



Social movements attending the World Social Forum on Migration appeal to local authorities to join forces with them and consider an alternative form of migration governance

Having met in São Paulo for the **seventh edition of the World Social Forum on Migration**, the Assembly of social movements adopted the following wording in its **final declaration**: *“From the city of São Paulo, which has been declared a global migration capital, we are launching an appeal for the creation of a partnership between social movements and local authorities in order to move towards universal citizenship and the construction of an alternative form of international migration governance”*.

Host cities, welcoming cities, border cities, progressive cities, cities of refuge... there are numerous initiatives being launched by local community groups, which are increasingly positioning themselves as key stakeholders in the creation of alternative migration policies.

Very often on the front line when it comes to welcoming migrants or ensuring their integration, these cities are now establishing themselves as the true allies of civil society when faced with States, in particular in transit and destination countries, whose only response to migration is the implementation of increasingly security-focused and repressive policies.

Many communities are subscribing to a radically different vision of migration, including the megacity of São Paulo (12 million inhabitants, including 1 million migrants), which for several years has been implementing a migration policy based on the promotion of human and civil rights. The active participation of migrants in the development of public policies, infrastructure that supports their access to rights and opportunities for intercultural exchange are just some of the steps taken to move towards ensuring that migrants living in the city are able to enjoy full citizenship. Barcelona, Madrid, Lisbon, Bologna, Berlin, Karlsruhe and New York are not far behind; they are all looking to explore possible areas of work and initiatives that will combat racism and promote the idea of migrants as equal citizens.

It seems more vital than ever that civil society stakeholders should seek to work in partnership with these communities in order to present a proactive force for reversing the balance of power and implement more welcoming, solidarity-based and inclusive migration policies. The exploitation of migration for electioneering purposes and the persistent refusal of States to engage in dialogue with civil society have created too many victims and led to too much inhumane treatment.

This partnership should demonstrate that it is possible - and vital - to facilitate migration and welcome migrants, while building on what already exists and identifying joint actions that could support an alternative approach at various levels, from the local to the international.

This unprecedented partnership between civil society and local authorities, which is sustainable and recognises the respective legitimacy and expertise of each party, as well as their strengths and weaknesses, should pave the way for a new form of migration governance.

The WSFM identified the following the possible options for building this partnership:

- Place a focus on welcoming migrants (and not just in emergency situations) as part of a global vision for welcoming these people so that they may access their rights
- Ensure the active social participation of migrants in order to give them a stake in the community and enable them to contribute to developing public policies
- Conduct educational work to raise awareness among the local population of migration-related issues and a positive approach based on universal citizenship and free movement
- Create legislation to guarantee that the alternative actions developed by local authorities will be able to withstand changes in government

Several meetings were planned in order to progress towards the implementation of this partnership and these proposals.

N.B.: The World Social Forum on Migration in São Paulo brought together more than 3,600 participants. The Forum centred around the overall theme of “Migrants: building alternatives to disorder and the global capital crisis”. Around 20 plenary meetings and more than 160 self-directed workshops enabled participants to further explore the key issues relating to migration, including the work area “Migrants’ right to the city, social inclusion and citizenship”.