



Conference Report

**Municipal Cooperation
with Migrant Networks**
Opportunities for Development,
Peace and Integration Policy

Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010
2–3 September 2010, Berlin Town Hall

Introduction

Migrants often establish very strong networks with their countries of origin and have specific and perhaps even exclusive knowledge of the situation there. At the same time, diaspora communities put down roots at the local level first and foremost in the host countries, with the municipal space thus providing the structural frame of reference for their activities. On the other hand, in the light of cities' growing aspirations to contribute to regional and global policy development, two questions arise: what kind of positive contribution can be made through the municipalities' cooperation with migrant networks, and which structures are needed in this context?

These issues were explored by academics and representatives of migrant organisations, municipalities and development agencies at the Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010 which took place in Berlin Town Hall on 2-3 September 2010. The event was organised by the Development and Peace Foundation (SEF) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH in cooperation with the Advisory Board for Development Policy and the State Office for Development Cooperation at Berlin's Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Women's Issues, the German Association of Cities and Towns (Deutscher Städtetag), Berlin/Cologne, and the Berlin Chapter of the Society for International Development (SID).

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Cities in the Global Governance System

What role for migrant networks?

Almuth Nehring-Venus, Permanent Secretary for Economics, Technology and Women's Issues of the State Government of Berlin and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Development and Peace Foundation (SEF), welcomed participants to Berlin Town Hall. Nehring-Venus briefly recapitulated the migration discourse of recent years which, she said, has resulted in a paradigm shift: away from the supposed deficits of migrants and towards their specific potentials. Nehring-Venus expressed the hope that this positive perception of migrants would ultimately prevail, despite the current resurgence of a more polemical debate, for as she said, interculturality offers benefits for all sides. For the future, however, it is also important to develop new forms of cooperation with migrants in the cities. Nehring-Venus drew attention, in this context, to the participation and integration laws planned by Berlin's Senate.



Almuth Nehring-Venus

Nehring-Venus hoped that the Berlin Summer Dialogue would produce new ideas about the form that such political cooperation might take and how it can be made a reality in cities. In Nehring-Venus's view, migrant networks offer immense development potential, both for cities themselves and for the countries of origin.

Migrants as facilitators of global cooperation

In his welcome address, **Klaus Brückner**, Director of GTZ Representation in Berlin and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Development and Peace Foundation (SEF), drew attention to one issue which tends to be ignored in the current debate about cities' potential to promote integration: how can cities make a constructive contribution to development cooperation? According to Brückner, in view of their demo-



Klaus Brückner

graphic diversity, cities should not only focus on the integration goals which are undoubtedly necessary; they should also seek to identify the potentials for development cooperation that exist at local level. Brückner pointed out that the migrants' remittances to their home countries, amounting to 11 billion US dollars, exceed Germany's total development contribution by one billion dollars. However, he also made it clear that this does not represent the total value of these networks' contribution to development. Migrants and their organisations, of which there are an estimated 3,500 in Germany, are also important facilitators of global cooperation and perform a key bridging function in this context. For GTZ too, migrant networks are important partners, and this form of cooperation is particularly useful at the local level. Brückner therefore hoped that the Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010 would produce valuable new ideas for the further development of these local forms of cooperation.

Cities as "makers" in the global governance system

The first opening speaker, **Professor Saskia Sassen**, Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University in New York, emphasised the importance of migrants and cities from a global governance perspective. Whereas national politicians who are engaged in dialogue in international forums can afford to spend years discussing specific issues ("talk"), cities have to find solutions and respond quickly to practical problems ("act"), for it is here that many of the challenges associated with global governance tend to converge – without the cities having been involved in the international dialogue.

The term "immigrant" still does not have entirely positive connotations, and some cities still regard migrants as a problem first and foremost, said Sassen. However, this focus on supposed deficits and the resulting policies ultimately decrease the city's international competitive-

ness. After all, migrants are important strategic players in the positioning of cities in global competition. Contrary to the tenor of previous debates, globalisation is decreasing the significance of the nation-states, whereas cities have established a range of transversal global networks, said Sassen.

Sassen drew attention, however, to the lack of appropriate models to analyse and elucidate this new complexity. The matryoshka principle, according to which different entities exist more or less separately, is becoming less and less suitable as a means of encapsulating these growing transversalities. Sassen described how, within this increasingly networked system,



Saskia Sassen

migrant networks are key actors and providers of ideas in a range of areas. As examples, she cited the adaptation of technology to conditions in developing countries, the establishment of microcredit schemes as a development tool, and the “urban craftsmen” who play an essential role in creating a vibrant cultural life in major cities such as New York. Indeed,

New York is a good example of how the gaps in public services resulting from neoliberalism can be filled by migrants’ innovative ideas and actions, e.g. in establishing new forms of local governance. However, as the prerequisite, said Sassen, there must be a stronger focus on the “hidden histories” of migrants in cities, with municipal actors generally attaching more importance to migrants’ role as “makers”. Sassen was very keen to see what kind of symbiotic relationships will develop in future between globalised cities and their migrant communities.

