

LOCAL LEADERSHIP ON MOBILITY, MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Hosted by the World Bank, JMDI and UNITAR

And under auspices of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Migration

10 March 2015

New York

9:00 – 13:00

New York City Baha'i Center

53 East 11th Street (between Broadway & University)

Summary Record

Opening

Dr. **Colleen Thouez** of UNITAR welcomed the participants to the meeting. Describing notable changes in the migration policy space over the last two decades, she pointed to: more established global interstate cooperation; a more refined understanding of how migration can support development; and more formal inclusion of non-state actors in policy making circles. She also acknowledged, however, that the international community has not until recently sought to gain insights on how 'sub-national' government impacts policy making and implementation, and how its inroads can be better brought into the international policy space. In connection, she described the first objective of the meeting: "to understand the relationship between local, regional and national decision-making on human mobility, and the extent to which local and regional government may or may not have greater scope of action".

Dr. Thouez also asked participants to consider current negotiations underway at the UN to define the benchmarks (targets and indicators) of the new development agenda or "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs). In addition to those targets that pertain to migration, there is a dedicated SDG to "making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". She thus asked participants to share experiences such as: how actions at the sub-national level may be implemented despite greater restrictions federally? What is the emerging new integration paradigm in societies/communities? How best to adopt non-discriminatory approaches to newcomers? Finally, she invited those present to seek bold new models for partnering with cities in this field.

Dr. **Sonia Plaza** of the World Bank KNOMAD project added that this meeting is an important step towards implementing the agenda that was initiated during the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development at the UN in 2013, and the first Mayoral Forum in June 2014 in Barcelona. The second Mayoral Forum will take place in Quito in November 2015 and will have an important influence on global, national and local policy-making with regard to migration and development. In highlighting emerging issues, she asked participants to consider studying needs and capacities from the perspective of differentiating between categories of migrants (including ageing migrants, migrant

youth), the profile of different cities (based on size, migration trends) and other important considerations (i.e. South-South migration, portability of benefits, and the contributions of diaspora).

Panel 1: City Initiatives and Lessons Learned on Migration, Mobility and Governing Diversity

Mr. **Kodjo Mensah-Abrampa** of UNDP opened the first panel by stating that cities are the places where migrants should feel comfortable and embraced. He stressed the issue of recognition of people, and the fact that by using damaging labels such as “illegal”, societies are hampering efforts at meaningful and productive inclusion.

Ms. **Sonia Lin** of New York City (NYC) gave an overview of the immigrant population in NYC. With 3 million foreign born (37%) of its population of 8 million people NYC might be the most diverse city in the World. 1/4th of foreign born arrived after the year 2000. 33% are Latin American, 28% Asian, 19% Caribbean, and 4% African. The first country of origin is the Dominican Republic, second is China, third Mexico, fourth Jamaica, followed by Guyana, Ecuador, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, India, and Russia. This diversity also implies that over 200 languages are spoken in NYC, and a significant portion of the population is linguistically isolated. Approximately 500,000 are undocumented.

The Mission of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs is to promote immigrant wellbeing in NYC. It has a significant outreach function to New Yorkers and consults other agencies within the government on how they can serve immigrant New Yorkers. The largest initiative is the municipal identification programme, an inter-agency effort between the Mayor's office and rest of the government. The purpose of the NYC issued ID card is to provide the security and the peace of mind that comes with having a government issued photo identification card. NYC is not the first city to have this kind of programme. It is a way for vulnerable New Yorkers to live their lives, get around the city and do their daily business. The police department recognizes the card and is an important partner in this endeavour.

Dr. **Sarah Wayland** of the City of Hamilton explained that in Canada, municipalities, local and regional government answer to the provincial government. Mayors are known as public figures but have limited power and resources. This causes a disconnect between the federal and local level. Cities are responsible for receiving migrants but have no decision power or resources to do so.

