the elderly, etc. Importantly, the issue of identity was also raised as local authorities stressed that many refugees and vulnerable migrants fail to be recognized by the authorities and as such are unable to voice their concerns. As they are “invisible” and their duration of stay in not assessed, these categories are not counted, and not budgeted in localities’ forecasted expenditures (Esmeraldas). It was also mentioned by a number of participants that the international community should refrain from focusing on one refugee crisis thereby overlooking others unfolding around the world (Ibarra).

Cities in Ecuador and elsewhere also raised concerns over the question of borders and violence, and the particular dynamics and burdens faced by border towns in terms of exercising the greatest share of responsibility for protecting refugees and vulnerable migrants.

In terms of implementation, a number of cities spoke of integrated delivery in order to provide a comprehensive array of services. Barcelona for instance offers legal, employment and other services in the same building for both migrants and refugees. Similarly, the state of New York through a model that is being adopted in other US states known as the “Office for New Americans” offers comprehensive language training, legal counsel, employment services, etc. through the intermediary of neighbourhood associations and other civil society groups already established and recognised in the community (as oppose to government offices which can incite distrust). What is more, through what is considered a “two-way process of change”, migrants are encouraged to serve as volunteers in destination communities thereby emphasizing their will and ability to contribute as full-fledged members of the community.

### **Labour migration and development**

In speaking of the significant development impact of migration, a number of participants stressed that it should be seen as going beyond the economic advantages for the immediate family (of migrants) and to the origin and destination communities at large. Some suggested that diaspora contribute four times as much to the communities of destination as they send in remittance to communities of origin, for example. [The Quito Local Agenda’s Action Item # 6 was described as



“superb” in what it describes as contributions to human progress through migration.]

Local administrations described how returnees come back with expertise such as in the case of returnees to Senegal, and also in the specific case described regarding Ecuadoran migrants returning to construct the subway system in Quito having acquired such knowledge in Madrid. It was recommended that local administrations establish specific channels to assess and capitalize on returnees’ expertise. An example cited was a recent workshop organized by the City of Quito on how to do this, and importantly, making migrants central to the decisions and inviting them to submit tenders and related proposals [for construction projects]. Another example of active inclusion of migrants’ in urban project development was cited from the region of Pichincha (Ecuador).

Conversely, other cities described how migrants were employed below their skills levels. The City of Barcelona spoke of many migrants from Quito and Guayaquil who arrived but whose skills and talent were under-utilised. Experiences from municipalities in Sweden illustrate that employers lack information on skills levels and foreign qualifications. The Government of the Philippines also stressed that systems should be in place to provide for skills certification so as to allow for recognition of competencies. Local authorities should engage with employers and migrant associations; in Sweden, labour migration boards and government authorities perform labour shortage forecasting in partnership with municipalities.

It was generally noted that job security and salary levels are both less favourable for migrants than for natives, and that refugees can have more obstacles to entering the local labour market. Employment opportunities are influenced by a number of factors including economic conditions, education and skills levels, discrimination, and whether migrants (or refugees) have established familial and/or professional contacts. Important areas to tackle are language skills (which can facilitate faster integration into labour market), portability of skills, and supporting entrepreneurship.

Cities spoke of the value of training and informing migrants prior to their departure. Municipalities in Morocco spoke favourably of temporary labour agreements in place with Spain in the agriculture sector that prepare migrants for their multiple months abroad, including through language training (and the provision of housing).

Naga City and the Government of the Philippines offer services to inform migrants of the migration process, including educating them on the discrimination and xenophobia that they are likely to encounter. There is also a grievance mechanism to compensate against recruiters who change the terms of labour contracts once these are in effect. And, training and other support measures should also be developed for family members of migrants who remain (are left behind).

### **Governance and policy coherence**

It was agreed that there is a need to develop effective urban planning and

governance, recognizing the wider role of cities in migration fora, including the Global Forum Migration and Development (GFMD).

Efforts should be made to gain clarity on how support to local migration governance can nourish better coordination and more coherent approaches to public planning on mobility and diversity. Indeed, a number of cities raised queries on how we can gain a greater understanding of the relationship between different levels of governance when it comes to implementing migration policy.