The future of the global society will be decided in the cities

Jürgen Roters, Mayor of the City of Cologne, added to Sassen’s input with various examples from his own work and experience. Roters began by dampening down some of the expectations made of cities in relation to the shaping of

international policy. Cities can only contribute to international policy-making on an ad hoc basis, said Roters, but even so, their input can certainly be effective. After all, cities are experiencing a “renaissance” and by 2015, three quarters of the world’s population will live in cities. It is clear that the increasingly self-confident cities will thus aspire to play an active role in shaping the future of the global society, notably in relation to issues such as the environment, integration, and managing demographic change. One undoubted advantage of urban governance is that municipal



Jürgen Roters

representatives are “close to citizens”. Roters therefore outlined a model for a democratic local community which must find ways of counteracting many people’s decreasing willingness to participate in politics and society. The City of Cologne, said Roters, is home to people from 180 nations, with migrants accounting for around 30 per cent of the city’s total population and a far higher proportion of the younger age groups. Faced with such enriching local diversity, an international perspective is essential, and this is reflected among other things in Cologne’s partnerships/twinning links with 21 other cities. As a further field of international cooperation to which cities can make an important contribution, Roters mentioned their role in shaping international peace processes. The City of Cologne has been twinned with Tel Aviv and Bethlehem since 1979 and in this context, Cologne organises trilateral meetings at many different levels; they include school exchange programmes, sports events and the meeting of mayors planned for 2011, which will bring together representatives of Arab cities, Palestine and Israel. The aim of these meetings is to develop new forms of municipal cooperation, which require a new form of “micro diplomacy”. The Mayor underlined the important contribution made by Cologne’s twinning associations to these activities and emphasised that the Israelis and Palestinians living in Cologne play an important advisory role.

Integration policy: a top-level issue

Turning to the issue of community relations within cities, Roters made it clear that a climate of openness is essential, which must include “making space for the new”. He also drew attention to small and medium-sized enterprises’ positive experience with multilingualism. Employees who have a command of several languages are an important resource for companies seeking to do business abroad. And while integration policy is a matter for all local government departments, it is also an issue which merits the mayor’s close personal attention.

In the final discussion, the question of how to close the “gap”, identified by Sassen, between policy-making at the national level and municipalities’ practical agenda aroused particular interest. Improving the interaction between the

various tiers of governance is likely to be a difficult task, said Sassen: cities play an important role in the development of “new norms”, but it is also apparent that municipal representatives, once they move into national politics, often adopt a far more critical stance towards integration issues than they did before. Immigrants therefore need to be given more opportunities for co-determination, but due to the present financial constraints, the starting conditions for this process are difficult. Jürgen Roters observed, in this context, that municipal representatives need patience and persistence, not only in relation to the issue of migration, and compared the municipalities’ increasing weight in the political discourse with the rise in significance of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) over the last 20 years. As Roters pointed out, the major cities now have a far greater say at EU level, for example, than in the past.



Jürgen Roters, Klaus Brückner and Saskia Sassen (l.t.r.)

Development Policy at the Municipal Level

What do migrant networks have to offer?

The first session at the Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010 centred on a discussion of the activities and associated potential of the numerous migrant networks in Germany, with a focus on their contribution to development cooperation at the municipal level. Which role can be played by the municipalities in promoting and supporting development and economic activities? And how can migrants be equipped to play a meaningful role in development cooperation at the municipal level? These questions were of particular interest. The discussion also considered which measures can help to encourage local companies to identify and utilise migrants' potential when doing business abroad.

In her introduction, **Regina Bauerochse Barbosa**, Head of the sector project "Migration and Development" in the Economic Development and Employment Division at GTZ, considered how successful cooperation can be developed with migrant organisations at local level in particular. Bauerochse Barbosa also raised the question of whether there may be a conflict between development activities and integration, and if so, how this conflict can be resolved.



Regina Bauerochse-Barbosa

Bringing together different development actors

The keynote speaker, **Renate Hechenberger**, Head of the City of Munich's Office for International Cooperation, described her experience of development cooperation at the municipal level



Renate Hechenberger

and gave an account of a pilot project on "Cooperation with Diaspora Communities". Munich is one of five cities/municipalities working with the Service Agency Communities in One World/Capacity Building International (Inwent) on a pilot project to improve cooperation among development initiatives at the local level.

With the exception of several African organisations, very few migrant organisations in Munich are currently involved in development cooperation. Very often, professional aid agencies are doubtful as to whether

migrants have the requisite skills and expertise to engage in development cooperation, but there is also considerable interest in new forms of cooperation. According to Hechenberger, migrants involved in development have a strong interest in improving their skills in this area and intensifying the dialogue with the City. The City therefore aims to bring together the various development actors and provide training if required. As an example, Hechenberger mentioned projects which provide start-up support as well as training and awareness-raising for migrant organisations. The aim is to promote an intensive exchange among municipal actors, which will also help to establish uniform quality standards in development cooperation. Hechenberger also suggested that municipalities involve migrants from the relevant country in the selection of prospective partner/twin cities, as this will generate added value for the partnership in many different ways.