The City of Hamilton grew as steel manufacturer (“steel city”) and is still growing. Today the largest employers are government institutions: the health care sector, schools, the local university and Mohawk College, along with steel firms. The economy is very diverse and one of the challenges is that the city has a lot of small employers and not many headquarters or large firms. Twenty five percent of the population is foreign born. Many immigrants arrived in the 1960s-1970s to work in the steel sector. Between 3,000 and 4,000 new individuals arrive every year, mainly from China, India, the Philippines, the US, and Colombia. The migrant population is diverse, from government-resettled refugees to high skilled workers for the university and health sectors. This diversity is rich but poses challenges when trying to create services for the population.

The City of Hamilton created and strengthened services for undocumented persons. For example city workers were educated about undocumented migrants. The city also initiated the *Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council*. This city-led and community-driven initiative was taken in the framework of the Local Immigration Partnership, an initiative of the federal government, and gathers 20 community leaders. The Council does not deliver services, but it is a forum for service providers and local actors to look for ways to work together and raise awareness. The Council has 3 objectives: to foster local engagement, to support community-based knowledge sharing, and to improve the coordination of services. The Council works with different working groups to translate policy into action. The focus lies on language training, health, housing, employment/labour market, and settlement service providers.

With these initiatives, the city was able to meet the community service needs lacked a focus on immigrants as drivers of economy and assets for local development. The city therefore established *Global Hamilton* to attract and support economic class immigrants, immigrant entrepreneurs and international students to the City of Hamilton. The project identified 6 elements of immigrant attraction: a welcoming environment, retaining international students, attracting secondary migration, strengthening neighbourhoods, attracting foreign investment, and immigrant entrepreneurs. In order to do so, it developed a 3-pronged approach: to attract, to support and to educate.

An example to attract migrants is Global Hamilton Connect, aimed at keeping young professionals in the city. A group of young migrant professionals organizes monthly professional and social events for networking and to publicize free services of the city for businesses. The aim of the educative approach is to shift the focus from immigrants as service users to immigrants as assets. For example through publishing small pieces in the local newspaper about immigrant “success stories”.

Ms. **Laia Roig** of the City of Barcelona agreed with the need to promote the advantages of migration. The main objectives of Barcelona’s “inter-culturality” programme are to: create space to foster dialogue and intercultural relations, foster knowledge about cultural diversity, and create opportunities for shared actions. The main lines of action are: Barcelona’s anti-rumour campaign, language education and supporting intercultural projects. Distinctions are made in concept and approach between: migration policies, diversity policies and social policies for vulnerable people. Diversity policies focus on all inhabitants and serve to foster respect and recognition for all citizens. They are founded on equality, recognition of diversity and positive perceptions. Social policies are for all vulnerable people, regardless of their origin.

Migration policies offer assistance for issues that are specific to migration, e.g. finding housing post arrival. Barcelona created services for welcoming immigrants, by offering information, orientation, support and explaining their rights and duties. It created “one stop shop” centers where immigrant entrepreneurs can receive comprehensive information thereby no longer having to go to different government agencies to retrieve what they require. Trade unions also play a part, including being responsible for providing legal support.

Mr. **Cristian Espinosa** of the City of Quito explained the migration and refugee dynamics in his city. Quito has 2.4 million inhabitants and has grown very rapidly, attracting many people from the rural areas in Ecuador as well as from other countries. In addition, Quito has many emigrants. Sixty seven percent of the population has a direct relative living abroad. Many left in the 1970s and after the economic crisis in 2000. Ecuador lost 10% of its population, mostly to the US, Spain and Italy. Nowadays, Quito has registered 120,000 migrants (5% of the total population) but the number is estimated to be larger. Most immigrants come from Peru and Colombia, in addition to significant flows from Cuba, Haiti, and North Americans and Europeans who retire in Ecuador.

Quito also receives refugees from Colombia and has been providing assistance to them. Seventy thousand are registered in Ecuador, and an additional estimated 70,000 are not registered. One third of these refugees live in Quito (it is only 200 km from the Colombian border).

