



Remarks by Mr. António Vitorino, Director General, International Organization for Migration, As Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration

**High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
SDG 11 and interlinkages with other SDGs
Thursday, 13 July 2023, 10.00am – 1.00pm
Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

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Madame President of the Economic and Social Council,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Our cities would not be recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic without migrants.

During the pandemic, migrants were amongst those hit the hardest by job loss, lack of access to health and other services and exposure to vulnerabilities, especially along migration routes and at borders.

Yet, migrants are now driving economic growth both in cities and in countries of origin thanks, in part, to the staggering scale of remittances they send to their families.

In turn, many of the innovative migration policy responses observed during the pandemic came from cities and local authorities.

In a sobering scenario of climate change, biodiversity loss, livelihood and economic crises, cities are demonstrating that, when factored into urban planning, human mobility is a key driver of sustainable development.



Migration is an accelerator of inclusive growth when we put in place policies that enable migrants fully to become active changemakers in our societies. And this is why the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is so important: it provides us with the framework to make migration work for all.

It is no surprise that the Compact recognizes the role of local authorities through the whole-of-government and whole-of-society guiding principles.

I am pleased that of the 230 pledges formulated at the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), 48 are led by cities or local communities.

To help unlock the full potential of migrants and migration, the United Nations Network on Migration seeks to forge strong partnerships with cities through their involvement in capacity building initiatives to integrate the GCM.

The Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, called for in the GCM, recognizes the unique contributions of cities.

At its inception, the Mayors Migration Council was a Steering Committee member of the Fund.

Through most of its 20 Joint Programmes, the Fund engages closely with local authorities.

One is facilitating South-South cooperation between Santiago de Chile and Mexico City to address city-level migration challenges.

With 31 approved concept notes pending available funding, the Fund is poised to do much more to support cities.

Excellencies,

Most importantly, migrants, and local authorities, need to have a seat at the table in discussions that affect them.

Their participation is key to developing inclusive and effective policies and it is my hope that more effective means can be found to ensure their full participation in UN forums, particularly the IMRF, but also the SDG Summit, the health and the climate summits in September.

In closing, we have before us a clear path to ensure that migrants are an integral part of our strategies to deliver on all SDGs with human rights at the centre of our action.



**United Nations
Network on Migration**

Working Better Together

Let me assure you that the United Nations Network on Migration is committed to working with migrants and cities in taking forward this vital work.

Thank you.