



# THE INTERETHNIC CITY:

MANAGEMENT  
AND POLICIES  
FOR A BETTER  
INTEGRATION  
OF MIGRANTS

## Leading migration experts from around the world gathered to showcase successful examples of integration programs and recommend migration policies aimed at promoting tolerance and understanding in multicultural societies.

Jointly organized by the Permanent Missions of Italy and Canada, the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the International Organization for Migration, the Roundtable examined good practices and processes for better integration at the level of cities as experienced by local administrators, policymakers, civil society organizations and academics. This event facilitated exchange and networking among representatives of municipalities, national governments and civil society organizations.

The roundtable began with remarks by **Enzo Scotti, Italian Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs**, who drew connections to recent General Assembly discussions on the need to work collaboratively and eliminate ideological divides. He (and later other speakers) highlighted the economic and cultural opportunities provided by cities, while also reviewing the challenges of large-scale urbanization and the inter-mingling of previously isolated communities. **William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration**, echoed these remarks, stressing that there is an unprecedented amount of migration occurring today and this is unlikely to change in the near future; as a result, exclusion and isolationism are simply not viable options. **UN Alliance of Civilizations High Representative Jorge Sampaio**, in recorded remarks, focused on cities as places of mixing, where individuals must live together. Cultural diversity may result in an increase in communal tension and potentially conflict, with local, national, and international implications; hence, he emphasized the need for good governance of cultural diversity. High Representative Sampaio noted that municipal governments and local leaders must play a key role, and city-to-city diplomacy can be a valuable tool. He also mentioned the UNAOC's Online Community on migration and integration that will be up and running in 2010.



**Professor Corrado Beguinot, President of the Italian Della Rocca Foundation**, gave an overview of the Foundation's urban studies on the inter-ethnic and inter-cultural city, as a solution to what it terms 'the urban crisis'. Professor Beguinot suggested, inter alia, bringing users and service providers closer together, and creating a team of 'inter-ethnic referees'. **Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-Habitat**, reiterated the importance of appropriate planning, management, and service delivery for resolving the problems faced by cities, including urban riots and slum housing. **Ratna Omidvar, President of the Maytree Foundation**, highlighted the Canadian Foundation's Cities of Migration project, which aims to identify and publicize the best ideas for integration from cities around the world- those that are practical, innovative, successful, and exportable. Ratna Omidvar concluded by noting the importance of local involvement in integration. **Ilda Curti, Commissioner of the City of Turin for Integration Policies**, highlighted how Turin has responded to changing economic and socio-cultural circumstances to empower new residents and support urban processes of change.

**Dr. Howard Duncan, Executive Head of the Metropolis Project**, described the partnership between government, academia, and civil society to provide research for policy making on the premise that successful societies are those that manage diversity well. He noted that studying incentives offered to newcomers to persuade them to integrate may provide examples of good practices to replicate. Dr. Duncan further noted that while dialogue can occur at the international level, and while national governments can set the conditions and provide financial assistance for integration, the real action on integration is at the local and municipal levels. **Geraldine Mannion, Program Director at the Carnegie Corporation**, focused her remarks on the US. Carnegie Corporation focuses on inter-racial, inter-ethnic outreach to newcomers, such as municipal involvement (which may not require



OPPOSITE PAGE: Enzo Scotti, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy.  
THIS PAGE: Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration

citizenship) and English language acquisition. **Helene-Marie Gosselin, Director of UNESCO New York**, noted that culture is becoming an economic asset, and multicultural cities therefore have a competitive edge. She highlighted potential areas of focus for more effective integration, including education policy (revision of textbooks and teacher training), social science research and data collection, and intercultural and linguistic education. **Jose Ricardo Franco Montoro, municipal secretary on Participation and Partnership of Sao Paulo**, spoke on Sao Paulo's rich ethno-cultural mix and some of the tools and policies that have resulted in successful integration there, including a coordinator for immigrant complaints and a racial equality plan. He noted that the lack of data on irregular/undocumented migrants makes it difficult to develop appropriate policies to deal with them.

