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**UCLG CONGRESS
WORLD SUMMIT OF LOCAL
AND REGIONAL LEADERS**



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Position papers
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Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

Position papers 02



UCLG CONGRESS
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EurAsian-Pacific Position paper #UCLGCongress

Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK ASIA-PACIFIC POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

The UCLG ASPAC Position paper highlights policy matters addressing the challenges of the institution and key issues in the region. UCLG ASPAC strategic direction is guided by the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 Manifesto that identified 5 priority areas: Promote good governance and effective democratic self-governments, improve quality of life of people through equal and adequate basic services, build resilient cities and local governments, sustainable green economy, and put global/regional agendas and national commitment into effective local implementation. Challenges include representation of local governments from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Pacific sub-region, women representation in statutory body and limited enabling environment and capacities of local governments. These are addressed through cooperation with members and international partners, work of UCLG ASPAC Committees and implementation of programmes related to global agenda.

2. Current context and state of challenges

UCLG ASPAC has faced some challenges in implementing the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Participation of members particularly from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in UCLG ASPAC's activities depends mostly on availability of sponsorship. Such dependency has caused uneven geographical distribution of participation. There is also less involvement given the low percentage of members from Pacific sub-region and their participation in UCLG ASPAC's activities.

As for low percentage of women in the membership of statutory body of UCLG ASPAC, there is a need for the organisation to reach more women leaders and councillors. Stigma on traditional/cultural beliefs that put them as incompetent or incapable has to be removed. Strategies to reach them and get them exposed need to be developed and implemented. LGAs, as members of UCLG ASPAC, can help ensure the outreach of women in local governments and conduct the inventory on their existence and set up the women committee in each LGA if required.

There are many external challenges that hinder the local governments to perform well. Limited enabling environment due to different level of decentralization in the countries, lack of capacity of local governments in planning and managing the cities/regions, shortage of resource to implement programmes and projects, are a few to mention. In spite of huge challenges, UCLG ASPAC sees opportunities in development of its members, through peer-to-peer learnings, technological transfer, solidarity in spirit and respect on culture differences that makes Asia and the Pacific a resilient society.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

Regional cooperation on Southeast Asia was set up in 2010. The standing committee has become a driving engine for local governments' collaboration in Southeast Asia. It plays crucial role in the development of the ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF). In 2018, AMF was officially accredited to ASEAN, marking a key milestone in the Standing Committee's advocacy for local governments at the regional level. Furthermore, peer-learning activities have been conducted and the beneficiary cities are those from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Malaysia, and Viet Nam.

Standing Committee of South and Sothwest Asia was established in 2013; the Standing Committee has fostered its engagement and support, also through the South Asian Association for Regional

Cooperation (SAARC). In 2018, UCLG ASPAC Congress endorsed the position paper on SAARC Collaboration with Local Governments in the South Asia. Major events held under the Standing Committee's support include: the International Conference on Local Governments, the 3rd and 4th South Asian Cities Summit. The advocacy and capacity-building activities are as follows: SDGs Localization Training, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop, Women Leadership, and Gender Equality Training. Enhancing support in the region, a plan to set up UCLG ASPAC Office in Islamabad has been developed.

Committee on 21st Century Maritime Cooperation was established in 2017 by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and Fuzhou Municipal People's Government. The Committee aims to promote cooperation on marine economy, marine conservation, waterway security, ports, and disaster prevention. In May 2018, the Committee convened its 1st General Assembly, which entailed a series of discussions and knowledge sharing events. Outcomes of the meeting contributed to the identification of the Committee's future activities, to be supported by UCLG ASPAC. At the 7th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the Committee reported on the implementation of the workplan which include: Seminar on Sister City Relationship and Local Government Cooperation, Forum on Application of Digital Technology in Marine Field, Workshop on Marine Ecology Conservation and Management, and the Launch of the Committee's official website and WeChat official account.

Cooperation on Belt Road Local Committee is led by Hangzhou City. The Committee was formed in 2017 to support the Belt and Road Initiative implementation, through its support for collaboration at the local level. Two major events were conducted in 2018 namely: E-Commerce Training Workshop and the BRLC Overseas Chinese New Media Forum. Also in 2018, the Committee organized a Computing Conference Observation. Under the theme "Empower Digital China," the conference brought together world's leading experts to discuss the latest trends on digital technology and how it can enhance the cities and quality of life.

Committee on Culture was established in 2015 by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province. The Committee has been active in promoting culture as one of the pillars of sustainable development. Several activities have been conducted to foster cultural networks and exchanges, with a particular focus on youth. Major events conducted under the Committee's auspices are: 1st Collaborative Culture in Local Planning (2016), 2nd UCLG Culture Summit (2017), and UCLG Global Youth Culture Forum (2018). Related with culture and heritage as tangible action, public space is one of important aspect for the people. Several milestones have been achieved in terms of public space. A key element is the use of participatory approach in the design process to allow the community to take ownership of the public space. In collaboration with UN-Habitat, UCLG ASPAC has assisted cities to be inclusive through the establishment and/or revitalisation of public spaces within Asia-Pacific sub-region, to, among many, promote income, investment and wealth creation, enhance environmental sustainability, promote equity and social inclusion, generate citizen involvement, and tools for gender and age-friendly cities. The Gedung Wayang Orang Sriwedari (Traditional Javanese Opera Building) in Surakarta was revitalized in 2017. "Cak Markeso" Community Culture Center in Surabaya was launched in July 2018.

Standing Committee of Women in Local Government was established with the aim of strengthening women participation and representation in local governments. The Standing Committee has been advocating for gender equality, while conducting activities to promote the integration of gender perspectives in local development. During the 6th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the Standing Committee called on local governments to establish a unit specifically focusing women and gender issues. During the 7th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the outcomes of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Training, conducted by the All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIIILSG) with UCLG ASPAC's support, were presented. During the Executive Bureau Meeting in Yiwu, China in May 2019, Guangzhou City Government has proposed to lead the programme on building a reliable maternal and child care system, child stunting and death rate in

Asia Pacific. The proposed programme will be part of Committee and it focuses on prenatal health care: including intrauterine growth retardation caused by malnutrition during pregnancy, inadequate implementation of regular maternity examinations during pregnancy, the management of child health system: including congenital diseases, such as congenital thyroid insufficiency at birth.

Strengthening the foundations of Resilience in Asia Pacific, UCLG ASPAC has prioritised resilience and continuously fostered collaboration with various stakeholders. Post 2015 and localising the global agenda 2030, UCLG ASPAC partnered with UNISDR (now DRR) to promote Disaster Risk Reduction and the Making Cities Resilient Campaign in 50 Asian cities from five most prone disaster countries. Achieving Target e is being pursued.

In partnership with various institutions, UCLG ASPAC has been implementing programmes and projects that have made significant contributions to the improvement of the environment and governance of cities and local governments across the region. These are the pro-poor and sustainable solid waste management project, Municipal Sanitation Policy Advocacy Project, Global Covenant of Mayors on Energy and Climate Change in which UCLG ASPAC serves as its Secretariat for SEA Countries.

Converting organic waste into energy is now possible through the Intermediate Resource Recovery Center launched in Jambi in January 2018 and in Malang on April 2018. The facilities were developed under the Pro-Poor and Sustainable Solid Waste Management Project in partnership with UNESCAP. The Municipal Sanitation Policy Advocacy Project is being implemented to strengthen and capacitate local government associations. To date, 10 pilot municipalities have already been selected. This project is in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Local governments are now taking voluntary actions to combat climate change through the Global Covenant of Mayors on Energy and Climate Change (GCoM). Cities are provided with training and technical assistance as well as platform for common reporting framework on the greenhouse gases (GHG) inventory and development of Climate Action Plan. Training on "Setting Emission Reduction Target and Development of Climate Action Plan" has been implemented in 5 cities (Kuala Lumpur, Gwangju, Jakarta, Surabaya, Hanoi) within 2018.

Localise SDGs in Indonesia and Pakistan aims to strengthen LGs and LGAs capacities in localising the SDGs. To date, in Indonesia, 13 local trainings on SDGs have been conducted where 524 local government officers and local stakeholders benefitted. Localising SDGs is being implemented in collaboration with several institutions namely Bappenas, Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), Public Administration Institute (Lembaga Administrasi Negara), GIZ, SMERU Research Institute, Center for Indonesia's Strategic Development Initiatives (CISDI), and Philantrophy Indonesia. Localise SDGs is funded by the European Union (EU).

UCLG ASPAC, in partnership with Association for Development of Local Governments (ADLG) and Local Council Associations (LCA) of Balochistan and Sindh and support from European Union (EU), is implementing the LEAD for SDGs Localization in Pakistan Program (2019-23). LEAD for SDGs builds on the commitment of the Government of Pakistan through the SDGs National Framework. It aims to contribute to achievement of SDGs through local governance in the Provinces of Balochistan and Sindh. The program shall closely work with the government institutions at all levels and LCAs to plan, implement and monitor SDGs at the local level.

The programme's overall objective is to contribute to the achievement of SDGs through effective local governance in Pakistan. This will be achieved through fostering an enabling environment for mainstreaming SDGs in local development processes through effective leadership and policy advocacy, supported by evidence-based research, capacity building and improved coordination, and piloting innovative approaches for SDGs localization.

4. Policy strategies and tools

UCLG ASPAC has been exploring the possibility to hold a statutory meeting in the Pacific sub-region. This will support the efforts to increase the presence of LGs and LGAs from this sub-region within the UCLG ASPAC membership. Support for members of LDCs currently rely on voluntary sponsorships provided by members of developed countries facilitated by and small funding available in UCLG ASPAC.

The Standing Committee of Women in Local Government developed its charter to revitalise its efforts to increase women representation in the statutory body and strengthen its governance structure within UCLG ASPAC. More programmes and tangible results are expected with the new leadership.

As Secretariat of the Asia-Pacific Local Government Coordinating Body (APLG) set up with the facilitation of UNESCAP, UCLG ASPAC is able to have a wider reach that extends beyond its own membership by cooperating with development partners in the region such as CityNet, ICLEI, C40, IGES, and UN bodies. Consultation with LGs and LGAs and their representation in regional forums are facilitated through the APLG.

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms

ASEAN

UCLG ASPAC hosts the ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF) secretariat. AMF has received accreditation from ASEAN as the first local governments network affiliated entity in 2018. It was originally conceived in 2011 when visionary mayors in Southeast Asia met for the first time in Surabaya, Indonesia, to demonstrate the importance of local contributions to ASEAN's regional integration. The Forum has gained prominence since 2015, with successive AMF meetings to discuss the ASEAN Community building and how mayors can help accelerate its progress and benefits for citizens. The role of local governments has been enhanced due to the wide recognition that at least 60 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be achieved without actions at the local level.

ASEAN is intensifying its collective efforts to promote sustainable development and address the urban challenges. In 2017, a report on Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Framework for Action, was published in partnership with UN ESCAP. The report was among the first initiatives to enhance complementarities between regional and global efforts to achieve the SDGs. It identifies five priority areas for ASEAN's actions: 1) poverty eradication; 2) infrastructure and connectivity; 3) sustainable management of natural resources; 4) sustainable production and consumption, and 5) resilience.

SAARC

The UCLG ASPAC - SSW sub-Region office was established in 2017. One of the main objectives behind constituting the SSW Standing Committee was to establish close collaboration among the members and ensure collaboration with SAARC secretariat to muster political and programme support for the Local Governments in the SAR. In one of the SSW Standing Committees on 16 August 2017 in Kathmandu, Nepal, the committee members invited a representative of SAARC Secretariat and discussed SAARC's mandate and linking it with the local governments at country and regional level, and taking up the local government sector as a priority area of interest of SAARC. The committee members outlined the action plan, and roles of local governments and local government associations with their respective country's governments to accelerating SAARC cooperation and support to put the local governments' issues on priority in the SAARC mandate.

Therefore, to achieve this strategic objective, the members of UCLG ASPAC in South Asia region agreed to adopt the following positions:

- a. To support UCLG ASPAC advocacy program within the region through formulation of new activities in the field of localizing global development agenda, and to enhance the existing activities and cooperation.
- b. To support UCLG ASPAC Secretariat in identify ways and methods toward the establishment of regional local government association as an SAARC recognised bodies.
- c. To encourage UCLG ASPAC Secretariat to be more actively involved in SAARC activities in order to highlight the importance role of local government in the SAR.

Note: One of the eight (8) members of SAARC is Afganistan. Although the Country is outside the geographical coverage of ASPAC, UCLG ASPAC will find its way to engage them in the Committee. Discussion has been made with UCLG MEWA on having Afganistan's participation in the SAARC's related activities.

6. Key recommendations and actions by the international local and regional governments movement

- a. Accelerate localisation of SDGs and promotion of multi-stakeholder partnership including the development of VLR in committed cities and local governments.
- b. Support the achievement of target E of Sendai Framework for DRR and increase the number of cities joining the Making Cities Resilient Campaign.
- c. Influence GCoM members to have policy changes in terms of climate resilience, urban governance, disaster risk management and inclusiveness, by embedding dialogue within the policy-making activities, and the local governments; and promote a common reporting framework on cities emission inventory.
- d. Strengthen the advocacy's strategies and activities through APLG and continually promote the importance of good enabling environment for cities and local governments in the region.

Related to making tangible impact in the ground:

- e. Influence national and local governments in Nepal and Bangladesh to make a National Sanitation Policy and Local Strategies, to establish a Task Committee at the national level, and Local Task Forces in committed LG pilot municipalities. LG's sanitation strategy programmes will be formed to provide the proper framework for implementation and enforcement.
- f. Replicate the waste to energy pilot programme in Indonesia and beyond to have innovative solution not only for the sanitation and for environmental aspect but also reducing local government budget for solid waste treatment and transportation.
- g. Promote public space and its expansion in the region.

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019

ASSEMBLY TRACK

EURASIAN POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

The efficient implementation of citizens' rights underlies UCLG-Eurasia's goals. Being close to people, local governments are most adapted to the use of resources to meet needs of the population.

The key issues in the Eurasian region are as follows:

- To shape a common vision of Eurasian local governments and protect interests of local self-government in the Eurasian region at the international level;
- To ensure efficient political representation of Eurasian local governments at the international level and at the global table;
- To cooperate with national governments for the purpose of decentralization, multilevel governance, engagement of local governments and localization of the SDGs;
- To develop policies, programs and initiatives within the framework of UCLG's goals, search for appropriate means of their achievement;
- To expand the membership of the organization in order to strengthen the political impact of UCLG and its financial independence;
- To ensure gender and national equality, combating all forms of unlawful discrimination in accordance with the international law;
- To promote preservation of culture and heritage in the Eurasian region. To continue cooperating with the Organization of World Heritage Cities;
- To enhance the cities' international activity by conducting the Research on Cities' International Activity, disseminating the Handbook of International Terms, and organizing learning workshops, etc.;
- To contribute to the localization of the SDGs by organizing learning workshops and awareness raising campaigns;
- To be a learning network;
- To enhance the capacity of UCLG for implementation of projects useful for cities by receiving financing from business;
- To establish partnerships with economic platforms of the Eurasian region and to represent UCLG at economic sites;
- To advocate gender equality, peace, city diplomacy, preservation of culture, right to the city, inclusion, financial decentralization and prevention of risks.
- To identify and disseminate best practices of local governments in the main languages of regional sections;
- To facilitate an understanding of the lexis of the international municipal movement by disseminating adapted information in the main languages of regional sections;
- To foster unity and strengthening of the UCLG World Organization by means of collaboration of sections and implementation of joint projects;
- To contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other international agreements and programs in cities of the Eurasia section.

2. Current context and state of challenges

A serious challenge for us is **the high centralization** in such countries as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Azerbaijan. Mayors cannot decide on participation in activities of international organizations or events. They need to obtain permission from the national government.

Another problem is **incomprehension of the necessity to develop international relations and participate in global initiatives**. “*How can I spend my time and budget money on participation in international events whereas I do not know how to find money for road or buildings restoration?*”. So, **lack of finances** is also a significant problem that poses obstacles for participation in events or hosting them.

We have problems with **collecting membership fees** as well. Not all members pay these fees conscientiously. Many small cities simply do not have money in the city budget for this type of expenditure, and, at the same time, these cities do not seek to leave the organization, and their representatives actively participate in UCLG-Eurasia’s activities.

Also, as a disadvantage in the whole UCLG’s work, we see that there is **plenty of ‘water’** in documents and speeches. Many of speakers say many beautiful words about ‘the importance of important things’, but they say nothing useful. It is too difficult to listen to long boring and similar to each other speeches. Participants come to get new information on the ways of addressing issues, but they are told only about the importance of solving these problems, nothing concrete. There are also difficulties with understanding of documents. Sometimes we read long documents, but, after reading, the questions remain: ‘What has exactly been done?’, ‘What benefits can it bring to my city?’, ‘What should I do to contribute to this action?’

There are some **problems with communications**. The first problem ‘**lack of English versions of websites and lack of visible contacts in English**’ causes difficulties in establishing cooperation and searching for information. For example, we cannot monitor news of the city of Ulaanbaatar as its website is in the Mongolian language only. This problem is also typical for Asia–Pacific. Often we are not able to find information on websites of China, India, Indonesia, etc.

Absence of departments responsible for international relations in many cities causes difficulties with communication, as every time we send some information and wait for a response, we have to find to whom it was entrusted.

And, of course, it should be noted that often participation of Eurasian representatives is difficult because of the language. Most of local leaders **do not speak English or are not fluent in it**. UCLG-Eurasia is not able to organize translation during all events of UCLG and its partners. So, often we send invitations only to those mayors, who speak English. Moreover, UCLG-Eurasia also faces the problem of translation of the large volume of texts into Russian. Documents related to statutory events of the World Organization are sent to sections one week prior to an event. Not always translation can be made in full and timely.

An important challenge for us **is to attract sponsors** for UCLG-Eurasia’s activities and implementation of urban projects.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

Our priorities in this field within the framework of UCLG’s activities are as follows:

- To provide local and regional leaders with the opportunity to be elected to the UCLG’s consultation mechanisms: **Policy councils and committees**;

- To ensure participation of officials of local and regional governments in UCLG's consultation mechanisms: working groups, communities of practice and fora.

I. Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace.

UCLG-Eurasia has the following key priorities in this area:

- 1) Preservation of culture and heritage.** In this sphere UCLG-Eurasia has been closely cooperating with the Organization of World Heritage Cities since 2004. We have organized 9 joint regional conferences within this period.

We pay great attention to **raising children in the spirit of cultural heritage preservation**. For this purpose, we organized children's drawing competitions (in 2017 and 2019) and a video competition (in 2018) dedicated to the theme 'Heritage of My City'. All drawings were presented during the international conferences of Eurasia World Heritage Cities in different years.

