



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

Check against delivery

**STATEMENT
BY
THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
Habitat III -- Open-ended informal consultations
New York • 25-29 April 2016**

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to make this statement on behalf of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Throughout the preparatory process for Habitat III, IOM has advocated for the New Urban Agenda to integrate well governed urban migration: expert advice was given to the work of the Issue Briefs, the Urban Dialogues on Social Cohesion and Equity, during the drafting of the Regional Reports, on the Advisory Boards drafting the Declarations and to the work of all 10 Policy Units. The reasons are twofold:

1. **First, migration is a key driver of cities' growth.** In many parts of the world, migration is driving much of the increase in urbanization, making cities much more diverse places in which to live. We welcome the recognition of migration and support the recommendations of the Declarations of **Montreal, Cuenca, Jakarta** and **Toluca** to design appropriate policies taking into consideration the needs of migrants. IOM also welcomes the recommendations of the Policy Unit on the **Right to the City**, which argues for the recognition of all inhabitants, whether permanent or transitional, living in legal or informal condition, as citizens of the city. As argued for by the Declaration of **Pretoria**, IOM supports the view that governments at all levels, including local and regional, explicitly and systematically integrate

migration into their regular planning processes, taking into account different national realities, capacities and in line with national priorities.

2. **Second, migrants are individuals with specific needs during times of crises, but who can also become agents of development when the right policies are put in place.** IOM welcomes the references in the Declarations of **Prague** and all thematic areas of the public **Urban Dialogues** which recognize the significant contributions to the economic, social and cultural development migrants bring. IOM also supports the Declaration of **Montreal** which advocates for cities to embrace diversity in participation and the Declaration of **Barcelona** which highlights the role of public spaces as an environment to dispel the myths and destructive stereotypes associated with migration by fostering public debate about the varied and overwhelmingly positive contributions of migrants to the local communities. But problems can and do arise, including when migrants face discrimination or xenophobia, or when they have difficulty finding employment, or accessing housing and social services. As local governments have shared at IOM's high-level **Conference on Migrants and Cities**, and presented in the policy paper on **Urban Ecology and resilience**, migrants are typically the most vulnerable to environmental stresses and shocks, but also those who, if included in governance processes, have insightful perspectives and resilience.

To conclude, IOM looks forward to continuing our strengthened partnership towards Habitat III, and offers support to all stakeholders in the elaboration of a practical and concise New Urban Agenda that establishes priority policies and a clear path to effective implementation on the ground for safe, orderly, humane and dignified migration that benefits societies.

Thank you.