A concluding statement delivered by **Canadian Assistant Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Global Issues, Keith Christie**, emphasized the centrality of multiculturalism to Canadian values and success. Mr. Christie also praised the UNAoC's convening abilities and urged continued collaboration from the international community. **Marc Scheuer, Director of the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAoC) Secretariat**, noted that migration and integration should be on the agenda of the next UNAoC Forum (2010 in Rio). Italy, IOM, and UNAoC all expressed a desire for the roundtable to be the beginning of a process rather than a standalone event. Indeed, this event followed on a working session at the April 2009 UNAoC Forum in Istanbul entitled "Integrating Migrants—A Challenge for Inclusive Societies." Mr. Scotti and others proposed that a conference be held next year to follow up on these issues, and several speakers also highlighted theme-specific conferences and workshops that will be held during the coming year.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Anna K. Tibaijuka; Executive Director of UN Habitat, Amb. William Lacy Swing, Director General of the IOM; Enzo Scotti, Italian Under Secretary of State; Ambassador U. Joy Ogwu, Nigerian Permanent Representative to the United Nations; Prof. Corrado Beguinot, President of the Aldo Della Rocca Foundation



## INTERETHNIC CITIES: SETTING THE CONTEXT

We are in the era of the greatest human mobility in recorded history. The current labor market, demographic and economic trends are such that it is unlikely to change for any time in the near future. So the question is not whether we are for or against migration, we simply have to learn how we can best manage it, by having everyone on board for the benefit of all.

*William Lacy Swing, IOM*

Something that has caught many off guard is not just diversity, not just multi-ethnicity, but what some sociologists, some anthropologists refer as hyper-diversity or super-diversity. (...) Migration can be an extraordinarily emotional subject and if we allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by sensational, perhaps misleading stories in the press, we are going to end up with less effective policies. This why we provide research that is relevant to policy making.

*Howard Duncan, Metropolis*

Diversity between and within the myriad of cultures around the world should be celebrated, and viewed in the context of our common humanity. We should not draw arbitrary distinctions between groups or peoples when framing these discussions. Rather, we must all work together to promote global pluralism and to learn from each other on how best to adapt to new challenges. Today's event has made an important contribution to that goal, by allowing us to share views on the key issue of how our increasingly diverse cities should be managed.

*Keith Christie, Canada*

"We should not draw arbitrary distinctions between groups or peoples when framing these discussions. Rather, we must all work together to promote global pluralism and to learn from each other on how best to adopt new challenges."



Jose Ricardo Franco Montoro, Municipal Secretary on Participation and Partnership of Sao Paulo, Brazil (SECOND FROM LEFT); Ms. Ilda Curti, Commissioner of the City of Turin for Integration Policies, Italy (FAR RIGHT)

We looked at the dispersion of immigrants and noted that, unlike in the past century when most immigrants came to the cities, New York, Chicago or Boston, immigrants today are moving all across the US, and predominantly in rural and local communities in the south. States with the largest percent of immigrant growth are indeed in the southeast, where we see almost 300- 400 percent change in population in States like North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee etc.

*Geraldine Mannion, Carnegie Corporation*

The city is at the forefront of globalization, reproducing its effects. It is a place of increasing challenges: poverty, insecurity and crime; separation among communities at the social level creating separate and conflicting spaces within the same urban context. But at the same time, the city is also the place for increasing economic opportunities, enhanced communication, cultural vivacity, scientific advances.

*Enzo Scotti, Italy*

The crises of the city will continue, as long as the city does not respond to the need of a society (that is) more multicultural and more multiethnic, and as long as the city produces few values, little wealth, little urban growth but great insecurity, great pollution, great decay and great economic loss.

*Corrado Beguinot, Della Rocca Foundation*

Brazil is a picture of the world. The immigration process has been extremely important in the creation of the Brazilian culture. We incorporated characteristics from all over the world in our national culture. These influences can be seen throughout the national territory, and it's very obvious in Sao Paulo.