The next children's drawing competition will start in January 2020 and will be dedicated to the theme of the national costume. We successfully organized the **carnival of national costumes** in 2008 in Indonesia. We plan to repeat this experience in Yakutsk in June 2020. All participants of X International Conference of Eurasia World Heritage Cities should put on their national dress.

We have a joint **project** with OWHC-Eurasia called '**Heritage of Eurasia**'. The main idea is that one city paints on front facades of a city building the image of the heritage of another city. Within the framework of the Heritage of Eurasia project the world heritage of the city of Derbent– Citadel Naryn-Kala- was painted on one of the buildings of Safranbolu (Turkey), and the historical center of Safranbolu was depicted on the walls of Derbent. In April 2019, the images of the heritage of Kazan and Bolgar appeared in the city of Denpasar, the capital of the island of Bali (Indonesia). The heritage of Bali was depicted on the walls of Bolgar. This project **has contributed to the development of international relations, intermunicipal cooperation and city diplomacy**.

- 2) UCLG-Eurasia pays great attention to city diplomacy.** Especially it is relevant in view of political conflicts between Russia and Georgia, Russia and Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan. **Our priority is to promote peace between countries by establishing a dialogue and friendship between cities.**

As facilitator of peace policy, UCLG-Eurasia works equally with each country in the region. Mayors in the countries that are in conflict sit at the same table and communicate peacefully in the frames of our events. Ilсур Metshin, President of UCLG-Eurasia, calls for bottom-up peace policy and city cooperation regardless of the state policy in his speeches. Our priority is to facilitate peace between countries by establishing a dialogue and friendship between cities.

Advocating city diplomacy, we organize the International Forum of Civil Diplomacy. It is held every year on 31 October (World Cities Day) in the city of Volgograd. Traditionally, the forum is dedicated to the World Cities Day (October 31). The venue of the event is the hero city of Volgograd, which together with British Coventry in 1944 became the founder of the international movement of twin cities. To date, 5 forums have been organized, and the 6th one will be held on 31 October 2019. Delegates from Eurasia, Europe, Africa, North America will gather to discuss how cities can contribute to strengthening peace, as well as to determine prospects for international relations.

UCLG-Eurasia supports the International Peace Forum in Novosibirsk dedicated to public democracy, engagement of the youth, international cooperation and intercultural dialogue. The 4th forum has been organized this year.

UCLG-Eurasia promotes sister-city cooperation as well. Thanks to UCLG-Eurasia, such cities as Safranbolu and Yelabuga, Bavly and Comrat, Volgograd and Izmir, Bolgar and Safranbolu, Aktau and Samsun, Kazan and Guangzhou, Lijiang, Harrare, Ankara, Paris have agreed on cooperation.

We support the UCLG Peace Prize and advocate this initiative in the Eurasian region. Friendship and cooperation with regional sections of UCLG is also our priority. We have signed agreements on cooperation with all regional sections of UCLG. We cooperate closely with MEWA, ASPAC and FLACMA.

II. Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing

One of the areas of UCLG-Eurasia's activities is to establish partnerships with economic platforms of the Eurasian region and to represent UCLG at economic sites, as well as to seek business partners that can finance projects on sustainable development in Eurasian cities.

We are working on establishing cooperation with national governments in order to convey them an understanding of necessity of cities' participation in international discussions and empowerment of local governments. The aim of discussions with national governments is to establish multilevel governance and financial decentralization.

III. Right to the City and Inclusive Territories

Identification of best practices in this field and their dissemination among members of the section is a UCLG-Eurasia's priority.

UCLG-Eurasia contributes to the Right to the City by organizing conferences:

On the initiative of Aisen Nikolaev, Vice-President of UCLG, Yakutsk Municipality together with UCLG-Eurasia organizes the biennial International Conference 'Cities and People'. The conference is held with active engagement of local governments, civil society and the youth. It aims to involve people in the decision making process on sustainable development.

We pay attention to the involvement of the youth in municipal governing. For this purpose, we promote the Day of an Understudy project of Astrakhan Municipality. Within the framework of this project, students take part in city managing for a day. They visit official meetings and take part in different committees. In such a way, the city administration provides young people with an opportunity to have an internship in local government.

Meetings with citizens and city's leadership are held in the city of Nizhnekamsk in the format of open talk. Citizens make suggestions for improving life in neighborhoods and in the city as a whole.

IV. Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis.

The UCLG-Eurasia's priorities in this field are the following:

- To study and disseminate best practices;
- To call for local governments to provide assistance for cities suffering from disasters and crisis;
- To promote implementation of the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement and other programs and agreements contributing to cities' resilience in the region;
- To engage Eurasian cities in the work of the Policy Council 'Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis'.

In April 2019, IX International Conference on 'Resilient Heritage and Tourism' was organized by UCLG-Eurasia in the capital of Bali Denpasar city. During the conference the following issues were discussed: how to protect the world heritage from climate problems, how to save tourist attractiveness of the cities with extreme weather conditions, and what contribution local leaders can make into implementing SDG #13 'Climate Actions'.

4. Policy strategies and tools

The strategy of UCLG-Eurasia includes the following directions:

- Cooperation with local and regional governments;
- Cooperation with national associations;
- Cooperation with UCLG and its sections;
- Cooperation with international organizations;
- Cooperation with business;
- Cooperation with national governments.

We are working on establishing **cooperation with central governments to influence high centralization**. It is important that cities could gain national governments' confidence concerning UCLG's activities. This is necessary in order to explain the key role of local governments in SDGs implementation to national governments. We have started from Russia: we have reached agreement with the Russian Government on UCLG-Eurasia's participation in preparing of the Voluntary National Review for 2020. Ilsur Metshin, President of UCLG-Eurasia, and Rasikh Sagitov, Secretary General, are members of working groups on SDG5, SDG9, SDG11, SDG13, and SDG17.

As for other countries in the region, we plan to start a series of meetings with national governments in 2020. Its objective is to receive support (including financial) of national and regional governments concerning participation of Eurasian cities in UCLG's activities, as well as in UCLG world congresses, the World Urban Forum, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the COP Climate Conferences and other global events.

The main areas in the frames of **cooperation with national associations** are the following:

- To organize trainings on SDGs during meetings of national associations of local governments;
- To receive results of the work, projects and recommendations from national associations;
- To develop joint projects for the benefit of cities and apply for grants to implement them.

Cooperation with the United Nations, European Commission and the Eurasian Economic Union for sustainable development of Eurasian local authorities is an important area of our activities.

The main activity of UCLG-Eurasia is cooperation with other sections. Agreements on cooperation have been signed with ASPAC, MEWA, FLACMA, Africa and Europe. The key priority of the Eurasia section aimed at fostering unity and strengthening of UCLG consists in participation in events of other sections and implementation of joint projects.

The UCLG-Eurasia's strategy includes such important item as shaping of the common vision of Eurasian local governments, that contains needs and opinion of citizens and representatives of local governments in the region, as well as informing political representatives of the region about it.

To solve the problem of incomprehension of the necessity to develop international relations and participate in global initiatives we have designed the Handbook of International Terms. It aims to explain the meaning of different international commitments, agreements, events, names of organizations and others.

The Research on Cities International Activities also aims to analyze local governments' work towards development of international relations. This will allow to define the most widespread methods of increasing international awareness. It is important that on the basis of the received data the Rating of Cities' International Activity is compiled. Its objective is to stimulate cities to develop international relations and to define best practice in this sphere. The experience of the leader of the rating will be analyzed and presented as a successful practice. Such groups of criteria as business activity of cities, international activity of the population, international organizations and institutions, international events, and infrastructure are analyzed in the research. Each group of criteria consists of indicators that most fully reflect the content of the criterion. Results of the current research will be presented during the UCLG Congress in Durban

Moreover, we plan to organize the **UCLG-Eurasia Retreat in March 2020**, where we will explain benefits of participation in the international agenda and SDGs implementation. We have an idea to invite representatives of city press offices to the Retreat as well. We plan to train them in SDGs, so that they could classify news on municipal websites by different SDGs. This will contribute to awareness-raising of SDGs among citizens, as well as to understanding what municipalities do for SDGs implementation. The second part of the training for press offices will be dedicated to municipal websites, especially their English versions. This will contribute to addressing the issue of **'lack of English versions of websites and lack of visible contacts in English'**.

Once a quarter, UCLG-Eurasia publishes **The Eurasia Local Governments magazine for local and regional leaders**. It is an important element of sharing experience. Since 2019 it has included not only news and best practices of cities, but information on the SDGs as well. Each magazine is dedicated to one of the SDGs and includes explanation of the concrete SDG, as well as the best municipal practice in this field.

We translate all UCLG's documents into Russian and organize simultaneous translation during main meetings of UCLG. It will be great if the UCLG website has the Russian version. We have already translated main parts of the uclg.org, and we are ready to make regular translation of news.

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms

To promote achievement of the SDGs, implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Addis-Ababa Action Agenda in cities of the Eurasia section;

To provide heads of local governments with the opportunity to be elected to the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA);

To ensure the possibility for political representatives of UCLG-Eurasia to deliver a speech during the World Urban Forum (WUF).

To ensure political representation of local governments of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine **at the global table** and to demonstrate their active involvement in the international municipal development and democracy development processes;

UCLG-Eurasia attaches great importance to the **Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**. UCLG-Eurasia continues to actively participate in preparing of the Voluntary National Review of the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which is being prepared in Russia by 2020. Ilсур Metshin, the President of UCLG-Eurasia, and Rasikh Sagitov, Secretary General of UCLG-Eurasia, work on the Report as members of the thematic working groups on SDG5, SDG9, SDG11, SDG13, SDG17.

UCLG-Eurasia has initiated Partnership for SDGs localization that involves conducting of **short two-hour seminars on the SDGs during the meetings of associations of local governments**. The goal of the project is to give local leaders a practical understanding of the SDGs and teach them how to align daily work of local authorities with the SDGs. Awareness of the SDGs will be a base for more local actions and will facilitate their systematization. To date, negotiations with partners are ongoing, and a calendar of seminars is being formed. The first seminar will be held on 31 October 2019 in Yekaterinburg (Russia) during the World Cities Day that is organized by UN-Habitat. We plan to organize 10 seminars and provide training for about 200-300 local leaders in 2020.

It is important that these seminars do not require significant financial and organizational resources, as they will be arranged on the basis of already organized events of partners. So, we do not need

to invite participants and to pay for a venue, accommodation, meals, etc. We just include our seminar to the program of a partner.

It is planned to conduct the **Campaign 'My City Implements the SDGs'**. During 2020 all participants of the campaign should post a banner on their websites and mark news with information to which SDG this business contributes.

Many Eurasian cities have integrated the SDGs into their city development strategies. Our priorities are the following:

- To receive relevant information on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals from heads of local and regional governments of Eurasia, systematize it and present at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- To organize participation of political representatives of the Eurasian region in discussions within the framework of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York.
- To ensure participation of heads of local governments of the Eurasian region in the activities of the Global Taskforce and meetings of the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments.

6. Key recommendations and actions by the international local and regional governments movement

Recommendations on improving UCLG's work:

- 1) To strengthen work in countries with the high level of centralization;
- 2) When developing programs and documents, as well as during organization of events, to use all UN languages;
- 3) To develop concrete practical recommendations on each of the SDGs: What can a city do? What projects can it implement on his own in order to make his contribution to the SDGs? It should be in the form of a clear step-by-step instruction.
- 4) To cooperate with business to reinforce financial independence and implement projects for the benefit of cities;
- 5) To identify clear criteria for speakers' addresses so that they contain only specific information without 'the importance of important things';
- 6) To cooperate with civic organizations for efficient solution of problems of urban activities;
- 7) To act in the interests of cities and their people regardless political relations between countries;

To establish the system of distant learning for local and regional leaders (available in all languages of UCLG member countries). The program should include such areas as development of international relations, solution of global problems and localization of the SDGs, best practice in addressing daily urban issues.


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11-15 November

**UCLG CONGRESS
WORLD SUMMIT OF LOCAL
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Latin America Position paper #UCLGCongress

Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

Position papers 02

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK LATIN AMERICA POSITION PAPER

1. Key Messages

The world has undergone major changes in the last three decades. Phenomena such as globalization and the financialization¹ of the economy, changes to production models, trade and consumption, the advancement of new technology and means of transport have shaped a hyperconnected and interdependent world.

As they are close to their policies, citizens and the territory, local governments play a vital global role in developing social, cultural, economic, and environmentally sustainable policies which leave no one and no place behind. Local governments, associations of local governments and cities are key players and the natural partners of national governments when it comes to designing and implementing policies in line with global challenges. Ibero-American local governments have shown their willingness to engage in global action, with local authorities from other regions, in order to strengthen mutual learning and build on relevant policy experiences that will help to provide effective responses to the global situation from the local level.

Local governments in Latin America and the Caribbean are facing economic, social, cultural, environmental, institutional and urban challenges. In order to meet these challenges, they will continue building on the achievements made and continue designing, implementing and strengthening political tools and strategies – based on the principles of transparency, participation, cooperation, accountability, the fight against corruption, the efficient use of resources and data – which will respond to those challenges and are linked to national, regional, continental and global agendas. Local priorities are also being identified while new public policies are being tested, learned from and improved, which is helping to achieve the global goals.

2. Current context and remaining challenges

2.1 Economic/Financial Context

Cities are the main sources of economic wealth because they generate around 70% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In economic terms, there is low growth and a lack of investment. Growth in the Latin American region is [estimated](#) to reach 1.4% in 2019 and 2.4% in 2020. However, in order to meet regional challenges, such as the 2030 Agenda, economic growth must be higher than 3%. Economic growth in the region has been insufficient and there have been delays in reducing poverty and income inequality. There are regional and territorial disparities in economic growth. Cities have limited resources to cope with the large number of tasks that they must carry out. There is a disconnect between the needs of cities in developing countries and the rules that dictate how resources are allocated; this poses a structural problem in the financial market, and it is a major obstacle to urban finance.

¹The term "financialization" generally refers to the increasing importance of financial capital in the operation of the economy. Financial activity is not only expanding rapidly, but its structure is also changing, in terms of markets, products and agents. These changes are deep enough to affect the logic behind economic performance. In most developed and some underdeveloped economies, non-financial companies, families and governments act under the logic of the financial sector. As a result, economic activity is "financialized" and leads to many problems of weakening demand, the slowing of the accumulation process and a restructuring of society that is to the detriment of working people and benefits the capital, particularly its financial sector. These numerous problems have finally led to the current crisis.

As an intermediate developed region, Latin America is able to attract and channel substantial internal or external funds into investment in urban transformation processes and use innovative ways to develop shared strategies aimed at mobilizing resources.

Economic/Financial Challenges

- Decentralizing finance to increase cities' capacity to respond. Creating and implementing innovative and diversified instruments to generate the necessary resources, which will help to activate and maximize the sustainable urban development value chain. Using innovative ways to design shared strategies in order to mobilize resources that would allow different stakeholders to be consistently involved in a suitable finance system for the sustainable development of cities and urban settlements in the region.
- Strengthening financial management by local and regional governments, by working to focus demand and seeking to diversify sources of finance. Creating new instruments for financing of infrastructure, and sustainable cultural and social policies. Making progress towards a new generation of instruments for attracting investment – public, private and mixed forms – for the purpose of promoting urban transformation initiatives and programmes.
- Promoting the definition, structuring and implementation of the “Ecosystem of Funds for Sustainable Urban Development”, an initiative which is aimed at boosting the sustainable urban development value chain by launching large-scale comprehensive urban transformation programmes in Latin America with medium- and long-term horizons.

2.2. Social/Human Context

Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the regions with the highest levels of economic and social inequality in the world; it is a result of an inequitable distribution of income among the region's inhabitants and the exclusion of vast segments of the population from basic public services, in addition to high socio-economic residential segregation, high unemployment rates and growing informality in the economy. Since 2015, there has been a further increase in overall poverty and extreme poverty levels (in 2017, over 187 million people were living in poverty and 62 million were living in extreme poverty).

Migration has been a constant feature of the historical reality in the region; in 2015, there were approximately 244 million migrants. This represents 3.3% of the total number (total world population is 7.35 billion) of people who currently live in a country other than their country of birth. Furthermore, the figure indicates that the number of migrants increased by almost 60% over the last 25 years, and by over 25% in the last decade.

In recent years, the increase to this figure has mainly been caused by the situation in Venezuela. By the end of 2018, a total of at least 3.4 million Venezuelans – more than 10% of the country's population – had fled to different destinations in Latin America and the Caribbean. Almost 5,000 people leave Venezuela each day. There are expected to be over five million refugees by the end of 2019. This phenomenon is also seen in Central America, due to insufficient growth, poverty and inequality. In this sub-region, the richest 10% earn up to 70 times more than the poorest 10%, and high youth unemployment also contributes to the migratory phenomenon – almost 362,000 young people try to enter the labour market each year, while only 127,000 new jobs are created.

In the light of the above, governments at various levels must adapt their policies and programmes in order to, on the one hand, address the structural causes of migration: insufficient economic growth with a high level of inequality, violence (gender, ethno-racial, intrafamily, social and sexual, as well as other forms), wage gaps and youth unemployment, family reunification and climate

change, and, on the other, receive and assist the migrant population that come to their territories. Violence in the region's cities reveals unforeseen vulnerabilities.

In addition, cities and their governments play a key role in social inclusion through the promotion and protection of the rights of people who belong to specific groups: young people, people with disabilities, women, the LGBTI community and indigenous peoples.

64% of young Latin Americans live in poor or vulnerable homes. They need to be given formal jobs and good public services if they are to have confidence in institutions.

With regard to gender equality, discriminatory and violent patriarchal cultural patterns; the predominant culture of privilege; the gender-specific division of labour; the unfair social organization of care; the concentration of power; and hierarchical relationships in the public sphere continue to pose obstacles to the inclusion of women in society.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, approximately 12% of the population has a disability, that is around 66 million people. These people have to contend with inadequate architecture, exclusion from health and treatments, discrimination in education, high unemployment, underemployment and precarious jobs.

With regard to safety, Latin America has been given the unfortunate title of the region with the highest number of the most dangerous cities in the world, following a comparison of the number of murders per 100,000 inhabitants in cities with more than 300,000 inhabitants and only counting intentional murder or death by assault. Out of the 50 cities in the ranking, 17 are in Brazil, 12 in Mexico, 5 in Venezuela, 3 in Colombia and 2 in Honduras. One of the cities is in El Salvador, one in Guatemala and another in Puerto Rico.

The region has witnessed armed conflict for decades and long negotiation processes. Cases like El Salvador and Colombia highlight the role that cities play in receiving victims, displaced and demobilized people, as well as their role in the post-conflict as key actors in implementing agreements and in building lasting and sustainable peace.