Mr. Espinosa stressed the unique situation of his city vis-à-vis others represented around the table. He suggested: “You feel it (migration) more, because people leave”. Moreover and notably, since 2008, the Constitution of Ecuador states that there is no such thing as an illegal person. And practically speaking, Ecuador has made steps towards “universal citizenship”: with few exceptions (6 countries), anyone can come to Ecuador without visa up to 90 days. The Constitution also puts an obligation on the state to make sure that immigrants are well treated and all rights are respected.

The Honorable **Luis Gallegos** stressed the importance of the positive work that cities are doing with regard to social cohesion. Fear of migrant populations and islamophobia are phenomena that should not be ignored and can be countered at the local level.

The Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development and “Call of Barcelona”: Significance and Next Steps

Ms. **Laia Roig** expressed Mayor Xavier Trias and the City of Barcelona’s satisfaction with having initiated the Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development (“Mayoral Forum”) process. In citing from the outcome document, the “Call of Barcelona” she emphasised the need to include city leaders in inter-governmental discussions that have an impact on the ground in cities and municipalities ... “a voice and role in shaping migration policies”, requesting: the international community to pay attention to local policies of integration, and the role of cities as key actors in discussions and decision-making processes in the design of migration policies.”

Mr. **Cristian Espinosa** confirmed that his Mayor, Mauricio Rodas, would host the Second Mayoral Forum in November 2015, characterising this as an opportunity to reflect on migration and its broader implications. He stated that Mayor Rodas and Mayor Trias had had the opportunity to discuss in person not long ago, and that the focus would be in line with one of the key areas of global and local policymaking in the next decade – namely the implementation of the new international development agenda (Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) after these are adopted in September 2015. Mr. Espinosa presented an action-oriented focus, expressing a vision to make the Quito Forum one at which real impact can be had through support to initiatives that will be concrete, scalable,

transferable and on which city administrations can report progress. For this, material support will be required.

In addition, the Quito Forum will conclude with an outcome document in the form of a Local Agenda for Development endorsed by the city leaders present.

In chairing the session, Honorable **Gallegos** referred to the need to not shy away from the hard policy questions, and from the fact that migrants are often the scapegoats of broader economic and social difficulties. In this context, and for the Quito Forum more generally, participants endorsed a focus on concrete action, emphasizing that the Forum should build on the lessons learnt from the GFMD, and also seek to include civil society and the private sector.

Panel 2: Assessing how International Partners can and do Support Cities

Mr. **Gregory Maniatis** of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration stated that it is important that cities unite and demand to be part of global discussions on migration and development. He commented that a process of “devolution” is underway in which the city level is where important and impactful change is occurring; and that this is true in the context of all global issues. Due to overriding security concerns (after 11 September 2001 but also now with the Islamic State (IS)), national governments are not yet giving cities the necessary responsibilities for immigration. Paradoxically because of this heightened concern for security by the national government, other interests fall down the ladder of priorities, which leaves the responsibility to cities. Cities must continue to be in the lead not least with the rise of xenophobia casting migrants as scapegoats.

In terms of the multilateral system, it is important to take city experience into account. And national governments are starting to take notice as cities set the standards for policy and action in this field. Engaging with cities is globally relevant.

Ms. **Cecile Riallant** presented the work of the JMDI, which is a case in point when it comes to the international community concretely engaging at the local level. The JMDI is a global inter-agency programme that has funded 55 projects across 16 countries. Key findings that have emerged are: a) the development impact is limited to a specific territory, and b) the practices and projects that have been the most far reaching in terms of sustainability are the ones that were implemented in partnership with local authorities and local development partners (in that given territory).

Ms. Riallant also stressed the obstacles to working at the local level given the lack of resources, capacities, and coordination among the many stakeholders. She also emphasized the need for greater policy coherence with national and global levels. The JMDI has conducted a mapping of practices and identified 16 initiatives for which an approach of scaling up was chosen through funding and capacity development to solidify these practices and support their institutionalization. The projects are located in 8 countries that are countries of origin and destination, and have different levels in terms of human development index. The JMDI also tries to link local authorities to each other. It supports initiatives every step of the way through dedicated focal points in each country to conduct the work in depth,

and advocate for it. The capacity building role of the JMDI goes beyond working with these specific projects. Through global research, the JMDI aims to build a corpus of knowledge that can be applied everywhere. The results of this research have been captured in a toolbox, which will be rolled out in Turin in June 2015. To institutionalize this training tool and make the work sustainable, the JMDI works with national academies that are responsible for training local actors.