*Ricardo Montoro, City of Sao Paulo*

Integration and inclusiveness are without doubt important factors in enhancing social advancement and economic dynamism in urbanizing and globalizing world. The difference between cities that have harnessed the potential of diversity and the positive contribution of inter-ethnicity and other cities that have failed to do so, is quite evident. Cities that have been able to promote social and structural integration are those who today celebrate their diverse cultural assets as part of their strength and uniqueness in a globalizing world economy.

*Anna K Tibaijuka, UN Habitat*

After more than 20 years of immigration flow, Turin is now a plural identity city where 11 percent of the population is non-Italian. We are faced with different national origins, faith and beliefs, cultural and social backgrounds, economical status, gender, age. All these new citizens have cultural and social needs and they ask to be considered as a resource of the city. They ask for citizenship, participation, engagement in the social life.

*Ilda Curti, City of Turin*

In our region, West Africa, migration is perceived as an essential of integration that could be utilized effectively to break the sub-regions' language, cultural, political, and especially colonial barriers.

*Joy Ogwu, Nigeria*





## THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND CITIES: coordination, complementary and participative approaches

Municipal and local governments play a crucial role in promoting sustainable urban development based on cultural diversity, as a key factor to preventing conflicts and contributing to security and peace. Promoting an appropriate climate for cultural diversity is a key role for local governments. (...) Legitimacy, proximity to citizens and experience in local management make local authorities more attuned to succeed in fostering mutual understanding, confidence and respect among peoples of different cultural and religious traditions. City diplomacy or city-to-city cooperation is also a powerful complement to the traditional diplomacy between States. City diplomacy can play a significant role in peace building and conflict prevention.

*Jorge Sampaio, UN Alliance of Civilizations*

National governments, it seems to me, can do little more than create conditions, create an environment within which local actors can carry out integration work. National governments can set expectations. National governments are able to provide financial assistance. But where the real action takes place is in municipalities. Non-governmental organizations have a strong role to play in all of this. The real question is how can the work of NGOs align itself with the basic policies, with the basic values that are established by the national governments? Where we have seen national governments act in partnership with non-governmental organizations, to carry out the integration work on behalf of the entire society, is where we find very successful results.

*Howard Duncan, Metropolis*

**We have found that local communities will take a good idea and make it their own with some adaptation.**

*Ratna Omidvar,  
Maytree Foundation*

**A plan for racial equality was drafted this year after the racial equality conference took place in May 2009, and was attended by over 800 individuals. It had representatives from South America, Africa, and Bolivia, Gypsies, Jews and indigenous peoples. And these individuals met with their communities before attending this conference and brought their demands, their needs, as far as income generation, culture and housing.**

*Ricardo Montoro,  
City of Sao Paulo*

## THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

As a catalyst and a platform for interaction of different players and stakeholders, the UN Alliance of Civilizations aims to build on existing initiatives and work in close collaboration with the main relevant players. We are very keen on facilitating exchange and bridge-building between actors of integration so as to promote further involvement and replication of good practices. And we are ready to disseminate positive experiences of integration of migrants so as to counter polarizing stereotypes about migrants.

*Jorge Sampaio, UN Alliance of Civilizations*

UNESCO, with UN Habitat and in cooperation with IOM, is also working on urban inclusive policies towards social and spatial inclusion of migrants. The objective of this long-term initiative is to build the capacity of local authorities to cope with new challenges posed by urbanization and migration in order to achieve inclusive cities. This means exposing social exclusion, equal opportunities, access to resources, social services, the issues of rights and responsibilities and citizenship. The access to education opportunities is absolutely key in this regard.

*Hélène-Marie Gosselin, UNESCO*

It is very important that countries work together at the UN and elsewhere to continue to support diversity and to learn about best practices. We see today's event as a part of our broader effort to enhance mutual understanding, to combat discrimination and to promote respect among all cultures and all faiths. These are core Canadian values reflected domestically in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in our policy of long-standing multiculturalism and in the strikingly varied and vibrant humanity of Canadian cities. The promotion of these values internationally is a key tenet of our foreign policy. (In this context), one of the Alliance's greatest strengths is also its approach to partnerships of a wide range of actors including governments and civil societies.