Social/Human Challenges

- Designing and implementing programmes and projects that seek to improve the social inclusion of all segments of the population (young people, women, people with disabilities, indigenous people, the LGBTI community), in social, political, economic and cultural areas of life. Supporting the coordinated work of the "UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights" with the Coalitions of Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia under the auspices of UNESCO. Considering new lines of work and strengthening those which have been successful in local areas in this field or innovating with new ideas that will help to tackle exclusion problems.

- Providing a response to the migrant population that moves within the region in search of opportunities. Making progress towards a common Latin American and Ibero-American agenda, which sets out a shared solidarity-based vision focused on integration and dialogue mechanisms and incorporates the capacities of local governments as key players in this strategy. Promoting the development of policies in line with the reality of migration, as well as good border control for inward and outward migration flows.

- Continuing to promote the Right to the City in global agendas and international forums; this is understood to mean the full exercise of rights through comprehensive social, cultural, urban, housing and habitat development programmes.

- Boosting the “Cities for Coexistence and Peace” initiative in order to achieve low criminality rates, and thereby strengthening coexistence and social inclusion in the region’s cities. Promoting prevention policy as an essential element in combating insecurity and creating standardized measurement mechanisms to generate and/or compile statistics on security while ensuring a cross-cutting approach to local policy. Cities for coexistence and peace seek to eradicate violence in all its forms: *direct violence*, which ranges from the violence of war to criminal violence; *structural violence*, as a result of an unjust order (economic and political); *cultural violence*, which is symbolic and based on ideologies and beliefs.

- Encouraging dialogue between different levels of government in order to coordinate efforts and initiatives aimed at consolidating peace locally, regionally and nationally. Post-conflict work from a territorial approach, as part of which cities contribute essential elements to the implementation of agreements.

- Making culture the fourth pillar of development. Promoting local heritage, creativity and diversity through people-centred culture policies. Promoting intersectoral and multilevel strategies and actions to help to achieve the 2030 Agenda sustainable development goals, regarding culture as a factor for integration and taking into account the rich diversity of cultural expression, as well as the importance of multiculturalism and interculturalism in Latin America and Ibero-America as cornerstones of development; and, by doing so, encourage discussion on the role of culture in the 2030 Agenda.

2.3. Environmental/Risk Management Context

Increasingly visible climate change, natural resource depletion and the loss of biodiversity require extreme solutions from local, national, regional and global levels; all stakeholders should be involved, and measures should also be implemented that aim to achieve environmental sustainability and manage the risk of disasters.

It is particularly vital that cities take action as they consume 64% of energy, are responsible for 70% of greenhouse gases, and around 70% of waste is generated in them. Furthermore, there is evidence of a trend towards pollution of natural resources; deforestation; waterproofing; drainage of marshy land and wetlands, which are then occupied; and unsustainable use of natural resources.

Since 1990, 117 million people in the region have been affected by natural disasters. Most of these people live in cities. The economic effects of natural disasters in Latin America are the most profound in the world (nearly 0.18% of GDP per disaster). The poorest households are the first to feel the effects and are the most seriously affected by environmental problems, along with the most vulnerable groups (women, boys and girls, the elderly, migrants, refugees, Afro-descendants and the differently abled); moreover, these people have fewer resources to adapt to disasters. People living in formal areas, but with ageing infrastructure, are also at high risk of suffering the effects of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. Heatwaves are also decreasing life expectancy among the urban population, particularly people over the age of 60 – the most rapidly growing segment of the population.

Environmental/Risk Management Challenges

- Tackling new environmental challenges. Mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, as well as reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, working to implement efficient and sustainable urban mobility systems, urban planning and appropriate land management. The objectives of equitable and prosperous cities depend on the ability to plan cities which take into account their relationship with the environment.

- Comprehensively addressing disaster risk reduction, prevention, by means of mitigation and adaptation, and appropriate urban and territorial planning in human settlements, as well as handling emergencies and resilience after suffering damage caused by disasters.

2.4. Institutional Context

It is clear that politics in the region are in turmoil; crises such as those in Nicaragua and Venezuela are destabilizing it. Changes to the political model, such as the new government in Brazil, combined with the corruption that affects most Latin American and Caribbean countries lead to problems in territorial governance. Confidence in local public administration must be strengthened by preventing and combating corruption, guaranteeing the efficient provision of public services, creating participatory forums and improved communication channels that will bring the government closer to citizens.

For 30 years, significant progress has been made in the process of decentralization in Latin America. Since the mid-1980s, subnational governments in the region have been strengthened. At present, in almost all Latin American countries, the people elect the highest municipal authority. The characteristics of the region also include participatory budgets, local economic development and municipal associativism.

The share of subnational government spending in consolidated public expenditure in the region's countries almost doubled between 1985 and 2010, from 13% to 25%. However, if it is analysed in relation to GDP, it only represents 6.3% and 6.2% of expenditure and income, that is, less than half the proportion in the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (corresponding to 16.2% and 15.9%, respectively).

Even though subnational governments' share of central government expenditure has increased in recent decades, subnational governments' autonomy in managing their resources may be limited in practice by continued central government controls, constraints on local capacities and a percentage of transfers that is higher than their own income, especially when such transfers are conditional, as is the case in many countries.

Decentralization in a broad sense can create horizontal fiscal imbalances as it grants power over income and assigns spending responsibilities to subnational governments, which propose and carry out projects with different fiscal capacities and expenditure needs. Local governments' fiscal capacities and needs are not always in line and this may mean that only some local governments are able to provide the appropriate services. It is also necessary to involve citizens in approving them.

Multilevel governance – which is regarded as an addition and not an alternative to local autonomy – is increasingly strong, which presents an opportunity for local and regional governments to become key players on the international scene.

Local and regional governments from around the world have committed to promoting a profound transformation of the current development model with a view to moving towards a human and sustainable development model. The 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda provide the roadmap for many Latin American countries, which are already making efforts to achieve the goals set in both agendas. The clear and specific inclusion of the right to the city in the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 11 on cities and sustainable communities is proof of this progress in the participation and advocacy of local governments.

New forms of interaction between governments and citizens using technological tools and social media are helping to establish a new paradigm of public management, in which data and

information generated by citizens is important for validating and supplementing political decisions. Open governance practices – for the purpose of efficient public management; transparency; as a strategy for institutional coordination and strengthening; institutional organization; as a proposal for action in the fight against corruption; and as innovation in public management – are essential to consolidating new schemes of multistakeholder governance at local level.

Local governments have succeeded in establishing themselves as important players in the global system. It is also important to highlight the establishment and strengthening of local government networks, which allow cities to have an influence on policy, economic and social decisions, not only at the national level, but also at the regional and global levels. As emerging players at the international level, local and regional governments, and their networks, are bringing about a process which is spreading quickly. International relations are now a vital learning space and a window of opportunity for every city, municipality or territory.

Institutional Challenges

- Strengthening local governments' autonomy and decentralization; in this respect, the current context established by the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda provide an opportunity for taking the following joint actions.
- Promoting effective decentralization, with competences, resources and capacities gradually being transferred to local governments. The achievement of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda will largely depend on this happening. The world cannot be changed without first empowering cities and human settlements.
- Empowering governments to implement programmes and projects based on a participatory strategic urban plan, which will allow progress to be made towards the concept of "co-creating" or collectively creating the city. This plan must take global agreements into account, linking them to the territory's strategy.
- Developing data and information-management platforms which will enable dialogue between the different spheres of government and allow the different planning, management and assessment processes to be incorporated with transparency for citizens.
- Maintaining the spaces gained at international level and the progress achieved. Promoting local and regional government voices and voting rights in regional and global decision-making forums using a clear strategic framework. It is important for international activity to move beyond isolated, spontaneous actions focused on specific projects towards public policy connected to the territory's particular features and its strategic planning.
- Strengthening spaces for dialogue between regions and making progress towards a model of peaceful coexistence and supportive development.
- Supporting citizen's leading roles in designing and monitoring public policies; this protagonism has increased with the breakthrough of new technologies and access to information. This is a new paradigm of citizen-centred governance based on data which reflects the values of open governance and smart cities.

2.5 Urban Context

Today's world is predominantly urban. More than half the world's population live in cities with over 300,000 inhabitants, and it is expected that 66 percent of the global population will live in large cities by 2050. These percentages are even higher in the region of Latin America and the

Caribbean, where 80 percent of the population currently lives in urban areas.

The urban population in Latin America and the Caribbean is growing by more than half a million new residents per month. 81% of people live in cities. The population of cities will increase by 100 million people by 2035. By 2025, 100 million Latin American residents will live in only six mega-cities: Mexico City (24.5 million by 2025), Sao Paulo (23.2), Buenos Aires (15.5), Rio de Janeiro (13.6), Lima (11.5) and Bogotá (11.4).

Housing is still an ongoing issue in Latin America. While at least 10% of the world's inhabitants live in informal settlements, in Latin America the figure is between 20% and 30%. These peripheral neighbourhoods lack public spaces, while in the few that do have them they are of a very low quality.

In Latin America, 55% of the working population work in the informal sector; in some countries the total is even 70%. Furthermore, the growing number of self-employed workers shows that there is a lack of opportunities in the labour market and is generally associated with an increasing lack of job security for workers.

With regard to mobility, major cities in Latin America were built with the mobility of motor vehicles in mind and not the movement of people.

The region's major urban challenges are concentrated in the "triple informality" (in housing, transport and employment). This context of increasing urban concentration is turning cities into the ideal spaces in which to develop policies that will allow us to move towards a human and sustainable development model.

Urban Challenges

- Promoting urban infrastructure that is focused on sustainability, productivity and social justice, with the aim of closing existing gaps and creating urban areas that do not harm the environment.
- Further strengthening the urban dimension in the 2030 Agenda and continuing to promote the localization of the SDGs. The SDGs will only be achievable if the local level and civil society take full ownership of this Agenda. Localization is necessary in order to bring the SDGs into line with local development plans, to share experiences, monitor and prepare reports on their implementation.
- Increasing investment in urban development in order to create smart cities. This refers to building infrastructure but more so to communications infrastructure, investment in social capital and in improving residents' quality of life as opposed to physical infrastructure. Applying new technologies in order to develop smart cities in different areas of city life: environment, mobility, governance, economy, society, citizen participation and housing, so that urban spaces will be increasingly efficient and sustainable with a balance achieved between citizens' well-being and preserving the environment.
- Working to create decent jobs and encourage social cohesion. It is essential to plan balanced linkages between the productive matrix and urban development with social justice, which is one of the main challenges faced by our region.
- Supporting the planning process for local development, tourism, heritage and culture strategies, together with the various stakeholders living in the territory.
- Fostering the development of local housing/habitat plans, as territorial planning instruments that

provide an exhaustive assessment of the community reality, an action plan, goals and strategies, which will help municipalities to improve management.

- Promoting the recognition of migration as a factor to consider when designing urbanization policies, understanding the contribution of migrants: they strengthen labour markets, promote diversity, help to improve productivity, and are a source of cultural enrichment, etc. As well as potential demands on an issue as crucial as housing.

3. Key political priorities in the following areas

Economic/Financial Challenges

The challenge of reshaping supply and demand for urban finance is a priority and is linked to the UCLG priority on Territorial, Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing.

The “World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance”, which is organized by UCLG together with the OECD, is working on the issue based on studies on local and regional government finance and structures; the aims include raising UCLG members’ international profile and bringing their perspective to global discussions on development financing and supporting a more equitable distribution of national income; as well as promoting dialogue and partnerships between local and national governments, international institutions and academics. In the same connection, the UCLG Policy Council on “Territorial, Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing” will debate how to boost effective territorial and multilevel governance, and re-think sub-national and public financing systems to reconcile financing with sustainability.

Social/Human Challenges

With respect to the Right to the City and Inclusive Territories, the challenges are directly linked to UCLG’s policy priorities, since the Policy Council on the “Right to the City and Inclusive Territories” has been working to promote and push for recognition of this right, hand in hand with reducing poverty and exclusion.

As regards the challenge of social inclusion, national agencies and the United Nations regard the “UCLG Standing Committee for Gender Equality” as the global voice of locally elected women. It monitors and promotes the participation of women at local level across the world. The “UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights” aspires to articulate a common voice for the world organization of local governments on social inclusion, participatory democracy and human rights.

There is also a direct link between the challenge posed by increasing migration and the need for governments at different levels to implement measures to address this issue. In this context, UCLG acts globally, making visible and accompanying the action of local governments in the governance of migration from the following angles: 1) The Mayors Mechanism, which is a tool for dialogue between States and local and regional governments in the framework of the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration. 2) The Community of Practice on Migration, to capitalize on and disseminate the work of the organization and its members on migration governance. 3) The Mediterranean Cities Migration Project (MC2CM), which supports the development of more open and inclusive urban policies that make it possible to protect and promote the rights of migrants for the benefit of the whole territory. Furthermore, with the Wave of Action “All migrants, all citizens”, governance of migration is a topic that UCLG links to urban development and planning, because today’s migrants are the citizens of tomorrow. This approach is part of the mission to promote the right to the city, access to basic services, the guarantee of human rights and participation processes.

Promoting culture in the international arena is a challenge that is linked to the UCLG policy priority Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace.

Local governments have been pushing for culture to be recognized as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. The “The Committee on Culture of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)” is the global platform of cities, organizations and networks to learn, to cooperate and to launch policies and programmes on the role of culture in sustainable development. The mission of the Committee on Culture of UCLG is “to promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development through the international dissemination and the local implementation of Agenda 21 for culture”.

The UCLG Policy Council “Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace” addresses the challenge concerning post-conflict cities; it debates how to protect the core values of culture, foster city diplomacy and cooperation through capacity development, and promote solidarity and peace as the bases for sustainable development, since UCLG firmly believes that strong local democracy is the foundation of national development and international peace, prosperity and solidarity. Local governments have taken part in international initiatives for peace, and they play an important role in dealing with conflict in their own areas. Through the “Committee on Development Cooperation and City Diplomacy”, and the “Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group”, UCLG supports its members in their efforts to prevent violent conflict and work towards establishing solid foundations for democracy and peace. Furthermore, the UCLG Peace Prize informs the international community about local governments that are implementing strategies for preventing conflict, building peace and post-conflict reconstruction. The Prize also promotes local innovative peace-building initiatives.

Environmental/Risk Management Challenges

With regard to the challenges associated with climate change and disaster risk, UCLG has adopted a position on disaster risk reduction reaffirming the commitment of local authorities throughout the world to anticipate and reduce disaster risks and to act, if necessary, when disasters do occur. UCLG has also been constantly involved in climate change negotiations; the organization has also raised awareness on the impact of climate change on cities and their inhabitants, and promoted the implementation of a sustainability agenda to prevent its impact around the world. The UCLG Policy Council “Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace” is the place to share initiatives in these areas and to hold in-depth discussions about related policies and their impact at local and global level. UCLG is also supporting UNISDR in the “Making Cities Resilient” Campaign. Over 1,000 cities have joined this important initiative to raise awareness about disaster risk reduction.

Institutional Challenges

As regards effective decentralization, the “UCLG Decentralisation and Local Self-Government Committee” works to strengthen decentralization and local self-government in all regions of the world, by enhancing the capacities of local governments, supporting research, encouraging the exchange of information and promoting advocacy. UCLG is also actively involved in international fora on the topic: The Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation, the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum and the EU Policy Forum on Development.

Further strengthening multilevel governance is therefore both a challenge and a priority. UCLG has affirmed the need to govern in partnership, build governance capabilities, implement effective partnerships with multiple stakeholders, and ensure accountable and transparent local governance. The governance model needs to be integrated, long-term and innovative, and it must support the participation of sub-national governments in the definition of national policies, and particularly national urban policies and regional development strategies for the localization of the SDGs, the achievement of the New Urban Agenda and other global challenges. The UCLG Policy Council “Territorial, Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing” is the place to share initiatives and hold in-depth discussions about policies and their consequences at the different

levels of government, as well as to propose paths for the development of a new model of governance. The UCLG Local4Action Hub is an initiative that aims to turn the 2030 Agenda into local actions by taking advantage of the network and its experience in sharing and cooperating.

With regard to boosting cities' international role, UCLG would like to increase the visibility and influence of local and regional governments on the global stage, amplify their voice and highlight their priorities, challenges and achievements relating to global agendas and the Bogotá Commitment.

Urban Challenges

The Policy Council on the “Right to the City and Inclusive Territories” has been working on the issue of housing with an approach that aims to exchange views on how to support inclusive housing policies and ensure the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing for all, work with communities to upgrade slums and regenerate poor neighbourhoods, and support the social production of habitat. Through the Wave of Action “Housing is a right, not a commodity”, UCLG will continue to defend the right to housing in the framework of the Right to the City at global level, as expressed in the Bogotá Commitment adopted in October 2016. It will promote debates on housing among its members to build a common narrative and strategy to influence the discussions of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11. It is also pushing for the concept of housing to be seen as a human right; UCLG has been supporting this effort in collaboration with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing.

UCLG is working to address the challenge of promoting the local development strategies planning process in the “Committee on Local Economic and Social Development” by focusing on local economic development as a public necessity, that is, as part of public policy in local and national government agendas. This view of development involves a territorial approach, based on endogenous resources and obeying environmental sustainability criteria. In turn, this view of local development must be constructed through public participation; it must strengthen decentralization; and it must involve an integrated vision of the territory, through participatory territorial planning.

Urban planning is addressed in the “Committee on Urban Strategic Planning” by means of technical assistance, the dissemination of good practices and promoting urban planning in a variety of settings.

4. Political strategies and tools

Training and Knowledge Management

Work has been carried out on governance starting with knowledge management, and involving capacity-building and regulated training for Ibero-American politicians, experts and officials. The XI regional training session on “Promoting governance and innovation to develop public regional policies” is an example.

On the topic of localizing the SDGs, workshops have been held with officials to share tools with them that will help to localize the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda in their territories. Agendas have also been structured in order to work on the topic; this has facilitated collaboration between different sectors of society and the government. Social communication process have also been systematized to make the SDGs local with the aim of involving and raising awareness among different target groups.

As regards the international role of cities, governments have been increasing their international activities. To achieve this, work has involved increasing local capacities in international affairs and advocacy related to the main sustainable development agendas.

Managing and exchanging knowledge is essential to the training and improvement of the professional skills of local personnel; for this reason, the purpose of the Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group is to advance the effectiveness and quality of international policies and programs of local and regional governments and their associations. The CIB is making progress towards building a knowledge and learning community to improve advocacy and local international action and cooperation.

Campaigns

With respect to social inclusion, campaigns have been designed such as the Ibero-American Cities Free of Gender Violence campaign. Defending diversity has also been made a priority in action on equality and social development. In this respect, actions to defend the rights of the LGBTIQ community have been promoted and, therefore, actions aimed at defending diversity in cities. Similarly, the Latin American and Caribbean Coalition of Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia has been carrying out activities.