In terms of knowledge management, the JMDI has a community of practice with has over 3,800 members across the globe. The aim is to provide them with knowledge and connect them with each other, but also to learn from them and engage in a progressive dialogue. One of the topics being discussed through this community of practice is how to include migration in the post-2015 development agenda, and how do you “localize” this agenda.

Ms. **Amy Muedin** of IOM stated that it is important to acknowledge that the local level is directly impacted by decisions made at the international level, without having a seat at the table.

Migrants can bring multiple skill sets to their new community but their ability to do so depends on whether they are well integrated into their new community, which consequently, will also determine their ability to also contribute to their country of origin. Ms. Muedin posited that a city is only as strong as its most vulnerable member. And, the increasing anti-migrant sentiment in rhetoric at all levels of government needs to be circumvented.

International actors can support local actors by not only discussing migration and development with migrant experts, but by including other actors who need to be considered such as the media, development actors and the private sector. At the United Nations, the IOM advocates raising the issue of migration, particularly with regard to including the topic in the next development agenda, which will also have implications at the city level.

Ms. Muedin informed that IOM will host a major conference on migration and cities on 26-27 October 2015 in Geneva. This global high-level conference will serve to advance the discourse on the socio-economic wellbeing of migrants. It will bring together a multitude of local and national actors to exchange best practices and experiences. Accompanying this conference, IOM will release its World Migration Report on the topic of migrants and cities.

Ms. **Bettina Etter** of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) started her statement with a quote from Sir Peter Sutherland, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Migration: *“Migration is the original strategy for people seeking to escape poverty, mitigate risk, and build a better life. It has been with us since the dawn of mankind, and its economic impact today is massive.”*

Ms. Etter indicated that regardless of the various reasons for migrating, migrants are always actors of development. By migrating, they improve their individual situation but also of their families back home. From a development perspective, migrants therefore have an enormous potential to contribute to the development of their country of destination and origin. International cooperation

on migration and development has a relatively young history. Switzerland is one of the few countries to include migration in its development strategies.

Ms. Etter outlined the SDC Global Programme on Migration and Development (“Programme”) based on its 5 pillars of work: decent work and labour migration; migrants’ contribution to development; integration of migration into development planning; global policy dialogue (GFMD, UN HLD, Post-2015, Financing for Development (FfD)); and coherence regarding Swiss migration policy (with an inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination mechanism to implement a comprehensive approach to migration throughout Government). She stressed that the Programme intervenes where migration matters, and where it can make a significant impact on multiplying the development potential of migration.

Ms. Etter pointed to two introductory considerations pertaining to cities. First, as the locus of social transformation and diversity, cities have been since the Middle Ages cities, the places of hope for a life of prosperity and freedom; Ms. Etter referred to the German expression: “*Stadtluft macht frei*”. Today more than ever, however, poverty is rapidly becoming an urban issue. Second, cities are also melting pots of different groups of migrants. The face of migration is mostly urban, so focusing on cities is an opportunity to overcome the imprecise categorization of migrants (international vs. internal / forced vs. voluntary / regular vs. irregular), since all migrants in cities face similar challenges (labour market, integration, service provision, identity, social cohesion, etc.)

Urban migrants have a threefold potential role for development that can be multiplied by international cooperation. Migrants contribute to the development of cities at the interface of formal and informal urban settings and contribute to the development of their places of origin.

Ms. Etter elicited the role of the international development community in facilitating migrants’ access to opportunities that could empower them to shape economic, societal and cultural outcomes. She raised broad governance considerations; the role of city authorities and service providers in fostering an enabling environment that provides urban migrants with access to jobs, housing, social services, cultural facilities, etc.; and the extent to which societal transformation in cities is a question of endogenous (and unregulated) urban development.

