



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

## **REMARKS**

### **Launch World Migration Report 2015**

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**Conference on Migrants and Cities**  
**27 October 2015, Geneva**

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the launching of the latest installment of IOM's flagship publication, the *World Migration Report 2015: Migrants and Cities – New Partnerships to Manage Mobility*. The eighth report in the WMR series focuses on the migration dynamics at sub-national level.

Migrants make significant and essential contribution to the economic, social, and cultural development of both their home and host communities. As such, migrants need to be at the center of national and global migration and development agendas. For the first time, migration is now incorporated in global development policy through the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or the SDGs. Migration's role in development is now firmly recognized.

Cities as the economic engines in host countries, have strived to achieve the sustained and inclusive economic growth with practical solutions. Managing global mobility and getting cities to work properly is the key to our future. In recognition of the important roles cities play, the World Migration Report 2015, investigates both the challenges and opportunities arising from increasing migration to diverse urban settings. It presents findings on the potential benefits of all forms of migration and mobility for city growth and development.

This report highlights how cities and migrants can work together in order to reduce the risks of migration to cities and take advantage of growing mobility and urban diversity in areas such as community resilience building and local economic, social and cultural development through migrants' connections between origin and host countries.

The World Migration Report 2015 benefited from the expertise and experience of IOM colleagues and external scholars. We are particularly grateful for the contribution of mayors and local government authorities to the report in sharing their perspective, experience and expertise.

### **Introduction of the Report**

Before I proceed in introducing our panel speakers this morning, allow me to elaborate further on why IOM chose this particular theme for this year's WMR. Why migrants and cities? In order to answer this question, allow me to provide you with a brief description of the policy context against which this report was drafted.

For the first time in history, the majority of people in the world now live in cities. The WMR 2015 draws attention to the fact that an increasing proportion of people living in cities are migrants. Migration is currently at an all-time high and has largely become an urban phenomenon with the exodus of people from rural areas to urban settlements. Although a lot of emphasis has been placed on the level of migration, little thought is typically given to the geography of migration and the effect that migration is having on our cities. The major cities of the developed world have very diverse populations living side by side. In developing countries too, the ethnic and racial mix can be considerable as migrants are drawn from nearby countries and across the region. Diversity is a reality of urban life and has to be factored into governance and development policies as internal and international migration continues to rise.

Second, migrants both internal and international, as they move to cities, and urban areas, bring diversity and connect communities within and across border to create new linkages among localities. Examples of how migrant help build cities, provide services, and generally resuscitate the socio-economic life of cities in decline are multiplying. Migrants are found among the architects and constructors of growing cities, the service providers, the entrepreneurs, the employers, innovators and as part of the global diaspora, "bridge builders", traders, business links and humanitarian support between countries.

Lastly, sustained and inclusive economic growth is the goal most cities strive to achieve through practical and innovative solutions. For an increasing number of cities, migration policies and programmes are integral to their urban development planning and management. Therefore, managing growing mobility and diversity effectively poses a challenge for both local and national governments. This calls for new approaches to urban governance and migration policies that can optimize the benefits of human mobility for towns and cities.

Having articulated the policy context, allow me to introduce our distinguished panel this morning who will each expound on the key findings and recommendations of the report.

Our first panel speaker is **Dr. June LEE**. June is the editor-in-chief of WMR 2015. June has worked with IOM for sixteen (16) years in various capacities including Research Officer, Labour Migration Program Officer at the Headquarters and the Chief of Mission in Seoul.

To my immediate left is **Professor Marie PRICE**. She is a Professor of Geography and International Affairs at George Washington University. A Latin American and migration specialist, her studies have explored human migration's impact on development and social change. She is a non-resident fellow of the Migration Policy Institute and the Vice President of the American Geographical Society. Locally, she serves on the Board of the Dream Project, a not-for-profit registered in Virginia that supports undocumented students to access and succeed in college through scholarships, mentoring, and advocacy. Her current research is on the spatial dynamics of immigrant inclusion and exclusion.

Rounding up our panel of speakers is Professor **YU Zhu**. He is a Professor at the School of Geography; and Director, Center for Population and Development Research, in Fujian Normal University in China. He is currently a Standing Council Member of China Population Association; Deputy Director of the Committee on Population Geography, the Geographical Society of China; Member of the International Advisory Board of UN Habitat's World Cities Report (2015); and Member of the Editorial Board of International Migration Review and Asian and Pacific Migration Journal. He received his Bachelor and Masters Degrees from East China Normal University, and his Ph.D. Degree from Demography Program of the Australian National University.