In the area of migration, the “Diversity in you” [“La diversidad que hay en ti”] campaign was designed. It is an awareness campaign about the rights of migrants in South America, which emphasizes the importance of the continent’s cultural and ethnic diversity, and the social inclusion of the most vulnerable migrants: boys, girls and young people; women; low-skilled workers; indigenous peoples; Afro-descendants; and illegal migrants or asylum seekers.

International Fora and Events

In order to address social inclusion, the UCCI seminar “aliadas en el orgullo LGTBIQ” (united in LGTBIQ pride) was held in Buenos Aires, and CENESEX organized the 10th Cuban Day against Homophobia and Transphobia in Havana.

As regards the environmental, sustainability and climate change challenge, the region has taken part in fora such as the World Forum on Local Economic Development (LED) in 2017. The Forum is intended to be a further means to make progress towards achieving equality, equity and cohesion within the localization framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set by the UN in the 2030 Agenda. The Local Economic Development Committee, which supports the organization of this Forum together with networks of cities, managed to arrange for it to be held in the region in December 2019 (Córdoba, Argentina).

With the same purpose of global advocacy in the area of territory and sustainable economies, it took part in the Regional Forum of Local Economic Development (LED) for Latin America and the Caribbean. At the second edition of the Forum, cities reaffirmed their commitment to a sustainable economic development model.

In order to promote culture as the fourth pillar of development and a culture of peace, local governments have been playing a leading role in the international sphere, and taking part at the global level; this has been reflected in Declarations such as the Iberoamerican Cities of Peace Declaration. They also brought the voice of Iberoamerican municipalism to Madrid’s Commitment to Peaceful Cities, which was a result of the First World Forum on Urban Violence, and to the 2nd UCLG Culture Summit. It is also promoted through recognitions such as the Ibero-American Capital of Culture Award, which is awarded to a city for its outstanding efforts to promote culture, the UCLG-Mexico City-Culture 21 Award and the UCLG Peace Prize.

With regard to housing, the region has addressed this issue by looking for cities with adequate housing. Among other issues, demands have been made for more funds to improve public housing stocks; more powers for local authorities to better regulate the real estate market; urban planning that combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods; and more tools to co-produce public-private community-driven alternative housing. Local governments also participated actively in the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito, at which the New Urban Agenda, the local road map that complements the 2030 Agenda for the construction of a human, equitable and sustainable development model, was launched.

Other Strategies and Tools

With respect to the challenge of preventing and managing the disaster risk, local governments have acknowledged the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. They have committed to adopting and implementing local disaster risk reduction strategies and plans, establishing and strengthening coordination forums, promoting the incorporation of the disaster risk into the development and implementation of land use policies, among other measures.

As part of their approach to urban mobility, through their national associations, local governments have implemented cooperation programmes with various European agencies, such as: the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the FIIAP Foundation, the French Development Agency (AFD), Expertise France and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).

With regard to the international role of local governments, the “South-South Cooperation Programme”, which is aimed at strengthening and revitalizing partnerships with other regional and global networks, is being promoted. Similarly, the process “A seat at the global table: local governments as decision-makers in world affairs” has been developed; its aim is to improve the global governance system through the internationalization of local and regional governments, as well as their networks, in order to face the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly urban world. Its purpose is also to strengthen the internationalization of cities and local and ensure that local and regional governments participate actively in international decision-making fora, with 3 focal points: I) Our added value, what we bring to the global table, II) Why do we want a change in global governance?, III) Our call for an Action Plan.

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms.

Training and Knowledge Management

The Workshops on Localizing the SDGs respond to the need for the Sustainable Development Goals to be implemented at local level. They were developed for that purpose and with a view to achieving the global commitments, taking territorial realities into account.

Campaigns

Equality and social development initiatives go hand in hand with the 2030 Agenda goal of leaving no one behind and with SDG 1 (End poverty), 5 (Gender equality), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Health and well-being), 4 (Quality education), 11 and 17. Work has been done on the topic of gender by joining the United Nations Global Movement and other initiatives led by different institutions and cities around the world through campaigns such as the Ibero-American Cities Free of Gender Violence campaign. These initiatives are also linked to goals 1 (A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens), 5 (Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production), 17 (Full gender equality in all spheres of life) and 18 (Engaged and empowered youth and children) of the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

The work that has been carried out on the topic of migration through the “Diversity in you” campaign is closely in line with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and to Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The XXIII Summit of the South American Local Governments Network ratified its commitment to defend the human rights of migrants.

International Fora and Events

The culture of peace that is being promoted is linked to the SDGs, especially SDG 16. Events such as the First World Forum on Urban Violence, which led to the Declaration of Iberoamerican Cities of Peace, have been held. There is also a link with goals 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the African Union’s Agenda 2063, which are aimed at entrenching democratic values, practices, the universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law on the continent, and establishing capable institutions and transformative leadership, as well as preserving peace, security and stability, to make Africa stable and peaceful.

With respect to the New Urban Agenda, local governments are key actors in the global spheres in which work related to this agenda is carried out; they actively participated in the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), at which the New Urban Agenda, the local road map that complements the 2030 Agenda for the construction of a human, equitable and sustainable development model, was launched. In the framework of the New Urban Agenda, they also took part in the World Urban Forum IX (WUF), where a commitment was made to the sustainable development of cities, drawing inspiration from action under the New Urban Agenda and with the aim of succeeding in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals at local level.

Local governments in the region have promoted actions which guarantee the Right to the City in international fora and bodies. All of these efforts have been made in line with the reference to the Right to the City made in the New Urban Agenda, which was adopted at the Habitat III Conference, in Quito in 2016.

Work has been carried out on governance covering open governance, transparency, citizen participation, conflict prevention and human security, and support for the international action of cities. In this respect, it is linked to the Right to the City included in the New Urban Agenda, and to SDGs 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and 17 (Partnerships for the goals). With regard to SDG 17, the Networks are participating actively in international fora and spheres. Efforts have also been made to strengthen partnerships by working together through CORDIAL, as well as by collaborating with United Nations Agencies and programmes, such as UNDP-Art and UN-Habitat, and maintaining close relationships with the Ibero-American General Secretariat.

Other Strategies and Tools

Local governments have been making progress on greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventories. Other cities already have Climate Action Plans and GHG reduction targets. It is also worth mentioning the development of Urban-LEDS, which are aimed at implementing low-carbon urban development strategies. In the area of biodiversity and food security, several cities have been actively involved in Cities With Nature and CITYFOOD.

As a result of the Sendai Framework, work has been done to develop disaster risk reduction plans, as well as to understand the disaster risk, improve disaster risk management, invest in disaster risk reduction, and step up disaster preparation to ensure an effective response and better recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean 2016-2036 (PAR) is a road map that establishes synergies with the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action.

The local and regional governments' constituency has contributed to the relevant debates and mechanisms, namely: UN-Habitat programmes on public space and safe cities; the 5th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, the implementation of the Marrakech Roadmap for Action; support for the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy; contribution to the Climate Change Summit; preparation of a conference aimed at deepening scientific knowledge of the link between climate change and cities, in support of the implementation of the relevant global agendas; the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS); and the "agenda for humanity" process.

With respect to territories and sustainable economies, local governments have been implementing programmes and projects which are linked to the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda, as well as to SDGs 11, 17, 6 (Clean water and sanitation), 7 (Affordable and clean energy), 8 (Decent work and economic growth), 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), 10 (Reduced inequalities), 12 (Responsible consumption and production), 13 (Climate action), 14 (Life below water) and 15 (Life on land).

6. Recommendations and key actions by the international movement of local and regional governments

Local Action

- Plan by linking the global commitments to the territorial strategy and taking into account policy coherence for development (PCD), that is, understanding policy effects and interactions both internally and externally and their contribution to global public goods.
- Step up strategic planning to ensure a shared vision of the development of cities and human settlements, based on the nature and governance of urban expansions; redistributive mechanisms for providing housing, infrastructure and local services; urban and peri-urban tenure and governance; joint governance; emerging cities, and rural urbanization.
- Strengthen the involvement of local governments in localizing the SDGs. Accelerate cities' participation in Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and local governments' efforts to monitor and report on progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Promote the development of shared information systems to review public policies, and collect disaggregated and localized data to add to national indicator systems and contribute to global monitoring.
- Open more and improved spaces to encourage local community participation in security, the environment, social and territorial development, health education, and other areas. Citizen participation will strengthen democracy, and improve multilevel and multistakeholder governance.
- Push for the adoption of laws and regulatory frameworks which guarantee equality and prohibit discrimination against women in the world of work. Strengthen policies aimed at gender equality, social inclusion and non-discrimination in cities. Make progress towards a "50-50" law, which will raise standards for women's participation in politics.
- Urge our governmental authorities to legislate on local issues with a gender perspective, establishing measures such as: mandatory equality and gender committee in Municipal Councils; implementation of prevention protocols and punishment of workplace and sexual harassment in all State bodies; and a prohibition on anyone who has a history of abuse or violence against women holding a post.

- Strengthen permanent mechanisms for dialogue with and consultation of indigenous peoples.
- Continue to promote cities as places for coexistence and peace through initiatives such as “Cities for Coexistence and Peace” which fight organized crime; corruption; intolerance; interpersonal violence; violence against women; defend the city in times of war; prevent and counter violent extremism. In addition, implement care rather than security policies; cooperate with national governments in developing, implementing and monitoring of action plans to prevent violence; develop local action plans to deal with violence and conflict. Encourage citizen diplomacy as a strategy for peaceful conflict resolution or transformation.
- Guarantee access to infrastructure and resilient, quality basic services for all. Ensure equitable access to public goods and urban services through coherent and coordinated urban and territorial management.
- Promote the undertaking of territorial and risk assessments, which will determine the status of water, energy and potential hazards. This will make it possible to design and implement measures aimed at improving management with a focus on climate change and natural disasters.
- Support the creation of decent jobs with a gender perspective, foster social cohesion and reduce informal employment rates.
- Encourage the design of strategies for social and inclusive economic development, aimed at creating platforms which will allow collaborative experiences of proximity, time banks and responsible consumption, among others, to be shared. Identify social economy strategies based on municipal action, which help to boost solidarity-based, participatory, small-scale economies of proximity, as driving forces of change towards inclusion and social equity.
- Work to promote culture as the fourth pillar of development and promote Agenda 21 for culture. Promote local heritage, creativity and diversity through people-centred culture policies.
- Encourage the use of new technologies through initiatives such as the Digital Agenda and Open Government Initiative, which enable municipalities to provide increased and improved services to the community. Promote open and collaborative governance which places transparency, access to information, accountability, citizen participation and preventing and combating corruption at the centre of local agendas.
- Make progress in including the rural sector in the development of Sustainable Cities.
- Increase internal institutional capacities and adopt more innovative international development cooperation arrangements.
- Develop strategies, urban interventions and mechanisms which promote urban mobility and a safe, affordable, accessible transport system for all.
- Continue encouraging citizen participation through training activities, exchanges and cooperation between territories that help to create or update regulatory and institutional frameworks.
- Strengthen and promote local government global partnerships, mainly involving neighbouring countries and municipalities, to define joint strategies to address their various issues.

National Action

- Address the issue of the financing of cities from various angles; find new means of financing, adapt the supply and demand of resources to local governments and strengthen territorial management. Negotiate a new Fiscal Pact with central governments to provide municipalities with sufficient resources to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs in all territories, particularly in the poorest and most deprived, ensuring that the allocation of resources

is adequate for the demands for action made to local governments; transparency control measures should also be put in place for the received funds².

- Adopt more territorial approaches to promote public investment as a tool that drives the localization of the SDGs.
- Support efforts aimed at establishing and launching the “Migrant and Refugee Reception Office” so that it can manage migrants’ needs. Central governments must incorporate these municipal offices into legislative proposals on migration. They must also provide local governments with the necessary resources to guarantee the social rights of all migrants.
- Continue promoting the Right to the City in a range of areas at national and international level.
- Improve local and regional governments’ capacity to manage the prevention, reduction and management of disaster risks, as well as their capacity to respond to and cope with crises. Implement systems for non-polluting clean energy generation and use; promote and encourage recycling, by means of recycling points, separate waste collection and extended producer responsibility. Enhance environmental education in order to include the community in this issue. Plan for urban and climate resilience through urban and territorial planning instruments and urban design.
- Support effective decentralization so that local governments have the necessary political and fiscal tools that will allow them to play a strategic role at the local, regional and national level.
- Improve the alignment of actions between the different levels of government with the aim of encouraging coordinated work to benefit national development, taking national, regional, continental and global agendas into account.. Improve legal processes and tools that boost the institutional and administrative capacities of local, metropolitan and regional governments in international topics, thereby promoting better coordination between the different levels of government.
- Involve civil society, academia and other key stakeholders in the process of implementing the agendas, with a view to sharing responsibility and ensuring a broad partnership and consensus.
- Encourage cities, through multi-stakeholder partnerships, to test and develop local innovations which may help to advance towards achieving self-sufficient and resilient cities by taking advantage of disruptive new technologies.
- Make localization an essential strategy as part of national strategies, with suitable legal frameworks, operational capabilities and appropriate financial resources.
- Address housing and habitat policy needs from the perspective of the housing deficit, improving existing marginal areas, planning and managing future growth.
- Promote sustainable urban development with a cross-cutting approach in national policies, which requires urban issues to interact with other public policies.
- Promote adequate and affordable housing and access to urban land as a fundamental element of urban planning and design.
- Incorporate the metropolitan dimension into proposals to respond to global challenges.
- Create strategies aimed at achieving more efficient and sustainable smart cities.
- Boost the participation of post-conflict cities by establishing covenants for the implementation of agreements based on territorial realities.

International Action

²Percentages will depend on local governments’ existing powers or those assigned to them. They will be higher if the local government is in charge of education, police, health, etc.

- Use innovative ways to design shared strategies in order to mobilize resources and create governance schemes that would allow different stakeholders to be consistently involved in an adequate financing ecosystem for the sustainable development of cities and urban settlements in the region.
- Make progress towards a new generation of instruments for attracting investment – public, private and mixed forms – for the purpose of promoting initiatives and programmes focused on the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, alongside the structuring and implementation of the “Ecosystem of Funds for Sustainable Urban Development”, which is a response to the common challenge of promoting the sustainable urban development value chain.
- Boost cooperation between all levels of government – multilevel cooperation – which makes it easier to involve all stakeholders – multistakeholder cooperation.
- Continue supporting Citizen Innovation Laboratories in producing innovative solutions to achieving the 2030 Agenda and as an important tool that will help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Manage actions aimed at countering the effects of climate change; adopt policies focused on the transition towards resilient cities and regions with sustainable environmental models.
- Support decentralized, city-to-city cooperation, learning, management and the exchange of knowledge between local governments.
- Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development and encourage the coordination of inclusive partnerships in the search for the common good.
- Create an agenda with strategic topics that the region can lead and take ownership of, thanks to their experience, at the international level. Identify regional priorities that are in line with global commitments. Develop Waves of Action in partnership with UCLG on key topics for the region and which will reveal the multiplier effects of synchronizing thousands of local and regional actions at global level.
- Align the principles and goals of our region’s networks of cities with the main sustainable development agendas in relation to topics such as: culture, governance, equality and social development, territory and sustainable economies, including cross-cutting themes such as the culture of peace and human rights.
- Present the region’s experiences and potential while highlighting its diversity and its contribution to public policies with prizes, awards and recognitions that shed light on the contribution made to improving living conditions in territories. Highlight lessons learned that need strengthening and continuity, teamwork, and interaction between cities which create knowledge and critical mass.
- Participate in forums for consultation and mutual learning with other cities, through municipal networks that strengthen the common goals of Ibero-American municipalism with respect for its diversity and unique features.
- Revitalize networking and the coordination of local authorities in Latin America under CORDIAL. Strengthen and broaden partnerships and coalitions at local and regional level. Boost political dialogue, strengthen networking and “city-to-city cooperation” and regional cooperation in order to design sustainable development strategies and define the priorities of the New Urban Agenda. Strengthen and promote local government global partnerships, mainly involving neighbouring countries and municipalities, to define joint strategies to address their various issues.
- Acknowledge and strengthen territories’ processes of internationalization in order to work together with national governments and international bodies.
- Foster political dialogue, strengthen networking and “city-to-city cooperation” and cooperation between regions in order to design sustainable development strategies and define the priorities of the New Urban Agenda.
- Boost the influence that local and regional governments have at the international level and local governments’ professional expertise in international topics. Design and implement public

policies on international relations, and launch communication and citizen awareness strategies about the importance of these cooperative relationships between cities and regions. Unite efforts to ensure that local governments have a central role, not only in leading processes locally but also taking part in decision-making at global level.

- Ensure that local governments are represented in discussion fora in order to place local priorities on regional and international agendas. Press international bodies with one voice to enable participation while preserving the uniqueness and characteristics of each network, which will deepen diversity and enrich the debate.

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Europe Position paper #UCLGCongress

Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

Position papers 03

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK EUROPEAN POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

- **Understand the activities of the CEMR and PLATFORMA in the light of the Sustainable Development Goals**
- Strengthen the **role, acknowledgement and involvement** of local and regional governments in **European and global policies**. In particular, we are continuing our work on subsidiarity and proportionality. In the European Union context, we would like to gain better recognition for the quality of local and regional public services. This entails freedom of choice over the way in which these services are managed based on priorities and the local or regional context. As regards European cooperation policy beyond 2020, the CEMR and PLATFORMA support reintroducing a specific budget line for Local and Regional Governments. Our study on the associations which represent local and regional authorities will help us to demonstrate the role that they play nationally, as well as how representative they are; this provides good reason for greater recognition in the European context and particularly from the European institutions.
- Increase **recognition of the role that local and regional governments** play in achieving the **SDGs**, and advocate for their **participation in the future European Decentralised Cooperation Programme** (influence of Member States on the different conclusions on the 2030 Agenda and of the European Parliament for its opinion report; organization of a delegation of European local and regional governments active in decentralized cooperation for the HLPF, annual report on the role of associations in implementing the SDGs, etc.).
- Continue to **advocate for efforts to promote equality between women and men at local and regional levels** by rallying the support of signatories of the *European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life*, supporting UCLGA in **developing an African Charter for equality**, and discussing obstacles to the participation of women in political life with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. The study on women in politics, which is currently being edited, will be very useful for this work; it will demonstrate how far we are from achieving gender equality in Europe despite the work that has been underway for many years.
- Defend the concept of **European cohesion policy as an instrument for territorial, economic and social development**; play an active role in discussions on and **developing strategies for territorial development and sustainable cities**. Several factors have an impact on territories: the movement of people and migration, and investment in infrastructure (including digital infrastructure), education and housing, etc. From a European perspective, structural funds are instruments aimed at reducing inequalities between territories.
- Local and regional authorities play an important role as **employers** as regards the **lifelong learning** of local and regional officials, decent work and well-being at work. SDGs 4 and 8 set out the path that local and regional governments should take as employers; however, changing stakeholders' mindsets and public administration structures remains a challenge.
- **Environmental policy is gaining prominence on the political agenda**; for example, in issues related to biodiversity; air, ground and water pollution; increased waste; the mobility challenge, etc. All these issues have an impact at local and regional levels. It is essential for

the voice of local and regional governments to be heard in order to ensure that their interests are taken into account when reviewing any existing legislation or new draft laws.