"Joined-up thinking" about integration and development policy

Following on from Renate Hechenberger's keynote speech, **Rolf Graser**, Executive Director of Forum der Kulturen Stuttgart (Forum of Cultures Stuttgart), Stuttgart's Office for Intercultural Affairs and umbrella organisation for migrants' associations, spoke about the activities undertaken by Stuttgart's migrant organisations for the benefit of their countries of origin. According to Graser, many of the local migrant networks in Stuttgart are interested in aspects of development cooperation, perhaps because a dedicated contact point has been established, which is now consulted by 40-50 organisations. Graser also noted that very few contacts currently exist with other development actors such as aid agencies and one world groups; clearly, this form of networking is a difficult process. One of

the main reasons for this “parallel existence”, said Graser, is the lack of knowledge about the migrant networks’ activities and expertise. Prejudice may also play a role, and views may also differ on what is “the right thing” for the country of origin. Nonetheless, Graser described



Rolf Graser

more intensive exchange as a worthwhile task for the future. However, he rejected a purely utilitarian approach: involving migrant networks should not just be about the potential benefits, but should also be about participation. “Joined-up thinking” about integration and development policy is always essential, as otherwise, migrants’

role will be reduced solely to their relationship with their country of origin. Graser also pointed out that migrant networks are not development agencies; they have many other functions, notably their advocacy role in matters relating to integration policy, e.g. education and culture. For that reason, integration policy cannot be excluded from the debate.

“We want to get involved”

Christian Kouam, President of the Cameroon Diaspora Network Germany, gave an account of the activities of his organisation, a network of Cameroon diaspora associations based in Wolfsburg, on behalf of their country of origin. Kouam began by emphasising that the Cameroon Diaspora Network is not a professional organisation; rather, it aims to help maximise the effectiveness of official and non-governmental development assistance. Kouam provided various examples to illustrate the wide range of activities in which his organisation is involved: one of its aims is to improve health care in Cameroon by establishing a competence platform through an eHealth project, giving Cameroonian doctors living in Germany the opportunity to engage in a professional exchange with their colleagues in the country of origin. Kouam expressed disappointment about the fact that although there are now 18,000 people from Cameroon living in Germany, they tend to go unnoticed and are rarely

consulted by the government or requested to provide expertise on matters relating to bilateral links or economic activities. As an example, he drew attention to German companies’ reluctance to invest in Cameroon. As a way of addressing this issue, the Cameroon Diaspora Network is supporting the German-Cameroon Business Days in Cameroon later this year. Kouam emphasised the Cameroonian diaspora’s great willingness to contribute: “We are here, we want to get involved”. Development actors need to take more notice, however. In Kouam’s view, there is no conflict between integration in Germany and a strong commitment to the country of origin: after all, the Cameroonians living in Germany are very well integrated. The key factor is that they have set themselves the goal of improving the conditions of life for people in Cameroon as well. In response to a question from Bauerochse Barbosa, who asked what the municipalities could do to support the Network, Kouam emphasised that many minor improvements can have an effect very quickly; this can be achieved through twinning arrangements, for example, with migrant organisations providing their expertise and helping to create win-win scenarios. Migrant organisations are in a position to help set up and develop partnerships with municipalities in Cameroon, for example.



Christian Kouam

Development actors: a complementary role

Dr Stefan Wilhelmy, Senior Project Manager for the Service Agency Communities in One World/ Capacity Building International (Inwent), Bonn, was the final panellist in this session. In his statement, he drew attention to the plethora of actors – migrant organisations, one world groups, aid agencies and governments – which exist in the development setting and which may well be working very effectively at a variety of levels. It is important, said Wilhelmy, for them to engage in an exchange of information about their work and thus benefit from each other. Like Hechenberger, Wilhelmy described training programmes for migrant organisations as useful

tools, for example in order to build their funding application skills. However, the primary task of local migrant networks, according to Wilhelmy, should be to support partnerships at the municipal level. A good example of a well-functioning partnership is the link between the City of Bonn

and the city of Cape Coast in Ghana, in which Ghanaians living in Bonn play a very active role.



Stefan Wilhelmy

In the final discussion, Barbara Wirth-Bauer, Commercial Director at ICON-Institute, Cologne, began by criticising the tendency to blur the lines between thematic areas, which she felt was unhelpful. Integra-

tion policy should not be weighed down with development issues, and in any case, some issues clearly relate to social policy, not migration policy. Graser agreed to the extent that it is important to avoid blurring the distinctions between separate areas, but he reiterated that a “joined up” approach is nonetheless essential; indeed, this is the real challenge for future work. In general, migrants’ development activities generate substantial added value as they are able to make contributions at the local level which no other actors can make. He also emphasised that it is not only the highly qualified migrants who make a contribution. He cited the example of a bread factory set up for women in an East Anatolian village; the less affluent migrants also contributed to this project by providing their specific skills and expertise.

Engagement on behalf of the home country vs. integration?

Bauerchse Barbosa took the question a stage further: could migrants’ active engagement on behalf of their home country have a negative effect on their integration in Germany? **Kouam** was unable to agree with this hypothesis: on the contrary, the Cameroonian migrants who are actively engaged in activities on behalf of their home country are very well integrated in Germany and many of them hold a German passport. **Hechenberger** cautioned against equating development engagement with integration

measures. The primary task of development, said Hechenberger, is “to make the world a better place”. **Saliou Gueye**, the City of Ludwigsburg’s Commissioner for Integration and Migration, pointed out that development policy does indeed have a great deal of relevance to migration policy: after all, it is the lack of prospects in the home country that drives people to migrate. Here, migrants have a responsibility to provide those remaining in the country of origin with reliable information about life in the host country. This is not an easy task. After all, if a migrant visits the home country and tells his friends: “You’d do better to stay here”, his friends will immediately tell him to come back home himself, in that case. With regard to the cooperation with established development organisations, Gueye drew attention to a psychological barrier: “Will a black development worker really be accepted at local level?” is still a common reaction.