Supporting this point, it was emphasized that the local dimension cannot be divorced of actions of and support from other layers of governance. One senior city leader jested that: *"the local and regional is a good marriage; the problem is the central government, 'the mother in law'"* (Barcelona). Another replied that *"good mothers-in-law"* are ministers and other allies in central government who can help; *"this is the positive side, and we have a responsibility to seek such alliances out"* (Upala).

Some participants cautioned that while municipal administrators can have a strong and persuasive vision for what they set to achieve, this vision should be crafted from a position of modesty, listening to people's concerns and desires and making sure the priorities reflect those that they serve.

Working with civil society organizations (CSOs) continues to be as critical at the local level as elsewhere, and as the Mayor of Upala stated, must be championed by overcoming misgivings of trust and transparency. Local administrators were encouraged to build a generation of trust and coherence between *"what is said and what actually gets done"* (Upala). It is important to create "open spaces of decision-making" where civil society can accompany the migrant population directly (Upala), and where through training and assistance, promoting co-responsibility sharing between government authorities and CSOs (Quito), these actors do not compete but rather leverage scarce resources to achieve common objectives.

Indeed, the fact that *"multi-stakeholder partnerships are required"* is uncontested, but what is meant by such partnerships (and how they function) is something that needs to be defined based on the context. At the GFMD in Istanbul in October 2015, an expert stated that three hours were spent on this issue of clarity given the different classifications for diaspora, contributions to development, etc. (ICMC). What is more, as another expert stated, there is a significant heterogeneity within the civil society sector itself: *"not all CSOs are pro-migrant, this must be carefully managed"* (Landau).

Strength in numbers continues to be a key feature to sway minds and hearts, and networks of city-to-city dialogue such as the Mayoral Forum are important – mayors need to: "guide the process, understand and reflect the complexity; stimulate the curiosity; and promote diaspora engagement" (Upala).

\*\*\*\*\*

## II. PROPOSALS FOR ACTION (PROJECTS/INITIATIVES PROPOSED)

### Introduction

From the outset, drawing on lessons from the First Mayoral Forum that took place in Barcelona in June 2014, the Organizers sought to elicit *"real project (proposals) drawn from the ideas of cities"* (Quito). As stated by one city administrator: *"the international community should be listening and supporting real projects drawn from ideas that come from cities and the people they represent"* (Esmeraldas). It was further emphasized that the partnership between city and regional government, with the international community be one established on an equal footing – *"it cannot be a form of paternalism"* (Quito).

At the Quito Mayoral Forum, one session was dedicated to a first round of consultations with the cities and regions represented. The criteria for proposals (that had been discussed prior with some of the Cities represented including the hosting City) are project proposals: that are new or that have been tested elsewhere; whose objectives are non-discriminatory in promoting equal rights across society; that would be implemented by municipal government in partnership with other municipalities and/or regional government(s); that can be fully implemented in a relatively short time-frame (2-3 years); and that would be subject to progress reports at future Mayoral Fora including as possible at the Third Mayoral Forum in Quezon City in September 2016.

With a view towards implementation, further considerations will need to be taken into account, including: the relationship between different levels of governance potentially constraining the ability to implement (or conversely, supporting it); election cycles in partnering administrations; engaging with secondary cities that are newcomers to immigrant policy; engaging with regions that are newcomers to immigrant policy (e.g. cities in Eastern Europe); and related, the applicability of projects across different cities and within different countries.

Necessarily, and following from the Quito Local Agenda on Migration and Development, these proposed projects will serve to support the attainment of the SDGs. The 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda contains a dedicated Goal 11 calling for *"mak(ing) cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"*. This is in addition to the fact that many of the migration-related targets (pertaining to promoting the protection of migrant workers (Goal 8 (Target 8)), countering human trafficking (Goals 5 and 16 (Targets 2)), skills transfers through international education opportunities (Goal 4 (Target 4b)), data generation by migratory status (Goal 17 (Target 18)) and additional implicit migration-related targets (for e.g. within Goal 3 on health, Goal 4 on education, Goal 5 on gender, Goal 9 on fostering innovation, Goal 16 on access to justice for all and build(ing) effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) will be implemented with or by sub-national levels of government.

### Proposals for Action

*With the financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)*

8



## Modeling social inclusion

(Bologna) Support projects that assess the applicability and implications of good practices regarding **4 urgent priorities for the implementation of immigrant policies<sup>2</sup>**:

- Securing unhindered access to basic services (i.e. for documented and undocumented city residents) through a comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach (vis-à-vis local populations);
- addressing head-on discrimination in schools;
- facilitating access to local labour markets; and
- providing opportunities for participation in civic life.