- We are pledging our commitment to the transition to a **fossil-fuel free society by 2050**. To that end, we promote measures aimed at improving energy efficiency, reducing the greenhouse effect and increasing the use of renewable energy. Local and regional governments will be on the front line in meeting this major challenge.
- Create innovative **international partnerships**, for the purpose of implementing and improving local and regional policies throughout the world based around the **SDGs**.
- **Share practices and experiences among members and partners**, in order to continually review and improve our public policies for citizens' well-being: strengthen the capacities of local and regional governments and their associations, workshops, peer reviews, discussions, training, etc.
- **Contribute to the work of the Global Taskforce** with the aim of bringing the perspective of European local and regional authorities to global discussions, and boost collective learning on global challenges that have an impact at local level.

2. The current context and remaining challenges

The CEMR's work is closely **in line with EU legislation**, even though some of its member countries are not part of the European Union. Similarly, PLATFORMA and its 30 partners, which represent local and regional governments active in international cooperation, signed a strategic partnership with the EU in 2015 and receives **European funds** to implement its programmes. Their actions should therefore be considered in the light of European legislation and action, the importance of multilevel governance for improved effectiveness and a greater impact of public action on local and regional territories.

The major challenges at local and regional level are similar: affordable housing; mobility; the provision of services; an ageing population; social segregation; pollution and air and water quality; climate change; energy supply; and waste and wastewater management. Although rural cities and regions face the same major challenges, these issues manifest themselves in different ways (e.g. climate change causes warming in urban areas but flooding in rural areas). These issues are often linked and need to be tackled jointly.

Lots of these challenges rely on the structures, competences and finances of local and regional governments. However, the political choices made by central governments have impacts on many of these policies, and a change in a central government may affect the finances or assignment of competences. As a result, it is therefore useful and necessary to monitor and analyze change in national policy while facilitating discussions between European local and regional representatives as well as with their global peers. The CEMR regularly publishes a study on the structures and competences of local and regional governments and shares this information with its members so that they can draw on it in their national context. PLATFORMA also provides a space for peer exchange on practices and policies related to local and regional socio-economic development, as well as providing several publications and training to assist cities and regions that are looking for external expertise.

When exercising their competence for self-governance, local and regional governments are involved in initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors to advance the energy transition; this is reflected in a reduction in CO₂ emissions, increased energy efficiency and promoting the use of renewable energy. For information purposes, almost 12,000 municipalities from around the world have already signed the Covenant, 10,000 of which are in Europe.

In a CEMR study, it was shown that, in certain countries, European Union legislation has an impact on up to 75% of municipal activities and prerogatives. Therefore, a large proportion of the CEMR's

activities is focused on fields which are decided at the EU level, such as environmental policy, energy, climate change, transport, public services, etc.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

• Right to the city and inclusive territories

- Advocacy for
 - Cohesion policy and territorial, economic and social development policies (**future Multiannual Financial Framework**);
 - Asylum, **Migration** and Integration Fund (AMIF);
 - Rights and Values Programme (**Citizenship**);
- Gender equality with **Power2Her** and the study on "**Women in politics**"; Cooperation with UCLG Africa/REFELA and European support for the **African charter on gender equality** with the support of PLATFORMA;
- Promotion of the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (**RFSC**)
- Building sustainable territories through **cooperation between cities and regions throughout the world (development cooperation)**

• Territorial multilevel governance and sustainable finance

- Greater **inclusion of local governments in the European decision-making process**; the role of local and regional governments in the **European semester** procedure, the **partnership principle in the management of structural funds** and European investments, the multilevel approach in policies concerning local and regional governments, the establishment of **multilevel policy dialogue in European development policy programming**;
- **CEMR study on associations** which represent local and regional governments in Europe, demonstrating how **representative** they are (95% of the population on average) and their role in the national context as an interlocutor with governments and authorities;
- **Localizing the SDGs**: cities must be taken into account in the **implementation of the SDGs** (the goals must be "**tailored**" to them with indicators that reflect their diversity; they must be taken into account when drafting laws and plans for the purpose of implementing the SDGs and **measuring their progress**);
- The need to provide local and regional governments with **sufficient financial resources** in order for them to **exercise the competences** assigned to them. The recent report of the **World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment** (available in English: **Key findings** and **Country Profiles**) is a rich source for analyzing the current situation, drawing conclusions and making recommendations and calls for action.

• Opportunities for all, culture and city diplomacy: the keys to sustainable development and peace

- The purpose of PLATFORMA is to provide a space for discussion on development cooperation practices and to **strengthen local democracy through the action of its partners**. For example, PLATFORMA co-organizes the European Days of Local Solidarity, which are held each November to raise citizens' awareness about cities' and regions' international action (working groups, **PLATFORMAwards**; European Days of Local Solidarity).
- Promoting the **localization of the SDGs**: a PLATFORMA-CEMR study on the European perspective and input to the **UCLG global study**. We also carry out advocacy work aimed at including cities in the implementation of the SDGs and in national reporting (New York model: voluntary local reviews), and to build the capacities of national associations so that they can improve their discussions and cooperation with their national government.

- **Safer, more resilient and sustainable cities that are able to cope with crises.**

- Support and promote **UN Women's concept of safe cities**, which is aimed at addressing violence against women in public spaces and sets out measures aimed at making **public spaces safer and more pleasant for everyone**.
- Promote the **Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC)** as a free and easy-to-use instrument to assist cities, their local elected representatives, staff and citizens in creating a sustainable development strategy for their city, monitoring its progress, sharing experiences, and succeeding in implementing the SDGs.
- Role that cooperations play in **fragile countries** – **what role** do partner organizations play in strengthening local democracy and the provision of quality public services that help to **increase citizen's confidence in their local public institutions**.

4. Strategies and political tools

- In the European Union, certain **policies and EU legislation apply** in all Member States. The policies are backed up by instruments (for example, funds) to support the implementation or introduction of **new approaches**.
- Priorities are generally set for a **period of 7 years** and supported by a **financial framework**. The current period will finish at the end of 2020; negotiations for the next period are ongoing.
- The most important programmes for local and regional governments are rights and values, the asylum, migration and integration fund, and structural and investment funds. The CEMR is committed to **advocating** to ensure that our perspectives are included in the programmes.
- The CEMR has decided to develop a **multi-annual strategy, which will run until 2030, aimed at implementing the SDGs**; it will be adopted in May 2020.
- **Gender equality** has been one of the CEMR's policy priorities for over 30 years. In the context of the 2019 European elections, we launched the *Power2Her* campaign, and we are going to publish a study on women in politics (November 2019). The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life is continuing to be promoted: it currently has 1,800 signatories. Together with UCLG Africa and PLATFORMA, the CEMR is drafting a Local Authorities Charter for gender equality in Africa.
- The CEMR defends the interests of local and regional governments in dealings with the European institutions and, by voicing its positions, it helps to increase **local influence on the legislative environment**: *stances* and consultation on a wide range of subjects, for example legislation on water, waste, the future environmental action plan, etc. **Development of international partnerships** (PLATFORMA) that work to support democracy, sustainable local and regional development, and to disseminate the SDGs (Dogbo and Roeselare – PLATFORMAwards);

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms

As explained above, the CEMR's political agenda is **influenced by the EU's political agenda**. **Lobbying** work is carried out to give prominence to local and regional government positions and to ensure that they are taken into account in policy and legislation implemented by the EU.

Since 2019, the CEMR has organized its work programme around the SDGs, and it is currently preparing a multi-annual strategy for 2020-2030 guided by the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda offers the benefit of being universal and helping to connect our activities more closely to the global dimension.

Similarly, as **the international agenda** has implications for European policy and the practices of local and regional governments and their associations (**COP 21, International trade agreements** [taking into consideration public services, the sovereignty of public authorities and EU standards], 2030 Agenda, etc.), the CEMR and PLATFORMA duly take it into account. Our organization also **takes part in the major global events** (UN Habitat Assembly in Nairobi, HLPF in July in New York, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, COP 25 in Chile). The CEMR and PLATFORMA also actively contribute to the **work of UCLG** (GOLD reports), the **Global Taskforce** and the **OECD** (involvement in the Regional Development Policy Committee and in ministerial meetings, as well as in the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment, which is jointly organized with UCLG).

6. Main recommendations and actions of the local and regional government international movement

In the light of previous developments, the CEMR would like to make recommendations for future actions taken by the world organization. It recommends taking into account the Sustainable Development Goals and the diversity of territories, as well as their realities, in order to develop sustainable public policies that remain in step with the times. As a result, there seems to be a need for local governments to be involved in drafting legislation in order to facilitate the implementation of a policy as closely in line with local realities and citizens' demands as possible.

Recognize the need to include local governments in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals...

1. The **SDGs** must be taken into account by all political actors and actors in society, and particularly in the **European Union strategy** for sustainable development and inclusive growth.
2. A **multilevel political dialogue must be guaranteed** in order to promote the values of partnership, sustainability and subsidiarity. This dialogue should include the local, national, continental and international levels.
3. Promote **balanced territorial development** by recognizing the **major role that local governments play in implementing the SDGs, both in urban and rural contexts; their access to financial resources, methodological support and capacity development support must also be facilitated.**

... by allowing them to play a major role in the legislative process...

4. Actively include local governments in **the drafting, implementation and monitoring of global, continental and national policies**. A consultation system could be considered with a more or less mandatory element as regards drafting texts.
5. All policies implemented, at all levels, must **take into consideration their impact on the territory** (economic, social, environmental, urban, etc.).
6. **Coherence between internal and external policies** must be ensured, and policies should not be made to the detriment of others (production lines, agricultural policy, business promotion, trade agreements, etc.). Public procurement is a key element in promoting more sustainable development.

...in order to encourage the implementation and achievement of policy that is as close as possible to territories:

7. **Multi-stakeholder dialogue** should be encouraged in order to co-design public policies that are adapted as closely as possible to territories and citizens' needs (participatory approach to ensure ownership and that citizens have confidence in their local and regional public institution). **Peer learning** must also be promoted among different territories.

8. The **principles of local autonomy** must be introduced in all European countries (and *a fortiori* throughout the world) by, in particular, guaranteeing access to **sufficient resources** in order for them to exercise the competences assigned to them.

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Metropolis Position paper #UCLGCongress

Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK METROPOLITAN POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

The world at the metropolitan scale: rethinking city borders and jurisdictions for better quality of life for all

2. Current context and state of challenges

Our planet is advancing towards a metropolitan era characterised by major conurbations of unprecedented complexity and diversity. The challenges raised by the urbanisation process are becoming plain to see in metropolitan areas with at least a million inhabitants. Today, more than 1.6 billion people live in these large metropolitan areas, which are expected to account for 40% of the total world population by 2050.

In addition to the demographic aspect, major metropolises are focal points for much of the world's well-being, economic activity and innovation. The GDP of some of these metropolises is greater than that of a number of nation states, as they rank among the top worldwide economies – Seoul, Paris and Mexico City have each overtaken the economies of countries such as Sweden, Austria and Chile. They are home to government bodies, leading companies, universities, research and cultural centres and the main civil society organisations; and they are nucleuses for a large proportion of the talent and creativity, technological innovation and artistic output worldwide. Major metropolises are globally connected and they have the ability to structure and galvanise the territories around them at a local, national and regional scale.

On the other hand, metropolitan spaces must deal with serious threats. The increasing pressure to achieve economic growth and competitiveness is giving rise to negative externalities that are having an adverse impact on sustainable urban development. While the benefits generated in a metropolis are not fairly distributed between all its dwellers, the inequalities between and within metropolitan spaces are intensifying. Metropolitan spaces become the ultimate arena of market segmentation in every domain of life, from housing to goods, services and jobs. In almost every metropolis of the world, it is possible to see growing social, economic and ethnic segregation, which is mostly visible in the ghettoization of communities and translates into varying forms of gentrification.

Such models of consumption cannot be sustained. Seventy per cent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions are generated in metropolitan spaces, which are themselves extremely vulnerable to the consequences and natural disasters linked to climate change. Due to worsening consumption patterns and agricultural production schemes, growing figures related to urban growth have made food and water provision a crucial matter. Food security, water provision and waste management bring to the table another key aspect of the urban agenda: rural-urban linkages, where no good solutions have been found, despite their importance.

The challenges faced by metropolitan citizens do not only reside in visibly physical spaces, and we find ourselves in a moment in which the rights of citizens are repeatedly violated in the digital sphere. As hubs for massive electronic transactions, the metropolises of the world are faced with large scale digital threats: every day there are cases of misuse, false information, concentration of power, and censorship of freedom of expression. Citizens' personal information is marketed without their consent; "black box" algorithms are used to make unaccountable decisions; social networks are used as a tool for harassment and hate speech, to subvert democratic processes and public opinion.

The outcome of the convergence of global and metropolitan challenges, thus, is that a significant part of the new generation of global agendas linked to sustainable development focus on large conurbations and has a decisive impact on the policies that are implemented. Consequently, metropolitan areas are the setting in which some of the planet's most pressing problems can be solved.

Different approaches can be identified in metropolitan efforts to align public policies to global agendas. The degree of local autonomy directly affects the capacity to address metropolitan challenges and implement the 2030 Agenda. While in Northern European countries municipalities have a high degree of financial autonomy and enjoy competences in health, education and environment, local governments of most African, Asian and Latin American countries lack the necessary powers, financial, technical and human resources, and are thus highly dependent on national and regional policies. These structural weaknesses limit their ability to mobilize their own resources and generate new responses to challenges at the metropolitan scale.

The lack of coordination between the different institutions that share SDG-related competences also clearly affects their implementation. Research on 58 metropolitan spaces where 69 members of Metropolis are located shows that less than half (43%) count on a metropolitan governance structure. When the complexity of layers of local governments operating in the same metropolis generates competition for resources among them, it becomes more difficult to create an enabling environment.

Even though large cities are the type of local government that has proved most active in the SDG implementation process, sometimes even ahead of their national governments, they stay unnoticed when states report on national achievements according to the 2016, 2017 and 2018 Voluntary National reviews (VNRs). This lack of visibility is more worrying, inasmuch as a big percentage of the challenges included in the 2030 Agenda are materialized and tackled in the laboratory of the big cities.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

The combination of the 2030 Agenda with the abovementioned challenges should serve to explore and capitalize the contributions of different metropolitan areas to sustainable development, through the definition and implementation of innovative, holistic and efficient solutions. Nevertheless, a lot of work needs to be done to create legal and institutional enabling environments (improved decentralization and financial schemes, amongst others) as well as new multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms, as well as financing for sustainable investments, that allow for quality metropolitan public policies and ways of doing.

Reducing fragmentation in large cities and increasing a metropolitan approach of governance are key objectives for Metropolis. New and improved governance arrangements and structures for the cross-level coordination, improved core city and peripheral cities governance and better allocation of resources, as well as the development of instruments to encourage greater participation by social partners in order to enhance the legitimacy of policies would dramatically help reduce territorial inequalities and promote more polycentric and integrated corridor approaches to metropolitan governance.

Right to the City and Inclusive Territories

Public urban space is a site where many inequalities are reflected and staged. The way people experience public space is shaped by the dimensions of each person's identity. Racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and ageism often result in exclusion from, and/or discrimination in, public spaces. The design of metropolitan areas can reinforce gender dichotomies, thus, although the notion of a public space suggests inclusivity, it can be very excluding.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG), including sexual violence and harassment, is an everyday phenomenon in public spaces such as streets, parks, markets, public transport and other public venues in metropolises around the world, which results in gender exclusion in metropolitan public spaces. The threat of VAWG limits women's and girls' movements, work, health, education, and leisure choices, and their ability to benefit from the opportunities cities offer – essentially their right to the city, and their right to be equal citizens. Other factors, such as race, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, further shape how women and girls experience public space and place them at risk of violence. When these factors intersect, women may face additional discrimination, harassment and oppression. Often, the exclusion women and girls experience is associated with lack of safety and fear. They may choose not to enter certain spaces for fear of harassment or assault. In order to take responsibility for their own safety in public urban space, they often employ sets of safety strategies.

Metropolitan governments should be taking responsibility for the safety of all in public space. As often people cross cities boundaries in their day-to-day life, such as commuting to work or school from and to areas outside the main city centers, when considering initiatives that address public urban space it is important to address how policies are integrated across a metropolitan territory.

Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing

Major challenges in regards to local implementation are laid in institutional and financing mechanisms enhancing to address the challenges in metropolization.

Large metropolitan areas are different from other cities and towns and these differences have implications for metropolitan public finance. The most obvious difference is that they have a much larger population. Their population is also more concentrated and more heterogeneous in terms of social and economic circumstances, often with a relatively higher proportion of immigrants and in-migrants. Metropolitan areas are important generators of employment, wealth, and productivity growth and are often the major economic engines of their country.

Most innovation occurs in large cities and metropolitan areas where people can reap the benefits of close proximity, often referred to as "agglomeration economies." Big cities also serve as regional

hubs for people from adjacent communities who come to work, shop, and use public services that are not available in their own communities.

Services local governments provide in metropolitan areas and how they pay for them are inextricably linked to governance. Firstly, an effective metropolitan governance structure is needed and, second, to set out an appropriate fiscal structure. For a metropolitan area to succeed, each tier of government needs to know what functions it is responsible for and it needs adequate powers and financial resources to perform those functions.

Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace

Enabling an environment offering metropolitan areas the necessary human, technical and financial resources to develop adequately transferred competences is necessary to enhance integrated approaches to sustainable development. Those approaches should guarantee an adequate coordination across levels of government and between territories while enhancing transparency and accountability, improving citizen participation and the involvement of local stakeholders in governance, fostering gender equality, and strengthening social cohesion.

Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis

As cities define metropolitan-scale objectives to achieve their resilience goals, it is crucial they consider their specific conditions, and build on existing strengths and assets. Many different metropolitan governance models exist. While cities can and should take inspiration from one another, they must tailor lessons and best practices to their own concrete needs and capacities. Each city's particular context gives rise to conditions that shape what kind of metropolitan structure and stakeholder coordination can and should be sought.