Dr Birgit Glorius from *Stabsstelle Lernen vor Ort* (Unit ‘Learning on site’) in Leipzig asked about the significance of political conditions in the home country in relation to migrants’ development activities. The question of how someone feels about their government is ever-present, said **Graser**, and this can obstruct certain activities. **Kouam** added that his network’s task is to implement practical, people-centred projects without pursuing a specific political agenda. This position is accepted by all Cameroonians in Germany, irrespective of their own political preferences.

The business community: funding and commitment

Glaser identified a further problem: unfortunately, there are no funding programmes specifically for migrant networks’ development activities. There is also very little funding available to support the establishment of migrant networks, which is why very few of these networks exist. Wilhelmy also pointed out that development cooperation at the municipal level and partnerships between cities (twinning links) are massively underfunded. Furthermore, very few municipalities are twinned with partner towns and cities in developing countries. **Tom De Bruyn** from the Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA), Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, point-

ed out that in Belgium, funding for municipalities' development activities is provided by the regional and the national government. Support is also available for NGOs, including migrant organisations. A budget for municipalities' activities in the field of development cooperation is on the wish list of the German Association of Cities and Towns (Deutscher Städtetag), replied Hechenberger. However, creating and managing this instrument is unlikely to be straightforward, partly because the funding will have to be distributed to the municipalities via the Land (federal state) level.

Bauerochse Barbosa drew attention to an Inwent study on the utilisation of migrants' potentials by companies in North Rhine-Westphalia. Among other things, the study showed that students from developing countries can act as brokers for businesses. This point was emphatically supported by **Kouam**. His network is willing to share its contacts with businesses, but so far, not a single German company has started

to do business with Cameroon. **Hechenberger** also saw cooperation with businesses as offering hitherto untapped potential. An initial attempt in Munich to harness this potential was not particularly successful, but a business-based approach is still promising, in her view.

Bauerochse Barbosa summed up the first discussion in a set of hypotheses: the municipalities are involved in development to a greater extent than is generally assumed; indeed, they have an obligation to make a contribution here. Although there are no nationwide migrant networks in Germany, a number of interesting networks exist. The linkage between development cooperation at the municipal level and migrants is new, but the potentials are obvious. However, the question of viable strategies and appropriate funding remains unanswered. The value added that new forms of cooperation can generate for development must be highlighted. Better communication and cooperation among the various actors are also important.



Stefan Wilhelmy, Christian Kouam, Regina Bauerochse Barbosa, Renate Hechenberger and Rolf Graser (l.t.r.)

Peacebuilding and the Establishment of Local Governance Structures A new field of cooperation for cities and migrant networks?

Is peacebuilding a field of action for migrant networks and municipalities, and if so, which conditions must be in place for it to function effectively? This was the core issue for the second session of the Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010, which was chaired by Professor Brigitte Fahrenhorst, Chair of the Society for International Development, Berlin Chapter, Chair of the Advisory Board for Development Policy at the Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Women's Issues, Berlin, and a member of the Advisory Board of the Development and Peace Foundation (SEF). The extent to which municipalities from consolidated democracies can contribute to the establishment of local governance structures in crisis-torn countries was also discussed.

Providing a critical basis for the discussion, **Dr Cindy Horst**, Senior Researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), focussed on two potentially problematic aspects of cooperation with diaspora organisations from conflict settings. The first is the fragmentation of the



Cindy Horst

diaspora networks, which can make it difficult to navigate through this landscape and is considered a major obstacle for supporting transnational engagements. The Somali diaspora is a particularly good and well-known example: here, fragmentation along regional, socio-economic, religious, clan and other lines plays an important role. There is a major risk of "doing harm" here, because conflicts over resources may intensify existing lines of conflict. The second problem in peacebuilding generally is the often very high level of politicisation of certain conflicts, such as the conflict between the Tamil organisations and the government in Sri Lanka, which makes it more difficult to involve diaspora networks. This politicisation also makes it more difficult for aid organisations to become engaged, and can best be circumvented by a focus on specific thematic areas such as education or health care. Horst also pointed out that "peacebuilding" is a very political and highly contested term in the countries of origin and diasporas and that in some cases, it may be preferable to engage in "peacebuilding" activities without using this highly charged term. Migrant networks' contributions are often aimed at the local and regional level, and these contributions should be valued and taken into account in the context of cooperation. Horst also pointed out that profes-

sional and voluntary activities are not mutually exclusive and there is room for supporting both these forms of engagement. Horst was in favour of involving experts from diaspora networks in the recruitment of staff and consultants, for example; in exchange, diaspora organisations should be enabled to access funding. Generally speaking, migrant networks' activities can only be supported; they cannot be forced.

