



Closing Session of the GFMD Consultations in Africa
Statement of Subnational and Local Governments
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I am happy to represent the Subnational and Local Governments community in this closing session of the Global Forum on Migration Development consultations in Africa.

Allow me first and foremost to thank the United Arab Emirates Chair as well as the African Union for having accepted to lead and facilitate this very important consultation process, that the subnational and local governments can testify to have been open, transparent, inclusive and conducted in a spirit of true partnership among all stakeholders.

The innovative approach proposed by the UAE Chair of the GFMD 2020 has made it possible for African local governments to participate in fruitful discussions with other actors at the international level and thus further anchor the Mayors' Mechanism in the GFMD consultation processes.

With the aim of making the governance of migration as one of the key levers of territorial development, leaders of subnational and local governments have chosen to focus attention on a human-centered approach to guarantee the protection of migrants in all areas affecting their inclusion in cities, in particular through access to healthcare, education, access to work, security and social protection.

From the discussions we had during these consultations, three points raised by the mayors and the representatives of subnational and local governments should be highlighted:

- One, the importance of multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms: Leaders of subnational and local governments need this type of platform more than ever, and in this regard the Mayors' Mechanism is an opportunity for them to find new allies and partners to achieve the objectives set at the local level: making cities inclusive safe and sustainable for all, including the migrants, advocate for free movement of people on our continent, and fight against xenophobia and discrimination against

migrants and displaced people in Africa, and protect African migrants and the diaspora throughout the world.

- Second, the role of Leaders and elected representatives of subnational and local governments in changing the narrative on migration: migrants should not be look at as a threat to collective security but rather important players in dissemination of knowledge, local economic development and wealth creation, particularly considering the role of the diaspora in supporting local economies and social services and networks in Africa. Subnational and local governments being at the forefront of migration requires that they have better greater leeway to intervene in the management of migration, access to resource, human and financial, to enable them to have an effective impact on migrants' conditions, in particular to prevent risks encountered in migration routes, better prepare the hosting of migrants and refugees, etc. The competences of local authorities must be extended in the field of migration, without affecting the Regalian competences of States. In this respect, national governments and parliaments must consider including provisions on migration in the decentralization laws.
- Thirdly During these discussions, the representatives of subnational and local governments stressed that migrants had been the forgotten ones in the double crisis that has affected our planet: the health crisis due to COVID-19 and the economic crisis that have severely affected our cities due to lock downs and stoppage of economic activities recommended in response to the pandemic sprawl. Mayors and leaders of subnational and local governments today have the heavy task of being political guarantors of trust between the migrants and the public authorities in these times of turmoil. It is also against concrete actions taken on the ground in order to maintain social links between migrants and local communities that our cities will be rated inclusive or not. This trust and this link are necessary to make migrants active players in the development of our cities. Domestic workers, employed in the informal sector, migrants are discriminated against, victims of xenophobic abuses... it is time to integrate migrants into local public policies, social policies in the same way as citizens, as recommended by the CHARTER OF LOCAL AND SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS OF AFRICA ON MIGRATION adopted in Marrakesh in the framework of the Africities 2018 Summit, just before the adoption of the UN Global Compact on Migration and Development in December 2018 also in Marrakesh, Morocco.

On behalf of the Subnational and Local Governments Fraternity gathered within the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, I wish to commend once more the

remarkable leadership and openness of the United Arab Emirates Chair and that of the African Union.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Rabat, 23 June 2020