UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Statement of the Executive Director

On the occasion of the Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Migration
Marrakech, Morocco, 10-11 December 2018

UN-Habitat commends the consultative efforts led by the International Organization for Migration and the Government of Morocco as world leaders adopt a Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Migration, taking place in Marrakech, the Kingdom of Morocco. This is a historic moment, and UN-Habitat offers its full support to the implementation of the Global Compact. We further welcome the strong commitment made by mayors and local government authorities to implement the principles and objectives of the Global Compact locally, as set out in the declaration at the Fifth Mayoral Forum on Human Mobility, Migration and Development.

People move to cities hoping for a better future: greater opportunities; economic, social and political prosperity; and a safe and dignified life. Cities are the destination of most migrants. Migration is, and always has been, at the core of urbanization. UN-Habitat therefore calls on national authorities to recognise the role, opportunities and potential challenges that migration plays in urbanization, as they develop urban policy and planning frameworks.

While urban migration leads overall to economic, cultural and social development, UN-Habitat also recognises that this movement can pose challenges on both host communities and migrant populations. These factors must be understood objectively and addressed, in order to ensure socially cohesive and integrated societies. We must support city leaders as they ultimately bear the responsibility of ensuring that migration to cities benefits all. Local authorities have the responsibility to provide for adequate basic services. Too often, however, they do not have the adequate financial and technical resources to do so.

Our work on sustainable urban development contributes to Objective Two of the Global Compact, to "…minimise the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin". UN-Habitat's draft 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is will more effectively address issues of migration in urban policies and plans.

Some recent examples of our work in this area includes: **(i)** providing capacity to unions in municipalities to better manage inflows of migrants to urban areas in Lebanon, and working with migrant and host community youth in co-creating shared spaces that foster social cohesion; **(ii)** developing, with local governments, planned extensions to cities (such as in Iraq), to support integration of migrants into host communities and improve access to urban services for all; and **(iii)** fostering knowledge and experience-sharing among city authorities in the Mediterranean and across the Arab States. UN-Habitat will continue to support cities and countries to develop their own successful 'recipes' to capture the positive impact of migration in urban areas and thus contribute to a "a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world".

In supporting the implementation of the Global Compact, UN-Habitat commits to working alongside other development actors, to provide coherent and tailored support to city leaders and communities, as well as national authorities, to achieve the successful local implementation of the Global Compact.