FOREWORD

Internal displacement is increasingly a protracted and urban phenomenon. Existing rapid urbanisation can be further accelerated with the arrival of people fleeing conflict and disasters, which in turn has serious implications for municipal authorities and urban communities coping with the rapid influx. In fragile settings with weak planning systems and capacities, this leads to fast and unplanned urbanisation, further aggravating inequalities, and generating further risk of displacement and instability.

This year's Global Report on Internal Displacement highlights the many challenges, but also opportunities, that cities face today when dealing with internal displacement. It also demonstrates a changing humanitarian landscape where internal displacement poses risks to both current and future crises. In cities, considering the additional strain placed on already limited local capacities and resources, durable solutions require that local, national and international actors integrate internal displacement into urban development strategies and financing.

Increasing demand for adequate housing, dignified jobs, quality health care and education, social protection and participation in public life presents opportunities for our cities and host communities. Investments in resilient infrastructure, including accessible road networks and public transport, and services, such as water, electricity and waste management, as part of urban growth strategies, can contribute not only to individual well-being but also to urban economic growth, thereby accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is along these same lines that ensuring adequate infrastructure and service provision to returning refugees and internally displaced people can contribute to social cohesion and stability, and the overall resilience of a city.

Cities today are faced with ever-increasing risks associated with disasters, violence and conflict. Cities can also, however, offer sanctuary to those who have lost their homes and livelihoods and facilitate access to durable solutions.

The analysis undertaken by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre shows that we still have a long way to go. Significant data gaps mean that we still do not know how many people are displaced in cities and what the pull and push factors are. Limited understanding of the relationship between urban change and displacement risk are also thought to result in millions of unaccounted forced evictions every year. Despite existing normative frameworks at the international and national levels to manage and reduce urban displacement, progress remains slow.

The New Urban Agenda, Sustainable Development Goal 11 on resilient cities, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, provide a shared road map for our collective efforts. We must strive to collectively deliver on our commitments captured in these global agendas, so that we do not fail the millions of internally displaced people across the globe and so that we work towards cities that can flourish, providing a fair and equitable urban future for all. This Global Report on Internal Displacement represents an important step towards attaining this vision.

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