Some challenges most clearly require action at the metropolitan scale: the impacts of climate change, inadequate transportation, and lack of affordable housing, not only transcend traditional municipal boundaries, but efforts to address them reverberate across municipal territories and affect shocks and stresses among neighboring municipalities. In other instances, shocks and stresses may not seem to trigger metropolitan scale solutions, but should. This is the case of public health management, and security and social cohesion concerns, which rely both on interventions that address underlying stresses and the operation of interrelated systems. Building resilience requires an assessment of a city's systems and how shocks and stresses operate on and within them. To best address them, cities are creating new partnerships and collaborations. This includes a renewed appraisal of at what scale they should be addressed and with which partners. Some sectors and challenges more naturally require a metropolitan scale.

4. Policy strategies and tools

This part provides a set of strategies proposed by members of Metropolis executive committee, which have the potential to be replicated by the rest of the membership, as well as by other levels of local and regional governments that are part of the UCLG constituency.

The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona brings the proposal of prioritizing policies aimed at public spaces. The concept of **metropolitan public spaces** encompasses a variety of elements of public ownership or public domain, which serve as the ideal scenario to provide services, equality and

opportunities for everyone. It includes the creation and/or preservation, as well as the sustainable management, of green and blue spaces (e.g. rivers, beaches, urban forests, parks, gardens), of spaces of exchange (e.g. markets, squares, street furniture, libraries, sports facilities), and of mobility infrastructures (e.g. pedestrian and cycling facilities, massive public transport, private vehicle regulation). Planning and designing high quality public spaces guarantees more egalitarian, resilient and environmentally sustainable cities. Public space is also a space for activity, transformation, innovation and exchange that leads to a freer, fairer, healthier and more advanced society.

Seeking the incorporation of human rights principles such as privacy, freedom of expression and democracy into digital platforms, the Barcelona City Council calls all Metropolis and UCLG members to endorse the principles of the Coalition of Cities for Digital Rights, created jointly with UCLG, EUROCITIES, New York, Amsterdam and UN-Habitat. The **defense of digital rights** should be a priority for the major cities of the planet, which can take the leadership starting with public digital services and infrastructures. While committing to fight climate change, enable social inclusion and foster sustainable economic growth, major cities should also commit to the defense of digital rights in order to create a more egalitarian, just, non-discriminatory society, where people see their privacy respected, where participation is facilitated, and where the rights to internet access, transparency and accountability are recognized.

From the Gauteng Province comes the focus on **decreasing social exclusion and fragmentation** by addressing issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment, migration, racism, xenophobia, digital exclusion, spatial exclusion and disability. These issues can be addressed by leveraging on the strengths of regional and provincial governments to enable conversation on social exclusion including: the research on quality of life, the establishment of observatories, as well as dialogues on migration and youth unemployment.

The People's Government of Guangzhou Municipality reinforces its commitment to **urban innovation, which can be boosted worldwide through peer learning and city-to-city cooperation** focused on the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Faced with an unprecedented level of urbanization and the need to address the new challenges posed by the location of the SDGs and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, which imply major financial challenges for local governments, the Municipality of Montevideo proposes to continue strengthening a **broad mechanism that brings together different actors to facilitate access to financing for metropolises**.

Finally, the City of Montréal calls local governments to take action on migration policies, as this is a local and global issue that presents both opportunities and challenges, and because their voices are increasingly being heard on the global stage and taken into consideration to advance courses of action and collaboration. Last but not least, Montréal also calls the constituency to mobilize for COP 15 on the Convention on Biological Diversity, since local governments are key actors in biodiversity, being both part of the problem and part of the solutions, aware of the impact of their action both on the well-being of their communities and for the planet as a whole.

5. *Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms*

As general and down-to-earth recommendations, the abovementioned policy strategies can be smoothly linked to nearly all global agendas, and especially the ones below, whose implementation at metropolitan scale has already been identified to be feasible, as pointed out at the Metropolis Observatory Issue Paper 2 (2017):

- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- The Paris Agreement
- The New Urban Agenda
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- The Addis Ababa Action Agenda
- The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation

6. *Key recommendations and actions by the international local and regional governments movement*


1. Localizing the SDGs
2. Coalition of Cities for Digital Rights
3. Community of Practice on Transparency and Open Government
4. Milan Urban Food Policy Pact
5. Guangzhou International Award for Urban Innovation
6. Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
7. Global Compact on Refugees
8. Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

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Middle East Position paper #UCLGCongress

Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK MIDDLE EAST POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

The Middle East and West Asia (MEWA) Region is a region characterized by **extreme heterogeneities and diversities**. Economic, administrative environmental, socioeconomic, as well as social differences and distinctnesses of the region negatively affects the local implementation of global agendas. Therefore, heterogeneity -and therefore the need for case-specific approaches- raises as the main challenge of the MEWA Region.

This geography is also highly characterized by **wars, conflicts, political instability, and civil unrest**. Stemming from these regional questions, MEWA Region is a center of migratory movements and therefore more vulnerable to national and regional instabilities arising from the **migratory influx**.

In addition to man-made disasters above, MEWA Region suffers from **a vicious cycle** between natural disasters, limited, mismanaged and misused resources, and therefore renewed conflicts. Within this context, the water-stressed character of the region and its fragile ecosystem leads to continued social and environmental tensions.

2. Current context and state of challenges

i. Regional Challenges and Heterogeneities

Relevant with the key messages, one of the main challenges that local government face in the region is the heterogeneous and diversified structure of the geography. This intertwined character of the Region can be addressed under three main headings.

- Economic Diversities

MEWA Region is a home for varied economic structures, where wealth sits side-by-side with poverty. The geography hosts countries where the national income per capita is less than 1.000 dollars, while some others have income per capita over 100.000 dollars. Among the countries of the region, Yemen and Afghanistan -countries listed in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)- are among the poorest around the world, while Gulf monarchies are among the wealthiest countries regarding their per capita GDPs. Not only between the countries in the MEWA Region, these economic heterogeneities, and therefore socioeconomic fragmentations, can also be observed within the countries itself.

- Administrative Challenges

The Region has a weak tradition of sustainable and deep-rooted governance at either the regional (if any) or local level. Therefore and in relation to this highly centralized government structures, local governments' lack of financial and administrative autonomy and formulation of urban policies exclusively at the national level are among the challenges faced by local governments in regards to administration-related difficulties. This has a direct negative effect on the financial and jurisdictional power of local government.

- Social Heterogeneities

This Region is also highly characterized by ethnic, national, religious and linguistic differences and distinctnesses, which mostly require the development of unique responses to challenges faced by local

governments. The regions, as its name suggests, can be divided into two sub-regions: (i) Middle East (ii) West Asia, which may be quite different in some aspects. There may be a certain level of homogeneity between the Middle Eastern countries regarding their shared language, culture, and history; while West Asia represents a different geography. This argument of regional diversity may be employed even for the Middle Eastern sub-region itself since the sectarian and ethnic orientations have a direct impact on political and social life. Therefore, social heterogeneity raises one of the main challenges of the MEWA Region.

- ii. Wars, Conflicts, and Migratory Movements

Since the beginning of the century, parts of the region have been plagued by wars and recurring conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and now today in Syria and Yemen. While the Region currently experiences one of the biggest humanitarian crisis ever, migratory movements led by the aforementioned challenges as well as political instability represent another challenge for local governments to run their activities effectively.

- Migration Management

MEWA Region is one of the leading geographies in the world that has high statistics for both immigrations and emigrations. Today Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, are hosting about 6 million Syrian refugees most of them are living outside of camps, not necessarily registered by relevant authorities. In Turkey, only 6% of refugees are living in camps, while the remaining 94% lives in urban areas with the local population. Similarly, Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon mostly reside in cities.

Considering these numbers with the urban aspect of migratory movements effective provision of basic services, access to the rights in the cities and the need for social cohesion policies at the local level arise as the forefront challenges faced by local governments in the Region, especially for the development of regional peace and development.

- Humanitarian Crisis in the Region

Due to civil wars in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen, the Region currently experiences one of the biggest humanitarian crisis ever. War in Yemen has cut transport routes for aid, fuel and food, reduced imports and therefore caused the most severe famine of recent history. Together with the limited number of treatment centers, starvation and malnutrition in Yemen have killed many women and children.

Similarly, some other countries in the Region suffer from diseases and severe living conditions, where their citizens are struggling to survive.

- iii. Vicious Cycle between Limited Resources and Renewed Conflicts

The Region is also highly diversified from the perspective of possession of resources. Some countries in this geography are characterized by rich underground resources such as petroleum and oil, while some others such as Jordan suffers from limited water resources. Combined with the environmental fragility, limited, mismanaged and misused resources feed renewed conflicts in the Region in a way to create a vicious cycle, since conflicts creates a disabling environment to address climate

challenges. Climate impacts in the coming decades are likely to add stress to existing resource challenges, with serious potential consequences for the economy, and for social and political stability.

- Environmental Challenges and Vulnerabilities

Environmental issues have historically ranked quite low on the list of public priorities for the Region due to aforementioned questions with prior importance, however, climate-related fragilities represent an alarming obstacle for the Region. MEWA is a geography predicted to be affected by significant heating and drying trends over the coming decades due to climate change. Extreme weather and climate events make some regions unlivable and reducing growing areas for agriculture. Rising temperatures put intense pressure on crops and already scarce water resources, and potentially creating higher numbers of migrants, and the risk of conflict.

- Tension between Growing Population, Rising Demands, and Limited Resources

One of the greatest challenges to the region is the increasing demand with limited resources. Regarding this, the Region is suffering from dwindling water supply. As most areas are arid and receive little rainfall, the supply of freshwater has always been a challenge. Rising demand from growing populations is only increasing the strain on rivers and aquifers, many of which are depleting faster than their natural recharge capacity. Together with the environmental vulnerabilities discussed above, drier areas becoming drier and precipitation events more intense. Natural disasters such as flooding and earthquakes affect the dense and continuously growing populations of cities severely and will continue to be a source of concern as urban areas expand.

iv. Other Relevant Challenges and Concluding Remarks

In addition to the regional challenges and heterogeneities; wars, conflicts, and migratory movements; and the vicious cycle between limited resources and renewed conflicts, another challenge faced by local governments is the lack of intergovernmental union that speaks the same language on behalf of the whole region.

There is also a limited number of regional organizations such as Organization of Developing Countries (D-8) and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) but they are mostly ineffective to embrace the whole region due to differences in their geographical working areas and varied organizational aims and targets. Besides this, inadequate coordination between central and local authorities has often resulted in imbalances in the coverage and quality of urban services.

Under these circumstances, the regional priorities tend to focus on the provision of basic services and fulfillment of essential rights. This causes, over time, deprioritization of other agendas, such as environmental concerns and gender-sensitive approaches, since the funds are also mostly addressed for the provision of basic needs and rights.

Therefore, these challenges gathered under the mentioned headings require diversified and crosscutting responses since they all have case-specific characteristics. This heterogeneity negatively affects UCLG-MEWA to determine a general action plan to address these difficulties. Combined with the fact that lack of international union and national municipal associations in the region, these diversities represent an obstacle for UCLG-MEWA in its quest to become united voice of its members in the region.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

Deriving from the aforementioned key challenges, UCLG-MEWA has identified four strategic priorities for the 2018-2020 period, these priorities are;

- **Migration & Social Cohesion,**
- **Local Development & Governance,**
- **Fighting Against and Adapting to Climate Change and,**
- **Urban Resilience**

In the process of determination of mentioned priorities, UCLG-MEWA considered the relevant mechanisms of the UCLG World Organization, which are mostly embodied in the form of policy councils. Within this context, every strategic priority, as well as identified challenges, directly or indirectly refer to at least one of the policy council of the UCLG World Organization.

i. UCLG Policy Council on Right to the City and Inclusive Territories

When it is considered under **inclusion** as the main theme, this Policy Council directly addresses the difficulties that local government faces especially in the management of migration-related challenges. Counting the fact that around 92% of migrants and refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan are living in urbanized areas, the urban aspect of migration and the concept of the **right to the city** forms a cornerstone for responding to the migration-related urban challenges.

Within this regard, migrants' access to basic services in urban space and their participation in decision-making processes for urban management arises as two pressing questions, which are also evident in the briefing document of this policy council. This is because, social exclusion is considered as the major cause of different social challenges that present themselves in the form of poverty, unemployment, low literacy levels, violence, crime, and isolation. Therefore, the need for sound migration policies developed for social integration, social exclusion, social cohesion, civic engagement, and democratic participation, become more visible in the Region every passing day.

This is also particularly relevant with the inclusive territories through a specific reference to the intermediary cities in the Region. Reinforcing i-cities for developing human-centered counter policies for challenges stemming from migration movements, countries in this Region has financial and administrative inadequacies to use the advantages of i-cities for their ideal size and human scale, which will contribute to the balanced distribution of population in the region and well-functioning urban systems in the long-term.

Besides migrants and refugees, participatory urban life and inclusive territories also require full and active inclusion of youths, women, as well as disadvantaged and marginalized groups. While these social urban actors, especially youths and women, have shown a great interest in shaping the future of their communities, there remain few formal platforms and institutions for them to expand their voice and translate it into positive changes for their societies in this geography.

As related to this, there are examples of multiple discrimination and exclusion in the urban areas in the region, which are particularly clear in the case of young women, who have fewer legal protections and rights than men. Although there has been a considerable improvement in the situation of women in the region over the past years, especially in the Gulf states, access to the labor market remains limited in cities mostly due to cultural barriers and the role women are expected to play in society.

Another vulnerable group that is challenged by multiple exclusions in urban are persons with disabilities. These are one of the most vulnerable groups in the region as their exclusion is present at all levels of society.

Moreover, the Region has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world. The inability to find decent and stable jobs is preventing young people in the region from establishing themselves in society as these jobs do not enable them to acquire their own housing, as also underlined in the introductory document of this policy paper, under the concept of “right to housing”.

ii. **UCLG Policy Council on Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing**

The Region strongly needs a pragmatic approach and fruitful cooperation between already weak local governments in order to better channel the sharing of best practices on multi-level governance in this geography. As related to this, ensuring political stability and eliminating socio-economic imbalances in the region require more **effective multilevel governance** with empowered local governments. This, in the long-term, contributes to the development of response for another challenge of the local governments in the region, namely **lack of horizontal and vertical cooperation between governmental levels**. In the MEWA Region case, restricted horizontal and vertical collaboration is evidenced not only between governmental levels but also among different actors, as embodied in the weaker partnership with the private sector. This sometimes leads to inadequacies in providing innovative local solutions.

Last but not least, local governments in the also Region suffers from fragile representation before national governments due to a limited number of national local government associations (LGAs). This situation, adversely affects the work of UCLG-MEWA, since it seeks to develop regional cooperation through the facilitative role that LGAs could play.

iii. **Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy; and Keys to Sustainable Development**

Due to the aforementioned political instabilities and conflict situation, the Region has a **weaker level of international-regional diplomacy** although the countries have many commons in the historical and cultural sense. However, today’s changing local government paradigm has made it necessary for city administrations and municipalities not only to meet basic infrastructure requirements but also to be active in regional cooperation.

Under these circumstances, there is a strong need in the Region as for the strengthened inter-city relations embodied in the form of **establishing sister city relations**, which makes municipalities one of the most important stakeholders of peace-building activities. As related to this and deriving from the regional challenges, UCLG-MEWA has identified city diplomacy as one of its strategic priorities and has capitalized on the experiences of relevant structures of the UCLG World Organization.

The need for strengthened sister city relations not only address regional peace but also refers to the protection and promotion of cultural diversity, as also employed under this policy council. Cultivating a culture of peace through sister-city relations creates an opportunity for citizens and also city officials to experience and explore other cultures, and it stimulates an environment for communities around the region to learn and share experiences, which contributes to the development of sound responses for cultural integration problems of this geography.

When addressed under the sustainable development framework, the regional need for stronger city diplomacy is crucial from the economic point of view. Since it’s a global world now, the more

relationships you have throughout the world the more productive and prosperous a community you may have. Considering the fact that commercial relations are not constrained to the initiatives at state level anymore, strengthened city diplomacy and empowered sister city relations emerges as one of the primary needs of the region for more trade and job opportunities established through business links between sister cities.

Giving this background, we remain convinced of the need for capacity-building initiatives, in particular through city-to-city and sister city relations as well as association-to-association activities in the MEWA Region.

iv. Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis:

Severe water shortage, over-dependence on the non-renewable natural resources, arid climatic conditions, food insecurity, and frequently faced earthquakes and disasters in the countries of the Region demonstrate that the Middle East and West Asia is among the neediest areas for **urban resilience** initiatives. This is because, in the areas where these crises and shocks are experienced, there is growing environmental, social and economic instability and vulnerability, which negatively affects the countries of the region and makes their cities increasingly fragile.

This is particularly evident in the urban dimensions of the challenges stemming from climate change. Despite **limited and severely threatened natural resources**, MEWA Region has a very high rate of urbanization (by this token, over-metropolization) that leads to new forms of urban risks and challenges. Increasing pressure on the fragile environment raises social pressures and links to economic opportunity for lower-income groups since the percentage of informal housing is increasing, especially through the settlements in high-risk zones (flooding, earthquakes, landslides).

Therefore, regional challenges in relation to urban resilience and environmental vulnerabilities are directly related to the issues addressed under the Policy Council on Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis.

4. Policy strategies and tools

Some of the policy strategies and tools developed in the MEWA region to face the aforementioned challenges are listed below. These policy strategies and tools are mostly employed under relevant UCLG-MEWA Committees, namely Committee on Smart Cities and Urban Mobility, Committee on Environment, Committee on City Diplomacy and Local Governance, Committee on Culture and Tourism, Committee on Social Inclusion, and Committee on Gender Equality.

Strategy: *Promoting the development of socially inclusive policies and ensuring their access to basic services in order to prevent vulnerable groups (migrants, youth, women, disabled people, child, and other disadvantaged groups) living in cities from being subject to social exploitation,*

Tools:

- Developing and conducting projects, webinars, panels, peer-to-peer learning programs, and many other activities in partnership with international organizations, specifically GIZ,
- Advocating the need for the changed narrative as for the refugees and migrants in a way to underline possible advantages that come through migratory movements,
-

- Ensuring the inclusion of refugees into decision-making mechanisms by establishing sub-municipal councils, that serve as advisory committees.
- Collecting good practices on the active involvement of local governments in the region to migration management, and presenting these before the related bodies of the UN.

Strategy: *Increasing the awareness levels of local governments in the region, on the global goals,*

Tools:

- Organizing projects and capacity building activities specifically on the SDGs, such as UCLG-MEWA Pilot Project on Mapping the SDGs in Turkey,
- Holding local government talks to increase the awareness on regional and international agendas (green spaces, health, gastronomy, energy efficiency, sustainability were among the topics of these talks as of July 2019),
- Conducting social media campaigns in international days,
- Conducting publication activities for the dissemination of the commitments of the global agendas.

