

Dear friends,

on behalf of the City of Torino and of myself I would like to express my warm welcome to all the participants and the guests of the “**Global Academy on Migrations**” organized by the United Nations.

Let me thank the Director Mrs. Patricia O'Donovan, the Vice Director Mr. Arrigotti, the Executive Director Assane Diop and all the people who worked to realize this initiative.

Nowadays international migrations remain an overriding issue of the Governments political agenda and one of their most demanding challenges. According to data, so far the number of international migrants is calculated around 214 millions and, if it will keep increasing with the same rate in the next 20 years, it could reach 405 millions by 2050. Legal permanent immigration of foreign citizens in the OECD countries reports a continuous increase and the main reasons of this phenomenon are family reunions or the search of job (in particular as far as Italy is concerned). Migration due to educational reasons is experiencing a strong increase too, with an increment of the total number of foreign students corresponding to 50% between 2000 and 2005. Moreover, in Italy last year regular foreign workers were around 2 millions, made double in comparison to the datum of 10 years ago which were less than 1 million. Still in 2010, the foreign population resident in Italy included more than 4 millions people and, by now, it represents 7% of Italian population, with an average annual increase of 13% starting from the year 2000, which is only second to Spain as for intensity among the largest European countries. In a very short period of time, Italy has fallen into line with the average migration trends of the rest of the continent. These fast developments have necessarily given raise to imbalances, tensions and troubles.

These numbers confirm that, more and more, the coexistence with migration requires new approaches and impulses, which enable all of us to manage in a more effective way the new challenges and opportunities of migration that are constantly progressing.

I would like to express my gratitude for the choice of Torino as hosting city of a so high level event on a strategic topic like international migrations.

This is not a choice made by chance: indeed today Torino is a city which communicates with the world. During 30 years of migration streams, Torino has become a city with varied and plural identities, presenting a permanent, considerable and structural phenomenon of migration, with more then 128.000 foreigners regularly resident and approximately 8.000 new citizens not having Italian origins. The new Torinese people belong to different targets of the

population and not all of them are necessarily experiencing situations of social exclusion. Notably, the second generation is more and more integrated in the school, social and job system of the city. The young immigrants are not only a bridge between different worlds and cultures but - with their presence, with their aware participation in the community's life- they represent themselves a meaningful indicator of the level of integration that has been reached by the whole citizenship.

Therefore the number of immigrated citizens who permanently live in Torino, who contribute to its development, to its cultural and economic enrichment and who ask for the acknowledgement of their rights and opportunities is increasing.

In the last years, within the framework of a process highly influenced by the European guidelines, the local and regional authorities of the UE countries became more and more important as for the management of issues concerning migration streams, often developing interesting best practices, especially as regards to the adopted measures and the programmes which contribute to the social integration of migrants and of people belonging to disadvantaged categories. Since several years, the City Government of Torino has demonstrated the willingness to face up its complex and multicultural society, even as for the management of the labour market. Among several projects, as an example, I just quote one of them.

“A pieno titolo” (“With full rights”) - started in 2008- is a supporting service for the admission of foreign educational qualifications and expertise of foreign citizens. Over the years, the project was able to face up in a successful way and with a special approach the topic of qualified professional employment of those foreign people coming to our Country who hold educational qualifications and medium-high level expertise, by working side by side with Agencies and Institutions already active on the territory in the fields of vocational training and guidance.

Moreover, I would like to underline a fact concerning the presence of foreign students enrolled in the city's Universities: differently to the rest of Italy trends, the students enrolled in the Politecnico and University of Torino are constantly increasing, and it have quadruplicated over the last 4 years. Most of them are Chinese boys and girls representing 28,5 % of the total number of foreign students in Torino, followed by students coming from Africa, Moroccans and Cameroonians first. The reasons of this success – if compared to the rest of Italy- is due to the fact that over the years the two Universities of Torino have been able to invest in mobility and internalisations projects, conceived as a incentive for cultural exchanges between universities. Other important issues which contributed to this phenomenon

are the starting up of classes totally or partly in English and the welcoming capacity expressed by the whole city.

Today the passage to a “major phase” of immigration means for Torino the acknowledgement of its plural identities. Shaping the city of tomorrow requires straightway the identification of special and flexible paths able to meet the diverse needs expressed by the citizens, including the new inhabitants of the city.

For this reason, in the next years, we will try to implement active policies for multicultural integration by promoting: the knowledge of Italian language in order to avoid any kind of exclusion, the access to employment and the protection of labour rights, the integration of children and teen-agers, the support to the integration of foreign women, the emphasis of native cultural identities, the right to practice ones creed. These are all instruments of representation which contribute to the city life.

It will be however fundamental strengthening cooperation policies with countries of origin in order to encourage the return of legal immigrants with all the skills acquired in countries of immigration. The experience gained by immigrants, training and know-how acquired in the host countries may, in fact, encourage a flow of migrants "return" which will contribute to the socio-economic development of countries of origin.

I hope you will enjoy your stay here in Torino, that you will have the chance to appreciate its cultural and artistic heritage as well as its museums and that you will suggest to your friends to visit our beautiful city.

Have a good stay!

Piero Fassino

Mayor of Turin