Facilitate within cities or between cities (and possibly at future Mayoral Fora) **greater participation of migrants**, with a focus on fostering **inter-generational dialogues between migrants** (Buenos Aires). Given the propensity of conflict between newly arrived and previously arrived migrants (including exploitation), there is a need to build understanding between these groups.

Support **projects that counter discrimination and advocate for the displaced are actors for development** (Quito)

Study different models adopted in localities that **foster and secure “the right to be elected”** through different models that ensure the political participation of migrants (Sao Paulo). Such a study should also look at local institutional frameworks to channel the demand of migrants for political representation.

**Work with the private sector to finance cultural projects within municipalities** (with tax incentives) that can embrace the role of local governance and CSOs towards achieving the SDGs. These should actively draw on migrant associations, and include protection against violence for the vulnerable, and promotion of economic development through entrepreneurship and craftsmanship (Buenos Aires).

Support municipalities in developing regions to establish **multicultural centres** and inter-regional dialogues for and within cities (Sweden).

## Provision of and access to services in destination communities

Appoint an **Ombudsman (local, regional) on dignified housing** to identify real solutions to settlement shortages and conflicts including on real costs (NRC). This

---

<sup>2</sup> (Was outlined in reference to Europe)

should involve undertaking studies on understanding the scope and political and material implications of the Ombudman's rulings (Dominican Republic). [*"Housing is hidden, not debated"* and yet it must be at the centre of UN Habitat III].

Secure **concrete protection commitments vis-à-vis border towns** so as to recognize their disproportionate efforts and in order to more equitably distribute protection responsibilities of refugees and vulnerable migrants (Esmeraldas). Steps towards commitments must involve the communities/countries from which migrants and refugees originate (e.g. Colombia).

Facilitate knowledge/skills exchange between **the Office of New Americans for NY State model** and local government and civil society in Ecuador (or neighbouring) where there would be an interest in establishing a similar model of integrated service delivery in roll-out of language services, legal services, etc. for migrants, based on needs assessment for the community facilitated by local government but delivered by locally-based CSOs.

Compile information **on how cities/local government units cope with migration crises**, especially in relation to the increase in **human trafficking** of women and children during these times of crisis (Philippines). [Explore link-up to MICIC...]

### **Labour migration and development**

Forge **partnerships on economic development between sister cities** as a tool for local development and international cooperation in the area of human mobility [this could include: support to diaspora associations in destination communities to contribute to origin communities] (Buenos Aires).

**Identify and promote strong models for good local governance and technology**, indicating how countries/cities have used the most modern communications technologies e.g. social network (Facebook, Twitter), websites, on-line applications to reach out to their diasporas especially in terms of financial education and encouraging investments, entrepreneurship, volunteerism, donations and on-line contacts/transactions with government agencies (both national and local) (Philippines).

Support **projects to promote economic development/prospects for returnees** (e.g. in Ecuador: returnees get special/favourable rates on loan from state to build housing) (El Salvador).

### **Governance and policy coherence**

Convene a series of **technical meetings to learn and compare local government capacities in the area of data on migration** (gathering, availability, usage and transferability) within broader context of measuring the



attainment of migration-specific SDGs and targets. A first meeting would take place under the aegis of the KNOMAD/GMG in March 2016, with a sub-theme dedicated to this issue at the Third Mayoral Forum (e.g. ongoing migration mapping exercise for local planning taking place in the Cities of Naga, Legazpi, Sorsogon, Masbate and Tabaco, Philippines).

Explore the functions, objectives and added value of a **Platform for Partnerships (PfP) for local and regional government** that would be formally linked to the GFMD's PfP.

Establish a **sub-regional dialogue for local authorities in Central America** on migration and development in El Salvador in 2016 (supported by CIFAL San Salvador). Given the juxtaposition of demand for institutional support at the municipal level in this field and the relevance of South-South migration including at the sub-regional level, discussion around marshalling the presence of the JMDI and UNITAR's CIFAL Network to support this initiative (in the lead up and aftermath of the UN Habitat III).

\*\*\*\*\*

CT/15 Dec. 2015