„Diaspora can do things, but not alone“

In his statement, **Dr Awil Mohamoud**, Executive Director of the African Diaspora Policy Centre in Amsterdam, reported on how the African diaspora networks in Europe influence peacebuilding activities. Broadly speaking, diaspora groups in Europe are highly engaged. This contrasts to some extent with Europe's waning engagement in Africa, where China's influence has increased substantially in the recent past. The EU-Africa Strategic Partnership adopted in 2007 could serve as a possible framework for diaspora organisations' participation in peacebuilding and development policy, said Mohamoud. However, the work of the diaspora networks is often viewed in negative terms, in his opinion, hence the lack of support for diaspora activities. "Diaspora can do things, but not alone", he said. At present, there is a "missing link" in the cooperation between NGOs, municipalities and diaspora networks, and research is required to determine which conditions need to be in place to improve this cooperation. In relation to peacebuilding in particular, Mohamoud expressed



Awil Mohamoud

the view that diaspora networks are best placed to engage in activities at the local level, and should work with local NGOs in the home and the host countries in this context.

Personnel screening needed

Wolfgang Garatwa, Senior Planning Officer in the Competence Centre Prevention, Security and Peace in the Security, Reconstruction and Peace Division at GTZ, drew attention to another important aspect. A number of conflicts, e.g. in Sri Lanka, are civil wars which have opened up deep intra-national divisions. Within the various diaspora organisations, too, some of the structures in place are incompatible with the rule of law, and this obstructs cooperation. There is a need for awareness-raising here. Reporting from his own field of work, Garatwa stated that local screening of personnel is essential – even though this can be a difficult issue – in order to avoid negative effects and conflicts, and this should apply to cooperation with the diaspora as well. In the case of Sri Lanka, the work should be as inclusive as possible. Diaspora representatives can play a very important role in establishing a foothold at local and regional level. Garatwa therefore also agreed that the potential of diaspora networks lies primarily in their capacity to contribute at the local level, and that there are good opportunities for cooperation here.



Wolfgang Garatwa

Promoting the migration networks' democratic rights

In his statement, **Stefan Rother**, Research Fellow at the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute for Socio-Cultural Research in Freiburg, focussed on the migration/democratisation nexus with reference to the Filipino diaspora in various places, including Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong. According to Rother, the question of how democracy in a host country can influence migrants returning to their countries of origin is a topic which – unlike the impacts of remittanc-

es, for example – has rarely been investigated. In Hong Kong, for example, two trade unions have been set up specifically to campaign for the rights of domestic workers, mainly from the Philippines. Other notable developments include the cooperation between Indonesian migrant networks and the Filipino diaspora, and the founding of a global grassroots organisation, the International Migrants Alliance, in 2008. In the case of Hong Kong, Rother observed that the experience of democracy there undoubtedly has feedback effects in the home country. Hong Kong gave birth to the Philippine migrants' movement supported by the British legal tradition as well as the freedom of assembly and opinion. In light of this scenario, Rother therefore voiced a general demand for migrant networks to be granted full democratic rights in the host country, rather than calling in more abstract terms for them to lobby for democratic processes in their home countries.



Stefan Rother

Learning about democracy

In the closing discussion, **Dr Awil Mohamoud** pointed out that peacebuilding training for diaspora organisations is available outside Europe; he would like to see something similar in the European context. **Christian Arndt** from the Berlin Chapter of the Society for International Development (SID) suggested that municipalities should set up forums with a view to facilitating a dialogue among migrants. Responding to the question of how peacebuilding with diaspora groups which pursue different objectives and are not necessarily well disposed towards each other would function in practice, **Rolf Graser** warned against stigmatising members of specific groups or excluding certain groups altogether. People should be encouraged to engage in dialogue in order to “learn about democracy”. **Horst** added that people who are integrated into civil society and are thus well networked outside their own ethnic group are often more willing to compromise. In her view, diaspora groups should only be considered as

partners for smaller projects, as negative effects could otherwise occur at national level. **Garatwa** disagreed: in his view, larger projects can also work very well with the involvement of civil society.

Focussing on solutions

During the further discussion of municipalities' engagement and the involvement of diaspora networks, **Gibril Faal**, Chairman of the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) in London, made the following point: of course, diverse forms of engagement involving municipalities and diaspora networks are conceivable, but it is crucial that in their activities, stakeholders adhere to firm principles which are transparent for everyone. Furthermore, the focus should be on solutions, not problems. Everyone is welcome to participate in developing these solutions.

With reference to Munich's twinning link with Harare, **Renate Hechenberger** emphasised that cities have opportunities for access, even during conflict situations, which are denied to other stakeholders. In such situations, however, cities must proceed with caution and their strategy for action must be carefully thought out.

Summing up the outcomes of the second session at the end of the discussion, **Fahrenhorst** drew attention to an important question which remains unanswered: when can municipalities provide financial or material support in a conflict situation with a clear conscience, and how can they ensure that the assistance produces genuinely positive effects? Fahrenhorst made it clear, in her statement, that there is still a lack of knowledge about municipalities' potential to contribute to development, as well as a lack of empirical experience in this area of work.



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National and International Migration and Integration Policy

What role for municipalities and their migrant populations?