Strategy: *Encouraging local governments in the MEWA Region to establish new sister city relations within and/or outside the region,*

Tools:

- Organizing sister-city workshops to contribute to city diplomacy in the MEWA Region,
- Developing a common strategy document on city diplomacy,

Strategy: *Encouraging the development of local government structures that have resilience against social and economic disasters, shocks and fragilities,*

Tools:

- Conducting technical training on local government financing for district municipalities,
- Organizing awareness-raising activities to put the concept of intermediary cities at the heart of regional development (Intermediary Cities Workshops),
- Establishing experience sharing and functional collaboration platforms between the intermediary cities characterized by similar characteristics on demography, socioeconomic structure, and working areas,

Strategy: *Fighting against and adapting to climate change in the MEWA Region and encouraging national governments to provide local governments with necessary capacities and resources for the development of environmental protection plans,*

Tools:

- Encouraging members to commit to the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM), where local governments prepare climate action plans to decrease their carbon emissions, and following-up their commitment process,
- Encouraging the GCoM signatory member local governments for developing local policies and commitments on fighting against and adapting to climate change,
- Organizing workshop programs in partnership with global, regional and local partners to address the effective use of natural resources (Workshops of the Project on Solid Waste Management, Training Program On Wastewater and Municipal Water Systems for the Municipalities of Palestine, etc.),
-
- Developing a database for good practices of member municipalities in the field of environmental protection,
- Advocating the use of zero and/or low carbon transport systems such as bicycles, electric vehicles and public transport

Strategy: *Encouraging the gender equality decision-making processes, the development of these mechanisms and or strengthening the existing structures,*

Tools:

- Advocating the dissemination of the Commitment of the Localization of SDG5 under UCLG-MEWA Committee on Gender Equality,
- Actively promoting political parties to determine a quota for women representatives,
- Encouraging women to take a role in the governing bodies of UCLG-MEWA

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms

Working out the vision of our region and coming up with solutions to the challenges, in the light of the global agendas that shape our work, especially the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** as the basic building blocks of our agenda for development by 2030; are the reasons for our existence as an organization.

Therefore, we, as UCLG-MEWA, consider SDGs as the overarching platform for our activities. Within this context, while determining our prioritized areas of work, we referred to the relevant SDGs, with an aim to present the contribution that we have made to the global development agenda and to take the action that may be required, after the three-year working period.

Besides the SDGs, **Paris Climate Change Agreement** and relevant international environment-related agendas play an important role in framing our policy strategies and tools. Within this context, UCLG-MEWA's advocacy activities for increasing the number of signatory local governments to the Global Covenant of Mayors is directly relevant to the localization of the commitments of the Paris Agreement.

Regarding the UCLG-MEWA agenda on social inclusion, we mainly base our relevant activities on the **New York Declaration for Refugees, and Migration and Mechelen Declaration on Cities and Migration**. As related to this, we put special effort to change the negative narrative on migrants, as also specifically addressed in the Mechelen Declaration. We, as UCLG-MEWA, truly convinced that local governments are one of the most crucial actors in the development of social integration policies not only for migrants but also for children, women, disabled people, and other vulnerable groups, and their whose roles are also acknowledged in New York Declaration for Refugees and Migration

Apart from these, whole UCLG-MEWA activities, in somehow, touches upon the commitments made in the **Bogota Commitment and Action Agenda & New Urban Agenda** as for building sustainable cities. Advocating that local and regional governments must be at the center of public policy development processes in cities to transform targeted ideals into concrete policies and initiatives, the Bogota Commitment paves the way for taking local steps to reach global solutions. In the Action Agenda, which is the continuation of the Commitment, a framework is drawn for the work to be done in the light of all global development agendas in local, national and global contexts.

Similarly, our works seek to strengthen the governance structures in urban management as key elements of the New Urban Agenda, to create socially inclusive policies in cities, to eliminate the

problems encountered in the development of sustainable environment through the spatial development and urban prosperity, and to solve problems in the cities of the MEWA Region.

Lastly, UCLG-MEWA also has direct references in its activities to the **European Consensus on Development**, especially the works conducted under the framework **Policy Forum on Development (PFD)**. Considering the regional challenges on the development issues and inspired by the shared spirit of this initiative, UCLG-MEWA has developed a multi-stakeholder approach in policymaking and advocacy. These efforts resulted in several partnerships with academics, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the private sector which created a favorable dynamic among local governments in the region.

As the Neighborhood South countries have been facing dramatic levels of human and infrastructure destruction, one could not think about possible reconstruction without the support of local governments and communities. Bringing the perspective of national and local governments in the MEWA region, to the table, UCLG-MEWA actively participates in and contributes to the efforts of PFD and realization of the commitments of the European Consensus on Development.

6. Key recommendations and actions by the international local and regional governments movement

Recommendation 1: *Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in the MEWA Region and ensuring the successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda.*

Local and regional governments in the region should be convinced that they have a key role to play in triggering the adaptation of global goals to the local level, and an important responsibility in fostering implementation by integrating the various agendas on the ground and ensuring territorial cohesion.

Recommendation 2: *Contributing to international diplomacy through city diplomacy in the MEWA Region and strengthening decentralized cooperation and peace-building activities*

Local authorities in the region can be a significant actor in global politics. They should be more active internationally by developing networks and twinning projects, sharing information, signing cooperation agreements, contributing to the drafting of national and international policies, providing development aid, enacting refugee assistance, and doing territorial marketing through city-to-city or district-to-district decentralized cooperation.

Recommendation 3: Advocating before the UN for the crucial roles played by local governments on migration management

Large-scale movements of refugees and migrants affect all UN Member States and they require closer cooperation and responsibility-sharing. Working with local governments is key to creating long-lasting and sustainable migration strategies, especially in an environment as complex and dynamic as the Middle East and West Asia Region.

Recommendation 4: Promoting the establishment of national and local government associations

National and local government associations will form a vital bridge between national governments, communities and citizens and will have a critical role in new global partnerships. National and local government associations will increase solidarity and coordination by bringing together member municipalities, providing consultancy services to member municipalities, raising awareness by organizing training seminars and panels.

Recommendation 5: Disseminating and implementing the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, (GCoM) in the MEWA Region.

The Global Covenant is an international alliance of cities, local governments and their communities' with a shared long-term vision of taking measurable action to combat climate change and make the transition to low-emission and more resilient societies.

Recommendation 6: Encouraging the development of local government structures that have resilience against environmental disasters, shocks, and fragilities while contributing to the development of socially resilient cities on the basis of gender equality

International collaboration can facilitate the flow of knowledge and financial resources necessary to help cities become more resilient to disruptions related to climate change and other systemic shocks and stresses, including the socioeconomic challenges associated with rapid urbanization.

Recommendation 7: Promoting the adoption of a rights-based approach in local governments for all forms of vulnerabilities

The promotion of adapting a rights-based approach in a national and international network will create better familiarity with a particular focus on equal opportunity, participation, transparency, corruption, and accountability.

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Africa

Position paper

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Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK AFRICA POSITION PAPER

Framework for UCLG Africa's intervention

Africa started in 2019 the last phase of implementation of its first long-term strategic plan known as GADDEPA (Governance , Advocacy for a Decentralized Development of Africa), adopted in October 2007 at Dakar, Senegal , for the 2008-2021 period. This strategic plan recommended the organization of the interventions of UCLG Africa according to three pillars:

Pillar 1: *Institutional strengthening of UCLG Africa* involving the creation, development and networking of national associations of local and subnational governments; the establishment of thematic networks of elected officials, in particular the network of local elected women, and the African network for local economic development, as well as networks of senior executives of local and subnational governments; strengthening the capacity to act of the secretariat through, *inter alia*, the establishment of regional offices in the 5 regions of Africa (North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa) to provide close support to members of UCLG Africa; and finally the establishment of an effective communication platform with the development of communication tools, an effective presence of UCLG Africa on social networks, and an Internet web page that aspires to be the entry point and point of convergence for all those interested in Local Africa.

Pillar 2: *Advocacy and Representation*, with the aim of promoting the adoption and implementation of decentralization policies in Africa and strengthening the role of local and subnational governments in the development and integration of the continent; and to bring the voice and positions of Africa's local governments within all bodies where people discuss Africa's development policies and strategies as well as the global agendas that have an impact on local and subnational governments in Africa. As part of this pillar, members asked UCLG Africa leaders to ensure that the organization is the spokesperson for the positions of local and regional authorities in the African Union institutions, the African Development, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and other development partners starting with the European Union with whom Africa has a long-term partnership governed by the Cotonou agreements between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries. The members also expressed the wish that local and subnational governments of the continent should take an active part in the work and decisions of the world organization "United Cities and Local Governments" (UCLG) set up as a network of networks of local and subnational governments of the world to make their voices heard at the United Nations. UCLG Africa is the UCLG chapter for Africa and participates as such in all

the bodies of the world organization. Members expressed the wish to make of the Africities Summit the flagship event of UCLG Africa, by instituting its organization every three years alternately in different regions of the continent, as the largest platform of dialogue on decentralization and on the role of local and subnational governments in Africa, and the and unmissable meeting of local and subnational governments in Africa as well as all those who cooperate or wish to cooperate with local Africa. Members finally requested that the UCLG Africa Secretariat sets up a Prize system to celebrate and reward leaders and municipal teams that have achieved outstanding results in the different areas of local government management, and could be role models to inspire other communities in the management of their localities.

Pillar 3: Development of capacities of members of UCLG Africa and Knowledge Management. Under this pillar, the members have expressed the wish that UCLG Africa should ensure that the voice of local Africa be more competent in order to be more respected and more considered; and that the practice of governance and management of local and subnational governments be more professional, more transparent and oriented towards services to be provided to the population. The members also expressed the wish to take advantage of the knowledge accumulated in the various fields of competence of local governments so that decision-making is increasingly informed by the contribution of data and documented facts and analyzes, and one should popularize within UCLG Africa the culture of performance at the service of the governance of local governments.

In view of the upcoming end of the first long-term strategic plan 2008-2021, the Executive Committee of UCLG Africa meeting in Cairo, Egypt, on June 18, 2019, requested the Secretariat to set up a working group of African elected officials to reflect on the results of this first strategic plan and to formulate the organization's next 2022-2036 long-term plan, to be adopted during the next UCLG Africa General Assembly meeting scheduled to take place during the eighth edition of the Africities Summit which from December 16 to December 20, 2021 in Kisumu, Kenya.

The following paragraphs present the main results achieved under each pillar since the last General Assembly of UCLG, as well as the stakes and challenges still to be faced by the local and subnational governments of Africa, and for which close collaboration with other local governments around the world through UCLG is likely to make significant advances in addressing the identified challenges.

Pillar 1: Institutional Development of UCLG Africa

1. 1. **Establishment of the 5 regional offices of UCLG Africa:** in Cairo, Egypt for North Africa (NARO, North Africa Regional Office); in Accra, Ghana for West Africa (WARO, West Africa Regional Office); in Libreville, Gabon, for Central Africa (CARO, Central Africa Regional Office); in Nairobi, Kenya for East Africa (EARO, East Africa Regional Office); and in Pretoria, South Africa, for Southern Africa (SARO, Southern Africa Regional Office). These regional offices, which are an extension of the organization's Secretariat, must provide local support to members, by being informed by a better understanding of the problems and expectations according to the specific contexts of

each region. For the time being, only WARO, EARO and SARO are fully operational. NARO and CARO are in the process of being installed. It should be noted that, to date, there is no regional office whose establishment is governed by a headquarters agreement, unlike the UCLG Africa Secretariat, which has signed with the Government of Morocco a headquarters agreement recognizing the diplomatic status of UCLG Africa as an international pan-African organization. The draft headquarters agreements have been submitted by the Secretariat to the various governments concerned, which must now decide on the signing of such draft agreements. It should be noted that the participants in the Cairo Executive Board meeting has resolved that all regional offices must be effective with teams in place by mid-June 2020.

The question of the legal status accorded to the UCLG sections or offices should be of concern to the world organization. As much as possible, the national governments of the countries hosting the secretariat of a UCLG chapter or its representations in the region should sign a headquarters agreement with that chapter. This requirement must be part of the institutional support that UCLG must provide to regional chapters that have not signed such headquarters agreements.

1. 2. Strengthening the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA). This network now has a dedicated secretariat at the organization's headquarters in Rabat, Morocco, and 26 national chapters (also called REFELA-countries). REFELA has defined three campaigns around which it wishes to engage local and subnational authorities in Africa and elsewhere: **(1)** the campaign of African cities without street children under the patronage of the President of the National Observatory for the Rights of the Child (ONDE), Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Meryem, of Morocco, who officially launched this campaign on November 24, 2018 as part of the seventh edition of the Africities Summit held in Marrakech, Morocco from November 20 to November 24, 2018. About sixty cities have joined the campaign of which the city of Rabat, the capital of Morocco, is the experimental pilot site; **(2)** the campaign of African cities of zero tolerance for violence against women and girls. The call to join this campaign has just been launched. A survey initiated by the secretariat of the network is under way. This survey is based on methods and tools developed at the level of the secretariat of the network and shared with the first member cities so that they are able to make a self-assessment of the situation of violence against women and girls in their localities, to take stock of the situation of violence against women and girls in African cities; and **(3)** the campaign of African cities in favor of women's economic empowerment and women's leadership in local governments, which includes among other things the generalization of gender budgeting and the adoption of the preferences granted to the suppliers whose leaders are women with equal quality of services provided compared to their male counterparts, and even the formulation of quotas to encourage female entrepreneurship within the local and subnational governments of the continent. This last campaign is in the launch phase.

REFELA has also undertaken to develop a Charter of African Local and Subnational Governments for Gender Equality. This Charter is drawn up within the framework of a partnership between CEMR (Council of Communes and Regions of Europe), UCLG, and UCLG Africa. Its adoption follows the resolutions of the first forum of the leaders of local and subnational governments of Africa and Europe gathered on the occasion of the African Union –European Union Summit of Heads of State and Government in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in November 2017. This Charter is currently the subject of an online consultation of members. It is expected that a discussion will take place during the UCLG World Congress in Durban on the modalities and steps to be followed for the finalization of this Charter.

It is recommended to give a global dimension to the campaign “Cities without street children” and to the campaign of “Cities with zero violence against women and girls”, given the universal nature of these two issues and the urgency to provide effective solutions in all regions of the world, including in the context of the implementation of

the corresponding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Hence the proposal to include these campaigns among the waves of action supported by UCLG during the next mandate of the world organization. This support should also promote the exchange of experience and give a practical dimension to decentralized cooperation around these topics.

1. 3. **Local Economic Development Network of Africa (LEDNA,).** LEDNA was set up following a request made in this direction by local elected officials of Africa at the fourth edition of the Africities Summit held in 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya. LEDNA develops and maintains up-to-date a reference website on local economic development that brings together more than 4,000 documentary resources and a community of practice grouping together more than 500 African experts in local economic development. LEDNA publishes every three years on the occasion of the Africities Summits a report on the state of development of local economies in Africa. This report draws on country reports prepared with the support of local consultants in collaboration with relevant institutions and administrations in the different African countries. As part of the LEDNA network, CGLU Africa has been led to undertake research on the production of wealth within local and subnational governments in nearly 400 local and subnational governments in more than twenty African countries, which allowed UCLG Africa to contribute to the development local economic accounts in a hundred of local and subnational governments thanks to the application of the ECOLOC method developed in collaboration with the Sahel Club within OECD to assess the added value produced by the economies of various territories. On the basis of these local economic accounts, the leaders of local and subnational governments are able to identify the levers of action at their disposal to promote economic activity in their territory according to the economic sectors or complexes on which its development is based. From all this research and experience, UCLG Africa has come to the conclusion that the local economic activity and the creation of jobs of most local governments in Africa are organized around 5 principal functions: a) to feed the city or the territory (about 30 percent of the economic activity and jobs); b) to build the city or the territory (about 20 percent of the economic activity and jobs); (c) to serve the city or territory with basic services (about 20 per cent of the economic activity and employment); to maintain the city or territory (approximately 20 per cent of the economic activity and employment); and to govern and administer the city or territory (about 10 percent of the economic activity and of the jobs). This modeling made it possible to realize the role played by the relations between cities and their hinterland on the one hand, and the role played by small towns and intermediate cities in the development and animation of local markets whose dynamics explains the development of national and regional markets. The development of small towns and intermediate cities thus appears as one of the essential elements of the equilibrium of the urban system of each country and of the continent as a whole.

Given the acuteness and urgency of the issue of the development of economic activities and job creation, particularly for young people, and given the expectations expressed on this subject by local and subnational governments, it is essential that Local Economic Development should be one of the priorities of the UCLG agenda. It is also necessary in this regard that UCLG explores the possibility of opening two new waves of action: on the one hand, the promotion of the social and solidarity-based

economy within cities and territories; and on the other hand the development of actions contributing to the food security of cities and territories.

1. 4. Creation of a Network of Locally Elected Youth of Africa. The year 2019 saw the creation of the Network of Locally Elected Youth of Africa. This is the implementation of one of the recommendations of the session of the network of young elected officials of Africa held during the eighth edition of the Africities Summit in 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco. The session recommended the creation of a network bringing together elected officials, and leaders of local and subnational governments of Africa aged under 35. The first campaign of identification of the young elected officials has been carried out. A first meeting of this network will be held on November 11, 2019 in Durban, in South Africa, during the UCLG World Congress.

UCLG should support the establishment of a worldwide movement of young elected officials of local and subnational governments and encourage a continuous flow of exchange of views and experience between chapters within this movement.

1. 5. Creation and reinforcement of the networks of the senior executives of the administrations of the local governments of Africa. This activity stems from the observation that while political officers of local governments come together within associations at the national, regional or continental level to speak with one voice, nothing like this existed for the senior executives of African local and subnational governments, with rare exceptions. In 2013, the UCLG Africa secretariat undertook to structure the networks: a) of City Managers or Directors of Services of Local Governments (MagNet Network); (b) of the Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) (FinNet); c) of the Directors of Technical Services of the communities (TechNet network); d) Managers or Heads of Human Resources of the Local Governments (HR-Net network); e) but also the network of permanent secretaries of associations of local and subnational governments (PERMSEC-Net). Each of these networks has internal rules and a management team at the continental level, representing all regions of the continent. The secretariat of the various networks is provided by the UCLG Africa secretariat. Each network also makes sure to develop national chapters within the various African countries.

The interest of setting up and strengthening the network of senior executives of local and subnational governments is threefold : to participate in the construction of a more competent local voice as enriched by the contributions of the executives of local authorities; to start contributing to the exchange of mutual knowledge and experience between the executives of the local and subnational governments of Africa; to contribute to gathering first-hand information on the situation of local governments in Africa in the fields of competence of the various managers concerned. This is the reason why each network participates in the observatories developed by UCLG Africa: the MagNet network associated with the work of the Observatory of Local Economies; the FinNet Network associated with the work of the Observatory of Local Finance; the TechNet Network associated with the work of the Observatory of Access to Basic Services; the HR-Net network associated with the work of the Observatory of Human Resources of local and subnational governments. Each Observatory publishes a triennial report published on the occasion of the Africities Summits.

