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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS PARTICIPATES IN CGI 2022 MEETING
“CITIES AT THE CENTER” SESSION**

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you, thank you so much. And to my fellow mayors that are here as well, this engaging conversation... Welcome to the city. We only have one request of you and that is spend money, spend money, spend a lot of money. I was reading the board as I was sitting here and the answer I believe to the question is the last comment. The refugee crisis... I see it as refugee opportunities. And oftentimes it's about how do we look at the problems that are facing us. Yesterday I was at one of the events and I shared my days of... My family is from Alabama and we have a large farm there with over 100 acres. And from time to time I would go down and play the farmer, getting out of the city environment. And while I was there one day, the tractor broke down that we moved hay from one side of the farm to the next. And I connected a motorcycle to the wagon and drove it over to the other part of the farm. Why is that important? I learned that from Cambodia. They don't have a lot of cars, they use something called tuk-tuk. And I was able to solve a problem because I was able to take the cultural norm of another place on the globe and see how do I use it to identify a problem that's here?

In order to solve global problems, we must have global tables. If the people sitting around the table to solve the problems of the future all look the same, talk the same, went to the same schools, speak the same language, eat the same food, do the same things. Then you're going to have a local solution and it's not going to impact the global problem. Our refugees that are now coming to our cities from all across the globe, 50 percent of the population are living in cities. Those refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, they're going to bring something to our cities. And the answers to the questions clearly lies in the cities. Cities have to deal with the national problem. I walked down the hall today, someone is not going to stop a president and tell him about the failure of garbage pickup. They're gonna talk to the mayor.

We are closest to the problem and we are closest to the solutions. But the solutions must come from a diverse environment. Take a recognition of running this event today. Not only listen to the speakers, but turn on your observation cap. Look at who's serving us. Many of them are first and second generation New Yorkers, coming from somewhere. Walk into your hospitals during COVID. Look at who took care of every New Yorker. Overwhelmingly our nurses and our doctors, many of them are foreign born but came here and stated they want to participate in the American dream and experience. Look at who serves your Uber Eats in your cities. Listen to their dialect and their language. Acknowledge them not only for the delivery of what you asked

for, but acknowledge them to see the diversity of who they are. Walk into your restaurants and peek inside the kitchen. Look at the face of your waiter. That's where we are.

You extract the refugees, the immigrant population, the migrants, asylum seekers. You extract them from our cities and you will find out our cities will collapse. It's not so much they need us. We need them. We need them. And in the midst of COVID, in the midst of COVID, when third, fourth, fifth generation New Yorkers were remotely working, first generation, undocumented, recently arrivals were not home social distancing. They were making sure that you can social distance. And so when people say to them, our new arrivals, our brothers and sisters from across the globe no matter what city in America. We've all came from somewhere. I know it's hard to believe. We've all did. And so whenever someone says go back to your country, they should say "We will when you go back to yours."

So as we embrace this dialogue, as we talk about the opportunities, it's right in front of us. The opportunity is being inclusive. That is why New York City is embracing our brothers and sisters that are coming from parts of the country to participate in the American dream. And that is why if you're from another country, embrace those who are bringing their ideas. Cities and countries will be left behind if they are not embracing the ideas of the new cultures that would sit around the table and participate in dealing with these international and global problems.

COVID was a wake up call for us. The globe came together and say how do we find a vaccine? And because of that global participation we were able to save lives, we were able to find answers. So the COVID of housing, the COVID of ending sex trafficking, the COVID of ending homelessness, the COVID of ending inequalities in healthcare, the COVID of ending how we treat our women across the globe. The COVID crises that we're facing just as we came together to find a medical solution, we can come together and find a global solution of those problems that are facing us. From climate to the climate that we bring in the room on how we treat each other. I'm excited about where we're going, I'm excited about what we're doing. And the answer lies, in the end of the sentence, our refugees. Thank you very much

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