The second day of the Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010 began with a discussion about the role of cities and municipalities in national and international migration and integration policy and the specific opportunities available to them, e.g. through their proximity to migrant communities. How can transnational migrant networks contribute to the national discourse, and what role does the municipal frame of reference play in this context? Which political frameworks need to be in place at local, regional, national and international level to enable migrant networks to make an effective contribution to development?

The Chair of the third session, **Dr Uda Bastians-Osthaus** from the German Association of Cities and Towns (Deutscher Städtetag), Berlin, pointed out in her brief introduction that whereas integration takes place at the local level, i.e. in the municipalities, most of the relevant legislation is adopted at the national and international level. More intensive analysis of the local setting would therefore be helpful in order to provide more detailed insights into the municipalities' resources.



Uda Bastians-Osthaus

Circular migration – a new phenomenon?

In his input, **Dr Helmuth Schweitzer**, Director of the Office of Intercultural Affairs, City of Essen, focussed on circular migration, a topic which arouses particular interest among academics and practitioners. Schweitzer doubted whether circular migration is a fundamentally new phenomenon. After all, the recruitment of guest workers several decades ago was based on the notion of temporary migration (the rotation principle); the reality, however, proved very different. Given that many municipalities currently have very substantial budget deficits, Schweitzer also doubted whether the resources are available for the municipalities to play a major role in development cooperation at present. In a city like Essen, the lack of resources and structural change leave very little scope for any activities beyond the delivery of core services. Even so, despite running a deficit of 3 billion euros, Essen has an "innovation fund" to foster intercultural development; this is a voluntary service.

Schweitzer identified a number of shortcomings in the cooperation with migrant organisations, which are often not taken seriously as partners by municipal actors. On the other hand, the cooperation with migrant organisations is often difficult, as these organisations are not always properly structured and do not always play a positive role, e.g. in the work of the foreigners' consultative councils (the democratically elected official representation of the foreign population within a municipality).

Schweitzer drew attention to the frequent tendency for migrant organisations to be overlooked during recruitment to paid positions in the municipal administration. He therefore called for a different mindset when dealing with migrants. The *Ausländerbehörden* (foreigners authorities) should become more intercultural and evolve into "integration authorities". Diversity and the different capabilities that exist should be promoted, rather than attempting to treat everyone the same. At present, we are still unwilling to recognise that migrants can be a source of enrichment and that they may have more skills and expertise to offer than we do, said Schweitzer. The Ruhr "melting pot" therefore symbolises assimilation, not successful integration.



Helmuth Schweitzer

"People do not migrate to countries, they migrate to communities"

"People do not migrate to countries, they migrate to communities"

"People do not migrate to countries, they migrate to communities and networks", said

Gibril Faal, Chairman of the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) in London, at the start of his speech. Although it is generally the national level which is responsible for adopting the relevant legislation, the task of managing migration flows and dealing with integration tends to devolve to the municipalities. Cities have two options, said Faal: to wait until problems arise and then react, or adopt forward-looking integration policies which aim to maximise potential. He called for proactive municipal migration and integration policies which place a stronger emphasis on the positive effects of diversity as the guiding principle. It is essential, in this context, that migrants and their organisations are not regarded as victims or supplicants, or indeed as potential criminals. Instead, their potential as honest and productive tax-paying citizens should be recognised. This must be matched by migrants' responsibility and obligation to understand and contribute to the development of the society in which they have chosen to live.



Gibril Faal

Migration also creates lose-lose situations

Tom de Bruyn, Senior Research Associate at the Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA), Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, emphasised that migrant networks can make contributions at many different levels. The positive effects are measurable in a range of areas, from their role in establishing an ethnic economy to facilitating communication between countries and promoting tourism. However, de Bruyn cautioned against assuming that migration will automatically have major positive effects. He drew attention to the problem of forced migration and to the difficulties associated with the changes to the local population's living space resulting from migration, which may not always be welcomed. In this respect, migration can also create "lose-lose" situations. Politics must therefore aim to "celebrate diversity".



Tom de Bruyn

With reference to the Belgian region of Flanders, de Bruyn explored the municipal dimension of cooperation with migrant networks and the uncertainties facing the municipal side, especially in relation to potential partners. Which organisations from the migrant community should be selected as partners for cooperation? What is the best way for cities to approach them? Do they genuinely offer a voice for as many migrants as possible, or is the dialogue monopolised in practice? These questions often stand in the way of more intensive cooperation. De Bruyn therefore recommended that municipal actors should wait for functioning networks to be established within the migrant communities, with a view to developing forms of cooperation that are as viable and democratically legitimised as possible.

