

Speech Bali Process – MM Closing

Global Forum for Migration and Development GFMD Bali Process

1 July, 2020

Allow me to start by thanking, on behalf of the Mayors Mechanism, the UAE Chairmanship of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, for giving us the opportunity to discuss these essential topics from a regional perspective ahead of the GFMD Summit in January 2021.

As the President of UCLG-MEWA stated at the opening of the consultation, migration remains above all an opportunity and a strong contributor to local economic and social development. First and foremost, what we have seen along these weeks of consultation is that dialogue among States, local governments, civil society and private sector is more necessary than ever. Innovative partnerships and policy coherence are much needed in this period in which the uncertainty of a global pandemic has added up to many other challenges that were already there when it comes to the governance of migration.

Migration flows have shaped our territories, and is a phenomenon that shapes our towns, cities and regions. The COVID-19 pandemic has served as a test to examine existing frameworks for human mobility and development. The current situation shows that some frameworks are obsolete, and puts the accent on missing links between local, national and

international frameworks, to address labour mobility and protection, but also to use technology more wisely and more consistently in order to facilitate pathways for regular migration and foster evidence-based policies.

Indeed, local and regional authorities have a crucial role in supporting migrants' inclusion and removing barriers to their contribution to the local fabric. The access to basic services is the starting point, but a strong coordination should happen between all spheres of administration, in particular the national level, and the stakeholders at local, national and international level.

At the thematic session on protection, we have seen many different examples of sectors and groups of workers that lack enough protection not only when working, but also when returning to their countries in the current context of pandemic. Coherent and strong measures were requested at different phases of the migratory process, but a particular accent was put on the informal sector, which is a topic of utmost importance for local governments. The reality of informality is not an homogeneous one, and local governments have much to say when looking at frameworks to tackle many of the challenges that happen in that context.

In order to promote coherent approaches, all the levels of government, together with private sector and civil society organizations need to work together to strengthen trust,

evidence-based policies and also more informed decisions by our citizens.

Local governments have also reminded that partnerships are essential to tackle issues as irregular migration. Although cities lack the mandate on legal status, coordination with the national level is essential for them to be able to guarantee basic services and to ensure that orderly and safe migration and development also happen at local level. As one speaker said “the most important goal in the city is to make the process of living in cities livable”.

Besides, the emergency brought about by the pandemic also shed light on the importance of documentation, since many workers remained outside the access to sanitary protection due to lack of legal status. Cities can not bear alone that burden.

The session of technology reminded us about the importance of data and the fact that technology can be an opportunity for all if we manage to leverage it properly. At local level, we heard cities reminding that credible data is the first step to build trust with all the citizens. Social media can be useful tools to push for a new way of communicating with all the communities, giving them also the space to speak and be heard, to be part of the solution.

However, a stronger accent needs to be put in providing disaggregated data that allow local governments to implement tailored policies to their realities, because not one size fits all. In

the territories concerned by the Bali Process, migration and asylum take different shapes and imply different challenges and opportunities. Those features need to be taken into account and local governments must be interlocutors at all levels of the governance system.

Finally, we want to recall the role of diaspora as a key ally for local governments, but also for States, private and civil society actors. A new governance of migration needs also to look at them.

On behalf of the Mayors Mechanism, I thank you for the space provided by these regional consultations and I look forward to bring the outcomes of this conversation into concrete partnerships for bolder action at all levels in order to ensure that migration works for all, in all regions and at all levels of development.

Thank you,