*Keith Christie, Canada*

The international community is less and less finding and dictating the solutions, but creating an enabling environment, and particularly in helping civil societies around the world to contribute their solutions increasingly. We all realize enormous sophisticated synergies, a new chemistry and new partnerships, large numbers of actors and partners at all levels. And particularly we have to invent new ways for civil societies and local authorities' initiatives to match with public policies coming from higher levels.

*Marc Scheuer, UNAoC*





## NEW PROCESSES AND SPACES FOR INTEGRATION: the role of Migrant and Host Societies

“Respect is the key word. A city where rights are respected will be a city of greater harmony, greater happiness, more democratic and able to create a better and more integrated future.”

Cities that have been able to promote social and structural integration are those which today celebrate their diverse cultural assets as part of their strengths and uniqueness in a globalizing world economy. (...) So unless local actors, unless the governance at local level is democratic, is open, is inclusive and is visionary in terms of finding the realities of our times, things will not work in the direction that we wish to see.

*Anna K Tibaijuka, UN Habitat*

Our country is a more vibrant, prosperous and energetic country thanks to the contributions of our diverse peoples.

*Keith Christie, Canada*

Migrants are contributing very significantly and are an asset both economically and culturally to cities. Culture becomes a significant economic asset, as it has been proven around the world that multi-ethnic cities have a more competitive edge over more homogenous cities.

*Hélène-Marie Gosselin, UNESCO*

Successful societies are those societies that manage immigration and diversity well. This will be enhanced by ensuring that research feeds into the policy effort and the developments of the actual on-the-ground programs. (For instance, our discussions about integration should examine) what are the incentives that mainstream societies have to offer to newcomers to integrate with the mainstream.

*Howard Duncan, Metropolis*

We have to look for practical solutions, for a different and a better model of urban planning, of city management, of social integration capable of overcoming those challenges and exploiting those opportunities. (...) Without a deep change in the relationship of one human being to another, there can be no integration policy. If I look at the other as someone that is diverse, as an opposite of me, I will not have any dialogue. What I need to know is that the other person is a projection of myself. This is the great contribution that religions must make to the world. Religions have produced many conflicts in the history of the world. Now they have to take awareness of a radical change, that they must be the promoters of a dialogue among cultures.

*Enzo Scotti, Italy*

Respect is the key word. A city where rights are respected will be a city of greater harmony, greater happiness, more democratic, and able to create a better and more integrated future. In search of better conditions, people from underdeveloped countries, who have suffered from poverty and natural disasters, naturally seek a better place to live.

*Ricardo Montoro, City of Sao Paulo*

Integration is a dynamic process: one of mutual accommodation and adjustment by the migrants and the host community. And it is best supported by rational, reasonable migration policies and practices on the part of the host government. Within villages, towns and cities, we find spaces where migrants meet the host community, workplaces, schools, community centers, shops, host government offices; these urban spaces are the social crucibles where the alchemy of integration will either succeed or fail. These are the points of contact; these can be the point of convergence of all.

*William Lacy Swing, IOM*

We look for good ideas that work, that are practical, that sometimes use new approaches, new tools that bring new players to the table, that are using new ways of solving old problems.

*Ratna Omidvar, Maytree Foundation*

In urban areas, the municipality adopted a holistic approach to try to improve the quality of life of everybody: housing, economy opportunity, social life, cultural initiatives, renewing public spaces and buildings reuse, and adopted a community development approach. The main task of local governance is the empowerment of people, communities and local actors in order to regenerate and transform their neighborhoods, and quality of urban lives. (...)

The cultural dimension affects transversally all public policies and is essential to empower the capacity of new citizens to play an active role in the social, cultural and economical life and to stimulate interaction between people. (...) We have a lot of people born in Italy that perceive themselves, as young people say, “Italian with the hyphen”: Italian-Egyptian, Italian-Romanian, and that first of all want to be a bridge between the different identities of their life.