A "hands-off" approach by government

What form of engagement by migrant communities is useful, and where should it take place? These and other questions were explored in the ensuing plenary discussion. According to **Dr Lale Akgün**, Head of Department in North Rhine-Westphalia's Ministry of Health, Equality, Care and Ageing, Düsseldorf, it is time to dispense with the notion that migrant organisations are in some way "exotic". It is quite normal for some organisations to work for the benefit of their home countries while others focus on activities in the host country; there is no qualitative difference here, said Akgün. In her statement, **Dr Cindy Horst** cautioned against investing overly high expectations in municipal activities: "There should be involvement of cities, but you should not expect too much." **Dr Uda Bastians-Osthaus** agreed with Horst, emphasising that the financial constraints currently faced by the municipalities are also having an adverse effect on the quality of their work and that unfortunately, many people with important intercultural skills are losing their jobs. **Schweitzer** also called for a more welcoming culture; intercultural training for the public administration is an important building block here. The discussion also explored whether the recruitment of guest work-

ers in the past could be compared with current approaches to circular migration, as described in the Schäuble-Sarkozy paper. **Emeritus Professor Dietrich Thränhardt** from the University of Münster called for more openness and flexibility in policy-making on circular migration and cautioned against over-management by the state. Generally speaking, migrants are best placed to know about the opportunities available to them, and a “hands-off” approach by government is most effective here. With ref-

erence to the financial constraints affecting the local government sector, Thränhardt pointed out that municipalities’ performance in relation to integration varies widely irrespective of their financial circumstances; this is reflected, for example, in the differences in the naturalisation figures. There is clearly considerable leeway for the municipalities to shape policy within the framework of national legislation which in some respects is highly contradictory, said Thränhardt.



Gibril Faal, Uda Bastians-Osthaus, Helmuth Schweitzer and Tom de Bruyn (l.r.)

Towards Structured Cooperation with Migrant Networks in Cities' International Activities

How can migrant networks contribute to cities' international agenda? In other words, to what extent can migrants' international experience and contacts be utilised to good effect in cities' international links and activities? This question was explored at the final session of the Berlin Summer Dialogue. It also considered the role of resource persons from the diaspora and their international contacts and experience, which may be of benefit to municipal administrations in developing international links.

The fourth session was chaired by **Annette Bähring**, Head of the Regional and Local Governance, Decentralisation Unit in GTZ's Planning and Development Department. She hoped that the session would help to identify the structural conditions which need to be in place for migrant organisations to be integrated as partners in international activities.



Annette Bähring und Zeljko Sabo

Integration and transnational engagement: a positive relationship

In her input, **Professor Felicitas Hillmann** from the Department for City and Migration Research at the Institute for Geography, University of Bremen, focussed on the different country-specific traditions in the management of relations with diaspora organisations: Germany maintains far fewer links with developing countries compared with former colonial powers such as Great Britain. Generally speaking, it is difficult to measure and thus obtain



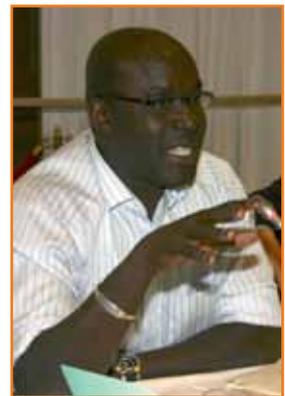
Felicitas Hillmann

reliable basic data about transnational contacts. In principle, however, the findings of research undertaken to date indicate that the better educated and integrated the individual, the more likely they are to be involved in transnational activities. Hillman highlighted two of the unresolved difficulties in moving towards migrants' sustainable and perhaps even institutionalised cooperation with municipal decision-makers.

Firstly, there is a legitimacy deficit due to the unelected status of "resource persons" from the migrant community. Secondly, the municipalities' rigid administrative structure and resource constraints, as well as their staff's frequent lack of intercultural skills, make it more difficult to adopt an appropriate approach to the very flexible, highly engaged but also somewhat mistrustful migrants.

Increasing diversity at institutional level

In his input, **Saliou Gueye**, the City of Ludwigsburg's Commissioner for Integration and Migration, reported on the positive experience gained in Ludwigsburg with the composition of the Integration Council. The Council consists of selected experts who engage in dialogue on a range of topics, and is part of the "Civic Engagement" Department. Integration, said Gueye, is also about participation, which is why his aim is to create more intercultural openness in the municipal administration; for example, he is working to increase the number of trainees with a migration background. Migrants should always be consulted when the city plans relevant initiatives; in Ludwigsburg, for example, they are involved in the preparation of local festivals, which are very popular. At the "Africa helps



Saliou Gueye

Africa” day in Ludwigsburg, for example, the municipality and its French twin Montbéliard collect donations to fund projects in Burkina Faso. Experts with an African background are invited to the event to ensure that ownership of the project lies with the Africans, rather than with the Europeans. Gueye also urged people with a migration background to play an active role in politics; in his view, diversity needs to be institutionalised to an even greater extent than is the case at present.

Tayfun Keltek, Chair of the Regional Council for Integration of North Rhine-Westphalia, Düsseldorf, also endorsed the call for people with a migration background to organise themselves, and cited numerous positive examples from his own field of work which have resulted in greater engagement by migrants. For example, through the cooperation with the local Integration Council, the number of trainees with a migration background in Cologne has risen sharply in recent years. Keltek expressed regret that the German school system still largely ignores the now considerable diversity among its students and makes little effort to build on children’s existing skills. He explained that the Regional Council for Integration will continue



Tayfun Keltek

to advocate for naturalisation and intercultural openness. Naturalisation is particularly important if migrants are to participate in society. According to Keltek, migrants should also organise themselves within the German political parties. As regards the idea of additional engagement by migrant networks in their home countries, Keltek voiced caution: in

his view, this could conflict with the ongoing call for migrants to work for their children’s integration into German society with a view to building their future here. However, Keltek also cited some positive examples of how such engagement by Turkish associations had helped to improve conditions in their home villages in Turkey. Nonetheless, Keltek insisted that migrants living in Germany should focus primarily on integrating into German society.