Ms. Etter announced that the SDC is establishing a comprehensive programme on urban migration. It is therefore establishing collaboration with a Swiss university to obtain more evidence-based material to showcase the interrelation of migration, urbanization and development; contributing to the Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development (2015), and through its on-going support to the JMDI.

Ms. **Kim Turner** of Cities of Migration explained that cities have considerable agency with regard to migration. They are leading the way, as policy makers, service providers, employers and buyers and sellers of services, as wealth creators, as engines of the national economy. Cities are wealth creators and are significant engines of the national economy. Importantly, in this development context, cities are democratic constitutions that are inviting us to rethink the concept of citizenship and the right to and membership in the city.

Indeed, successful integration strategies focus on making cities attractive to potential migrants, and creating the conditions for investment, attachment and belonging. Migrants overwhelmingly move to cities because that is where the opportunities are. Managing the settlement and inclusion of newcomers at the municipal level, in cities and urban regions, is vital and managing it well can make a city prosper. Cities, like businesses, are solution seeking, entrepreneurial, flexible, and opportunistic. Integration is a complex process that involves many actors and stakeholders and requires innovative approaches, new solutions, new forms of collaborations and partnerships.

Local governments can succeed where many national governments are challenged. Successful innovation at the municipal level has the potential to redirect the public discourse about the benefits of migration and facilitate the development of more successful mobility systems. Unleashing this potential of local initiatives requires that they are better understood, actively disseminated, and replicated. Their impact can incentivize a new public narrative and influence policy frameworks.

Dr. **Howard Duncan** of Metropolis stated that Metropolis convenes people from local and national authorities, academics, and CSO to encourage them to respond the kinds of issues that are being discussed today. Its motto is to enhance policy through research.

Dr. Duncan warned of the latent assumption that what goes on in the global North is directly relevant to what could go on in the global South. He stressed that there are things going on in the South for which the North does not have answers, and he encouraged those around the table to pay attention to the specific characteristics of what is going on in cities in the South, and try to understand them in their own terms instead of assuming replicability from the North.

As agglomerations of human capital, big cities' success has hinged on whom they can attract to live there. Therefore, cities have acknowledged, accepted and promoted diversity and global connections. And, cities must adjust to the growing global competition for talent. This competition will be fought between cities, not between nation states, although what states do, the legislation they enact, will make a difference to which cities are successful. Cities that are embracing diversity, and that are looking for involvement in the world, will succeed. Cities that are worried about diversity will fail and will not attract the kinds of innovative minds that successful cities will attract, and national policies will not be able to prevent this.

With regard to the relationship between integration and development, through KNOMAD research, we are looking at the process of immigration to a host society, integration into that host society, and we are putting special emphasis to integration into institutions (workplace, business community, universities, government sector, etc.) followed by return migration to the homeland, followed by reintegration into the institutions of the homeland. The hypothesis is that the emigrants will acquire enhanced human capital that they will bring back to the homeland and that this will be development (business creation, wealth creation).

Closing



Ms. **Riallant** stressed the need to continue to lobby for local government inclusion in discussions pertaining to migration and development. She also concluded that while political dialogue amongst cities (through the Mayoral Forum and other opportunities such as the 2015 IOM Conference) is vital, drawing from the experience of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), she called on those responsible to take it “a step further” with a more action-oriented approach. Moving from the necessary policy dialogue and knowledge sharing to the ability for cities to work together in partnership, and linking the global North and South, including other partners like civil society and the private sector. She closed by stating that we have a lot of work ahead of us, but already have an amazing wealth of knowledge accumulated.

Dr. **Plaza** concurred with this call for action. She listed a number of concrete outputs including two forthcoming KNOMAD Policy Briefs on Cities (one on economic development, and another on the new SDGs). She informed the group of the forthcoming GMG Conference on Post 2015 and FfD on 26-27 May in New York, which will take place under the World Bank Chairmanship of the GMG. And, in thanking the City of Quito as the host City for the Second Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development, she pledged the partners’ support to creating and implementing an ambitious agenda.