*Ilda Curti, City of Turin*

## GOOD PRACTICES: learning, replicating, adapting and exporting ideas that work

The Maytree Foundation has created a marketplace of good ideas:

- Imagine a language class where immigrant and asylum-seeking men and women are learning English, and are also learning about law and order, learning about the city, and they are learning it from the community and the police officers in the City of Cardiff. This increased the level of trust to the extent that today the Cardiff police force has hired a number of these asylum seekers as police officers.
- One in three residents in Denmark uses a bicycle. The Danish Red Cross teaches immigrant women in Denmark how to cycle, how to repair the bicycle, and how to understand the laws and rules governing biking in Denmark. Again, this is important because it enables the Danes to see a migrant woman as one of them.
- In Duisburg, the “miracle of the Marxloh Mosque” is about a mosque which has been built with input, with participation from the local community, with conversation and dialogue with the local Catholic priest to the extent that the minaret of the mosque was designed so that it was not higher than any spire of any Catholic church. The mosque has a meeting place for all residents regardless of whether they are Muslim or not, and has now become a part of the community.

*Ratna Omidvar, Maytree Foundation*

In the New York City Queens Borough Immigration Task Force, we meet once a month with non-profit organizations from different countries. We have human resources from the government, we also have a lawyer from the Police Department (...)—Everybody gets to learn what immigrants need, and how can we help them.

*Shi Ho Lin, Grey Panther*

“It is often a source of great frustration for migrants, to not manage to have their diplomas recognized. We also cooperate on the issue of multi-lingual education, as a child has the best chance in succeeding initially at the primary level if he is given an education in his mother tongue.”

Carnegie supports efforts to ensure that all Americans, all people who are in the US, are able to participate politically, civically, in all aspects of the country, including voting. (...) We also have welcoming campaigns, in 16 states, in which folks, especially from the South, use their history of hospitality to reach out to people who are newcomers. They explain that their cultures may seem different, but that new migrants are not unlike people who have come before them: they want to contribute to the local communities.

*Geraldine Mannion, Carnegie Corporation*

UNESCO encourages conventions for the recognition of studies and diplomas. It is often a source of great frustration for migrants who come to a city (with diplomas), that they do not manage to have recognized. (...) We cooperate with the Roberto Varino Foundation in Sao Paulo, and the Linguamón foundation in Barcelona, Spain, on the issue of multi-lingualism and multi-lingual education—we often forget that a child has the best chance in succeeding initially at the primary level if he is given an education in his mother tongue, and that area should not be overlooked in migration policies in cities.

*Hélène-Marie Gosselin, UNESCO*

Every child who is not given English language acquisition and who is not able to get the right education, will be left in poverty and will not be able to attain the kind of life they need, and what they came to the US for, to try to achieve a better life, a better existence. Our schools need to be brought into the process, and we do programs that can help immigrant children to be able to attain both a high school diploma and also get to college.

*Geraldine Mannion, Carnegie Corporation*



In Sao Paulo, we have taken health prevention actions such as developing publications in Spanish, English and French to prevent tuberculosis and pneumonia, and to combat AIDS. The publications were made available to people who have been traditionally fearful of seeking out information. We have done this work with civil society groups and organizations that work with the homeless. (...) In partnership with immigrants and with the human rights committee, we have created the Immigrant Project which aims at reaching immigrants and helping them to adapt to their new homeland.

*Ricardo Montoro, City of Sao Paulo*

(Our aim is) to bring closer the user and the provider, the supplier of goods, services and activities. Today, the distance tends to increase more and more, due to a lack of understanding and a lack of dialogue, with many economic, social and political consequences. The "Kilometer zero" philosophy could be adapted and tested in cities on every continent and could possibly redesign the response to the demands of the society, by using the results that biology and other fields connected to electronics are making in technological development of nano-science.