A wealth of nationalities: a chance for Vukovar

Željko Sabo, Mayor of the City of Vukovar, who was also a member of the panel, described reconciliation between ethnic groups as being one of his most important tasks. Sabo briefly outlined his city’s eventful history and – despite all the violent conflicts – repeatedly underlined the importance of diversity and understanding. There is no place for revenge, said Sabo: instead, people should recognise that the wealth of nationalities in the city of Vukovar has a positive effect



Željko Sabo

on its image abroad. Cultural cohesion creates strong economic benefits, as the example of the relocation back to the city of one of its major factories shows. Sabo also underlined the significant support provided by the Croatian diaspora during Vukovar’s reconstruction and, not least, in securing international recognition of Croatia as an independent country. However, Sabo was critical of the diaspora’s involvement in Croatia’s domestic politics, which, he said, allows people living in a different country to have a say in decisions about Croatia’s future. At the end of his statement, Sabo presented the organisers with a Vučedol dove, a clay dove symbolising peace, which originates in an ancient civilisation found in the Vukovar area.

Engagement via the local councils

In the final plenary discussion, **Renate Hechenberger** suggested that in future, targeted efforts should be made to accommodate refugees in cities which have a specific connection with their home country. **Dr Lale Akgün** and **Dr Helmuth Schweitzer** stated that new approaches to migrants’ political participation must be sought in future. The era of Turkish-dominated foreigners’ consultative councils is over. Instead, migrants should feature more prominently on the municipal councils. **Keltek** was open to these suggestions, but emphasised that the new composition of the regional integration councils, with city councillors now accounting for up to one third

of members, is already a major step forward. **Professor Hillmann** drew attention to the difficulties of applying a very “British” concept such as transnationalism to the situation in other countries. With regard to the repeated call for a high level of engagement by migrants, **Gueye** reminded the audience that migrants often find themselves in life circumstances which make

such engagement difficult or even impossible, and this should also be borne in mind. Moreover, young people often choose the wrong role models – the bouncer from the local nightclub, for example, rather than Cem Özdemir. **Sabo** rounded off the discussion by summing up his own experience of politics: diversity is a city’s greatest wealth, said the Mayor of Vukovar.



Saliou Gueye, Felicitas Hillmann, Annette Bähring, Željko Sabo and Tayfun Keltek (l.r.)

Summary and political outlook

At the end of the Berlin Summer Dialogue 2010, **Emeritus Professor Dietrich Thränhardt** from the University of Münster summarised the outcomes. In light of the newly emerging migration/development nexus, he briefly reviewed the current stage reached in the debate. The Berlin Summer Dialogue had made it clear, said Thränhardt, that there is a “disconnect” between migration policy and development cooperation at present, but some of the outcomes provide a firm basis on which to build for the future:

1. Well integrated migrants are best placed to provide assistance to other countries; this is apparent, for example, from the increasing engagement by Germany’s Turkish community for the benefit of their country of origin.
2. A city’s economic dynamism plays an important role, as people usually migrate into growth regions, where they provide further impetus for development. Unfortunately, at present, there is more return migration (i.e. migration back to the home countries) than immigration into Germany.
3. Migrants are not “the poorest of the poor”, and they are generally very willing to integrate.

Building on these conclusions, Thränhardt analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation with a particular focus on the urban integration dimension. Compared with other countries, the trend towards segregation is far less pronounced in Germany. Achieving good quality of life, which is one of the municipalities' main tasks, also takes place at a high level in Germany. Although this is an expensive process, it has a number of positive effects. Unfortunately, as mentioned in the discussions, problems exist in the schools sector due to the early selection process, but this is a matter for Germany's federal states (Länder), not the municipalities.

With regard to identificative – as opposed to functional – integration, Thränhardt pointed to various deficits and emphasised that cities and municipalities could achieve a great deal here if they were to promote a culture of openness.



Dietrich Thränhardt

Thränhardt also called for an end to the stigmatisation of migrant organisations' activities: the representation of interests is, after all, necessary and legitimate in a pluralist society, said Thränhardt. Other weaknesses which he identified include Germany's "closed" culture and generally pessimist attitude towards integration, which contrast sharply with Germany's solid performance as measured against various integration benchmarks and social normality.

In Thränhardt's view, although it is not the primary task of the municipalities to engage in independent forms of development cooperation, they can, nonetheless, perform a useful role as facilitators in the establishment of links. In relation to development cooperation, Thränhardt also called for a break with the outdated paradigm which is based on Western "donors" and developing country "recipients". In his view, the involvement of well-performing migrant networks can help to bring about much-needed modernisation here.

In her closing remarks, **Dr Michèle Roth**, Executive Director of the Development and Peace Foundation (SEF), thanked all the participants for their contributions to the discussions. She expressed the hope that this final event in the SEF's "Migration, Development and Urbanisation" project series had helped to intensify the emerging dialogue between migration policy, development and municipal actors for the benefit of all sides.

The conference was organised by the Development and Peace Foundation (SEF) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)

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