It would be interesting for the different chapters of UCLG to develop similar initiatives in setting up professional networks and observatories.

1. 6. Establishment of an effective communication system. An intranet / extranet was established to improve communication within the secretariat, between the secretariat and

regional offices, and with members. An Internet portal has been developed which contains websites dedicated to the various UCLG Africa programs. A newsletter is published every month on the Internet, as well as a Weekly Review of the presence of local and subnational governments in Africa in the press. UCLG Africa is present on the following social networks; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. This strong presence makes UCLG Africa the real entry point and rallying point for all those interested in local Africa.

It would be interesting for UCLG to develop an Intranet / Extranet system to improve communication between the different chapters.

Pillar 2: Advocacy and Representation

2.1. Promotion of the African Charter of Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development. It is recalled that UCLG Africa was instrumental in drawing up this Charter, which was adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in their conference held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2014. During the same conference, the Heads of State and Government also decided to create a High Council of Local Authorities, an advisory body that will ensure the presence of the voice of local and subnational governments in Africa within the bodies of the African Union. In 2019, UCLG Africa continued to promote the Charter and continued its mobilization efforts for the signing and ratification of such Charter by the Member States, with the support of the African Union Commission (Department of Political Affairs). The number of signatories now stands at 18, and the number of ratifications stands at 6. It should be recalled that it is necessary that 15 member states signed, ratify, and file the instruments with the African Union Commission for the Charter to enter in force as an instrument of the African Union.

2.2. Structuring relations between UCLG Africa and the African Union. UCLG Africa collaborates with the African Union on many topics, but especially in the context of the technical assistance that the organization provides to the Specialized Technical Committee number 8, which brings together the conferences of Ministers of Public Service, Urban Development and Housing, Decentralization, and Local Governments (STC 8 of the African Union). UCLG Africa has in particular supported STC 8 in the formulation of its 2019-2020 strategic plan. In recognition for these efforts, the STC 8 Executive Board wanted a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed between the African Union Commission (which provides the Secretariat of STC 8) and UCLG Africa. This MoU has been finalized and people are waiting for an official date for its signing.

2.3. Structuring relationships with the other partners. Efforts have been made especially towards the European Union. The Secretary General is a member of the Task Team of the Political Forum on Development (PFD) set up by the European Commission to discuss the implementation of the Union's cooperation policies with partner countries. In addition, the European Union is the main financial partner of UCLG Africa. In 2015, it signed a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with 5 regional and international associations of local and subnational governments to operationalize the Communication adopted in 2013 by the European Commission on the role of local and subnational governments in the European Union's cooperation with partner countries¹. Through the signing of the FPA with UCLG Africa, the Commission is committed to supporting the implementation of the long-term strategic plan of the organization, still known under the name of GADDEPA (plan) for the 2015-2020 period, and to provide financial support corresponding to approximately 48 percent of UCLG Africa's budget for the implementation of the actions planned under GADDEPA. The installation of a new Commission following the recent European elections, and the ongoing negotiations on new cooperation and financing instruments of the European

¹ UCLG, UCLG Africa, CEMR, AIMF, CLGF

Union, including the negotiation of the post-Cotonou Agreement, have led the 5 associations having signed the FPA with the European Union to prepare a Memorandum to be sent to the new leadership of the European Union for greater participation of local and subnational governments in the Union's programs.

The UCLG Africa Secretariat has been tasked with preparing the draft Memorandum letter to be shipped to the new leadership of the European Union institutions and has been working on it. This letter must be signed at the UCLG World Congress in Durban by the presidents of the organizations having signed the FPA.

2.4. African Summits. An Africities Summit is the flagship event organized by the community of local and subnational governments in Africa every three years alternately in all regions of Africa. It is the only chapter of UCLG that hosts such a continental meeting. The Summit is a platform for dialogue of elected officials with other actors of decentralization on decentralization policies and local governance, including ministers, institutions of international cooperation, civil society organizations, private sector representatives, members of the academia, and other stakeholders. The Africities Summit offers an eminent opportunity for the 16,000 mayors and leaders of local and subnational governments in Africa to establish a dialogue and discuss the implementation of decentralization. The last two editions of the Summit have been a huge success. The seventh edition of the Africities Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2015, on the theme : "***Building the future of Africa with the people : the contribution of African local and regional authorities to the African Union Agenda 2063***" saw the participation of 5,000 delegates. The eighth edition of the Summit held from November 20 to November 24; 2018 in Marrakesh, Morocco, on the theme of "***The transition of African cities and territories towards sustainable development***" brought together more than 8,000 delegates. The ninth edition of the Africities Summit is scheduled to take place in the city of Kisumu, Kenya, from November 16 to November 20, 2021.

It is recommended that the Africities Summit also becomes an important meeting in which UCLG should also be able to mobilize the attention of UN agencies for increased cooperation with local Africa.

2.5. Best Mayor Award. The purpose of this Award is to recognize and celebrate mayors and communities that are leading outstanding actions in terms of local governance and SDG implementation. This Award was organized in 2016 at the level of the entire continent, and tested nationally on two successive editions in Tanzania (2016 and 2017). After these two tests, the organizational arrangements were specified. It was decided to call upon the various associations to select those who are ready to organize a national edition of the Best Mayor Award, and to deliver the Award at the Pan-African level at the Africities Summits, by having the winners of the National Awards compete with each other.

It is recommended that UCLG should take the initiative to launch a World Prize for the Best Mayor or Leader of Local Governments, to be awarded at the UCLG World Congress.

Pillar 3: Capacity-building for the members of UCLG Africa and Knowledge Management

3.1. Development of the activities of the Africa Local Government Academy (ALGA). ALGA was created to solve the nagging issue of human capital and the professionalization of political leaders and senior officials of local governments in Africa. For the deployment of its activities, ALGA relies on 30 African anchoring institutes, and 28 partnerships around the world. ALGA offers two types of training activities : **a)** a Professional MBA on African Territorial Governance for senior managers in African communities, mainly city managers and Directors of Services; the Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) of local governments; and the Directors of Technical services of the Local Governments; **b)** short courses (10 days to 2 months) organized in the following specialized colleges of ALGA :

Territorial Coaching; Localization of the SDGs; Human Resources Management of Local and Subnational Governments; Decentralized Cooperation and International Action of Local and Subnational Governments; Participatory Budget; as well as Female Leadership and Local Governance. Other colleges are planned regarding: the Access of Local and Subnational Governments to Climate Finance; the public-private partnership in the provision of basic services; the Access by local and subnational governments to the financial market; the Cultural policy, the promotion of Tourism, and other themes. In October 2016, at the Habitat III Summit in Quito, in Ecuador, ALGA organized a side event on the theme of " *Human Capital of Local & Subnational Governments: The time to act is now.*" Since then, nearly 500 participants from 14 African countries have participated in the training activities offered by the ALGA colleges. Since 2017, ALGA organizes annually the African Forum of Territorial Managers and Training Institutes dedicated to Local Government (FAMI) which usually brings together 150 participants from all regions of Africa to discuss issues related to human capital within local and subnational governments. ALGA also follows the development of the Observatory of human resources of African local governments which issued the First Triennial Report on the Status of Human Resources of the local and subnational governments in Africa during the last edition of the Africities Summit in November 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco. ALGA also organizes study tours of national associations of Local and Subnational Governments wishing to have a better knowledge of UCLG Africa. Thus, in October 2019, the UCLG Africa Secretariat received the Association of Libyan Cities, and in November 2019, the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON). These associations were informed of the role of UCLG Africa and of the need to strengthen our partnership as well as to provide guidance on how to they could strengthen their own role in the institutional environment and in the process of decentralization of their respective countries.

Lastly, peer learning is one of the preferred methods for accelerating capacity building within national associations of local and subnational governments. UCLG Africa has classified national associations into three categories: nascent associations, associations in the development phase, and mature associations. A peer learning program has mobilized mature associations to support emerging associations or developing associations. This program works on the basis of the "First Applicant, First Served» principle, and is limited to 5 peer support missions per year.

It is suggested that UCLG should undertake to set up a Global Local Government Academy by synergizing the various initiatives taken in the field of training by the different sections of the world organization. A specific working group should be set up by the CIB Commission with a view to proposing an appropriate strategy to achieve this ambition.

3.2. Support to global agendas. The recent years have been marked by the adoption of a series of global agendas, many of which have a direct impact on local and subnational governments across the world, including Africa². All communities are being asked to localize these global agendas, and to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of their implementation. In particular, local governments should participate in the drafting of voluntary reports submitted by member countries during the High Level Political Consultation (HLPC) sessions organized under the auspices of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations' Economic and Social Council. Apart from its normal contribution to the reporting of local and subnational governments organized by UCLG within the framework of the Global Task Force of local governments, UCLG Africa has identified three areas of

² Sendai Protocol on Risk and Disaster Prevention and Management (March 2015); Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development (June 2015); 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (September 2015); Paris Agreement on Climate Change (December 2015); New World Urban Agenda (October 2016); Global Compact on Migration (November 2018)

particular interest for African local governments, for which three specific days were organized at the last Summit Africities in November 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco: Migration, Climate, and Urban Planning.

With regard to Migration, the Secretariat undertook to disseminate the Charter of Local and Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration with a view to encouraging potential local governments to join the initiative. To date, 33 members of UCLG Africa have joined, which is very little given the importance and urgency of this issue. The secretariat is also considering setting up a Migration Task Force which should speed up the involvement of local and subnational governments in Africa in the management of migration and the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration adopted by the United Nations in Marrakech in December 2018. The Compact also provides for a follow-up mechanism involving local and subnational governments, the Mayoral Forum Task Force, whose 6th meeting is scheduled in Quito on January 20 to January 24, 2020. The secretariat of UCLG Africa is working with the UCLG global secretariat to ensure that this monitoring mechanism fully integrates the participation of local and regional authorities in Africa. In order to ensure that the voice of local and regional authorities in Africa is heard on migration management, the secretariat has joined or collaborated with institutional platforms dedicated to debates on migration, such as the Steering Committee concerning the Joint Program on Cities and migration, animated by Cities Alliance and the "International Center for Migration and Policy Development" (ICMPD) based in Vienna. The secretariat also represented UCLG Africa at the first meeting of the European Network of Welcoming Cities organized on October 03 and 04, 2019 in Paris. The participation in this meeting made it possible to disseminate the Charter of Local Authorities of Africa on Migration and also made it possible to note that a number of cities in Africa were faced with the difficulty of having to oppose themselves to the construction of the so-called "hotspots" within their jurisdiction while their national government is in favor of such hotspots. This is the case of Gao in Mali. The declaration adopted at the end of the Paris meeting takes into account the recommendations of the Charter of Local and Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration.

It would be necessary for an internal debate to be organized within UCLG to achieve a minimum threshold in terms of common positions on the issue of migration which remains very controversial within our world organization.

Regarding Climate, it is recalled that a Marrakech Declaration of local and subnational governments of Africa on the urgency of territorial climate action was adopted. Such Declaration encourages all cities and territories in Africa to join the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CoM SSA) and in the Mediterranean countries, with a view to drawing up Climate and Energy plans at the level of the territories. The Help Desk of the Covenant is hosted in Accra, in Ghana, UCLG Africa's Regional Office for West Africa. It helps promote the Covenant with the cities and regions of Africa. 200 cities have joined the Covenant. The Marrakech Declaration also calls for the strengthening of the UCLG Africa Climate Task Force to support African local and subnational governments more effectively in defining concrete and multi-year action plans for the implementation of Territorial Climate projects.

Finally, the Marrakech Declaration is calling for the adoption, financing and implementation of a "Readiness" "Program" for the Preparation of cities and local governments for the regionalization of Nationally Defined Contributions to National level" for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Finally, it should be noted that UCLG Africa is initiating the original African proposal to take advantage of the ongoing revision of the Nationally Defined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement to take a bottom-up approach by taking as a starting point the Locally Defined Contributions (LDCs). To promote access to climate finance for local authorities, a workshop was organized on the localization of climate finance on September 22, 2019 in New York as part of the Climate Summit convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations. On this occasion, a partnership agreement was

signed between BOAD and UCLG Africa, which provides for a financial support from BOAD to the Climate Task Force of UCLG Africa, and the granting of the quality of Implementing Partner to UCLG Africa. for the elaboration of the applications that are eligible to the climate portfolio of the BOAD.

UCLG should confirm the political leadership of its regional chapters concerning the implementation of the Climate Agenda in their respective regions, including that of UCLG Africa concerning Africa.

CAs far as urban planning is concerned, it is recalled that following the day organized on this theme during the Africities Summit in November 2018, a series of partnership agreements were signed between Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Casablanca, Morocco; Dakar, Senegal, and Rabat, Morocco; Yaoundé, Cameroon, and Marrakech, Morocco; Rufisque, Senegal, and Dakhla, Morocco; Jinja, Uganda, and Essaouira, Morocco; Abomey, Benin, and Al Hoceima, Morocco; Sousse, Tunisia and El Jadida, Morocco. These agreements entered into between the cities involved were also co-signed by UN Habitat, UCLG Africa, and MAJAL, the association of urban agencies of Morocco. A specific agreement has also been entered into between UCLG Africa, MAJAL, and the "Al Omrane" Holding to monitor the implementation of partnership agreements between cooperating cities, with the aim of setting up and operationalizing urban agencies to help the cities involved to better implement the recommendations of the New global Urban Agenda.

3.3. Implementation of the priority programs. These programs are the establishment of Territorial Africa Agency; the launch of the program of African Capitals of Culture; and the second phase of the Territorial Coaching program. The Territorial Africa Agency (TAA) is a vehicle proposed to enable local and subnational governments of Africa to improve their investment capacity through the issuance of bonds in the financial market. The TAA consists of two parts: (1) a cooperative association of local and subnational governments who agree to pay 100,000 Euros to build up the starting capital of the vehicle, and which must in principle receive 100 founding members, i.e. a total mobilizable amount of 10 million Euros, representing 50.1 per cent of the capital of the TAA originally set at 20 million Euros; (2) a financial institution whose reference shareholder is the African Development Bank, which agrees to contribute 33.3 per cent of the capital, the remainder to be sought from financial institutions specialized in local and subnational governments. The feasibility study of the TAA foresees the setting up of the bond and loan preparation team during the year 2020, and the actual issuance of the bonds and loans in 2022. A call for expressions of interest to make part of the club of the founding members of the TAA association was launched by the general secretariat and made it possible to collect to date 45 members for a goal of 100 cities. The African Development Bank has proposed that, pending the actual constitution of the TAA, an upgrade test of 10 cities will be carried out with the financing of the Municipal Bank Fund to prepare those cities to develop a portfolio of bankable investment projects, i.e. 2 cities per region. It is proposed that this choice be made as soon as possible on a "first come, first served" basis. A meeting of the club of the founding members of the TAA association is scheduled for November 13, 2019 as part of the activities of the UCLG World Congress.

The "African Capitals of Culture" program was adopted as a priority by the Executive Committee meeting on June 18, 2019 in Cairo; Egypt. Since this decision, the program of African Capitals of Culture has worked on three pillars: **(a)** The strengthening of its team, the development of tools, and the mobilization of financial resources. The department was strengthened by the recruitment and the provision of human and financial resources, the

reorganization of the organizing committee, the establishment of the “Young Ambassadors” and of the “Committee of Wise Men” who will be spokespersons for the program. The mobilization of financial resources has seen the signing of agreements with the municipality of Marrakech and also with the Region of Marrakech. Private companies made commitments to finance activities of the “Marrakesh 2020” capital city of culture program. The development of a communication strategy has been finalized and its implementation is under way with the development of a website and numerous communication products. **(b)** Advocacy at the local, national, continental and international level through the mobilization of institutional partners such as the Commission of the European Union, UNESCO, ACP-EU, etc., private partners and cultural actors such as FIMA, MASA, Kigali Forum, AXA Africa, etc. and the participation in many activities to promote the program.

At the continental level, participation in the meeting of Ministers of Culture held in Niamey from October 17 to October 20, the participation in a meeting of MASA in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, the participation in Dakar in the “thoughts workshop”, and a meeting with the councilors of the city hall of Dakar, one of the cities chosen to receive Marrakech in 2020, as well as the co-organization with UCLG of a session on cultural policies at the World Cities Congress to be held in Durban.

At the national and regional level: information meetings at the Ministry of Culture, meetings with the private sector and the national, regional and local authorities of Marrakech and its region, and participation in a seminar bringing together the elected representatives of African regions that are partnering with the Marrakech region. **(c)** The preparation of the activities of the multi-year program, of the pan-African fora (Ministers, cultural actors, civil society, etc.) and the granting of labels to existing activities to be held in Marrakech during the year 2020.

The second phase of the Territorial Coaching program in the Oriental Region was launched by the signing in March 2019 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the continuation of the program. This MoU is currently being approved by the competent national authorities. This MoU provides for the implementation of the program over 3 years, from 2019 to 2021. The program partners are the Regional Council of the Oriental region of Morocco, the Oriental Development Agency, the Mohammed 1st University of the city of Oujda UCLG Africa, and the “Echos Communication” NGO. The new program foresees the extension of territorial coaching actions to all the provinces of the Oriental and the Beni-Mellal regions in Morocco; and the development of territorial coaching on the international scene, around the South-South cooperation initiated by the Oriental Region and the Government of Morocco. This has been manifested to date by the creation of a center for territorial coaching in Dakar and Kaolack in Senegal, and requests for intervention in the region of the Nohoum Loop in Burkina Faso, the Region of San Pedro in Côte d'Ivoire, and the City of Douala in Cameroon.

3.4. Transparency and Integrity Index in African cities. In 2019, following the completion of the trial of an evaluation of the Local Integrity System (LIS) in 2018 in a district of Uganda, the Transparency Index was developed for a wider application in the cities and will be launched in 2020. The Transparency Index will help local and subnational governments improve their transparency vis-à-vis citizens by providing them with information on their main operations, mainly online.

It is proposed that this initiative be taken up by the other regional chapters of UCLG.

3.5. Improvement of knowledge management tools. Knowledge helps to make the right decisions, including in the management of public affairs. To support its members and stakeholders in the search for information, UCLG Africa has developed a knowledge hub on local governance in Africa that includes several tools including a specialized resource center, in particular a mapping of the institutional environment of local and subnational

governments in Africa. Between June and October 2019, the number of cumulative hits was about 20,000, which is a remarkable achievement. The hits received on Twitter and on the site are respectively 11,743 and 8,535 hits.

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