*Corrado Beguinot, Della Rocca Foundation*

With regard to integration, points of orientation are going to differ from society to society. When we talk about social cohesion, what we mean by cohesion, of course, is cohesion with respect to something specific to each society.

*Howard Duncan, Metropolis*

Good ideas are practical, innovative, successful and exportable. And exportable is not the same as replicable. We have found that local communities will take a good idea and make it their own with some adaptation. (...) This is how we are connecting cities across the world.

*Ratna Omidvar, Maytree Foundation*



## RECOMMENDATIONS, next steps and practical projects

The UN Alliance of Civilizations will launch in 2010 an Online Community on Migration and Integration. It will be a virtual platform for learning and exchange. It will showcase good practices collected, initiated and implemented by a variety of actors, from the private sector and academic institutions to national and local governments, including civil society, international organizations and United Nations agencies.

*Jorge Sampaio, UN Alliance of Civilizations*

We need to have innovative professional figures, new types of professionals whose job would be to be an inter-ethnic guarantor to help administer the problems of cities. (...) These guarantors could provide new functions, new services and new activities that are required by multi-ethnicity and problems of coexistence between different people and mutual respect.

*Corrado Beguinot, Della Rocca Foundation*

One of the main challenges comes when political parties or majorities change at the national level, then you see terrible results and a sudden stop at the local level, even in cities where you have had political leaders that guaranteed a coherent development for decades. In this sense, the proposal of Professor Beguinot is extremely interesting and innovative: the idea of an inter-ethnic commissioner, or "guarantor". This system would be organized throughout the country, in which an institutional figure would guarantee continuity and provide space for cities to pursue their policies of inclusiveness.

*Gabriella Battaini Dragoni, Council of Europe*

I like very much some of the ideas expressed in this debate: the participation of all, the building of inclusive societies rather than the obsession about integration as such, principles of respect and the people-to-people approach (...). Providing cities and local authorities in the world with a greater say in shaping policies that can be crucial for effectiveness at the local level is another very interesting idea.

*Marc Scheuer, UN Alliance of Civilizations*

What's next, then? In order to highlight the topic and give it more visibility, I believe we should explore the idea of creating an "Alliance of Civilizations Model City," a framework, as a concrete example of different best practices in urban policies and integration. To achieve this goal we should call on experts worldwide to provide suggestions, proposals and solutions. From there, we could move to convene an international conference in 2010, under the auspices of the United Nations.

*Enzo Scotti, Italy*



## **USEFUL LINKS AND INTERNET RESOURCES:**

Carnegie Corporation of New York:	<a href="http://carnegie.org">http://carnegie.org</a>
Cities of Migration (Maytree):	<a href="http://citiesofmigration.ca">http://citiesofmigration.ca</a> ( <a href="http://www.maytree.com">http://www.maytree.com</a> )
City of Turin:	<a href="http://www.comune.torino.it">http://www.comune.torino.it</a> ( <a href="http://www.comune.torino.it/portapalazzo">http://www.comune.torino.it/portapalazzo</a> )
City of Sao Paulo:	<a href="http://www.capital.sp.gov.br">http://www.capital.sp.gov.br</a>
Foundation Della Rocca:	<a href="http://www.fondazionehellarocca.it">http://www.fondazionehellarocca.it</a>
IOM:	<a href="http://www.iom.int">http://www.iom.int</a>
Metropolis:	<a href="http://international.metropolis.net">http://international.metropolis.net</a>
UNESCO:	<a href="http://www.unesco.org">http://www.unesco.org</a>
UN Alliance of Civilizations:	<a href="http://www.unaoc.org">http://www.unaoc.org</a>
UN HABITAT:	<a href="http://www.unhabitat.org">http://www.unhabitat.org</a>

**Visit the new UNAoC/IOM Migration Integration Online Community!**  
**<http://www.unaoc.org/communities/migrationintegration/>**

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The full verbatim report of the roundtable can be found on:  
<http://www.unaoc.org/communities/migrationintegration/community/the-role-of-cities-in-integration/>