2016 WORLD SUMMIT OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEADERS HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2016

On Friday, the 2016 World Summit filled its third day with forums, meetings, policy dialogues, workshops and the continuation of the permanent working platform dedicated to co-creating the city. Ample networking opportunities allowed participants to connect in informal settings and at a social event in the evening.

In the afternoon, the second session of the Second World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments convened and adopted a joint statement on the New Urban Agenda to deliver to Habitat III in Quito, Ecuador, on 16 October 2016 at the third session of the Second World Assembly.

SECOND WORLD ASSEMBLY OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Emphasizing the link between the New Urban Agenda, the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, Kadir Topbaş, President of UCLG and Mayor of Istanbul, introduced the session, which focused on a draft joint statement containing the Second World Assembly’s inputs to Habitat III.

Maryse Gautier, Habitat III Co-Chair, said the New Urban Agenda will encourage collective work in Quito to develop new innovative cooperative mechanisms to implement this new agenda.

Mauricio Rodas, Mayor of Quito, emphasized that local governments and authorities have contributed extensively to the development of the New Urban Agenda, explaining that the joint statement represents a concrete proposal for action by cities and local governments beyond Habitat III.
Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montréal, Canada, predicted that the outcomes of Habitat III would be historic, securing the role of local and regional governments, not as administrators, but as partners in creating solutions.

Delegates to the Assembly discussed the joint statement and highlighted issues of particular importance to their regions and cities. A delegate from VNG, the Netherlands, celebrated the close cooperation with local and regional governments to agree on a global urban agenda and looked forward to continuing progress in Quito.

A delegate from Terrassa, Spain, shared that a collaborative and participatory culture had enabled success in coping with evictions resulting from financial crisis. Another, from Liverpool, UK, argued that, with half a million mayors on the planet, communication is key to ensuring that they all see themselves as part of the solution. African delegates highlighted that the 2030 Agenda is the “agenda of women and Africa,” and invited mayors to join forces at the Marrakech Climate Change Conference in November 2016 to make it a solution-oriented event.

Delegates also called for: consideration of the pressures on cities created by immigration; clarity with respect to the role of local governments in achieving the SDGs; and taking intermediary cities into account.

Closing the second session of the Second World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, Rodas announced the approval of the joint statement on the New Urban Agenda to be forwarded to Habitat III.

**PERMANENT WORKING PLATFORM – CO-CREATING THE CITY**

**RIGHT TO THE DIVERSE CITY:** Bernardo Gutiérrez, Medialab-Prado Madrid, introduced diversity as a process, not a product, suggesting the need for collective and responsible management of common cultural goods.

Igor Stokfiszewski, Political Critique, cautioned against commercialization of culture, noting copyrights violate the right to culture and that self-expression is often criticized as vandalism. He stressed that communities, rather than architects and urban planners, should organize themselves.

Lucina Jiménez, CONARTE, reminded participants that indigenous matters are urban issues, considering that indigenous peoples also live in cities. She suggested defending one’s rights by using them.

Kelly Anderson, filmmaker, presented her documentary, “My Brooklyn,” which recounts how an important shopping area for African Americans was displaced through zoning laws and subsidies that favor corporate urban developers.

Participants discussed the tension around the role of local governments in urban planning and supporting culture, with some noting that “urban planning” is often equivalent to facilitating the wants and needs of developers, while community plans are rejected by city governments. A participant and municipal employee reminded that even those in local governments are activists and citizens.

**FUTURE OF CITIES – EXPERIMENTAL CITIES:** Fabro Steibel, Institute for Technology and Society (ITS-Rio), presented the use of blockchain, a tool which creates a digital public ledger, in Brazil to help facilitate communication between governments and citizens, including their participation in the legislative process.

Boyd Cohen, Universitat de Vic, presented on various technological tools emerging in cities around the world, including the tourist lodging app Airbnb and ridesharing app Uber. He noted that, while the collaborative economy can facilitate optimization of underutilized resources, its regulation has many gray areas, such as when landlords acquire apartments to rent on Airbnb, diminishing housing availability.

Gabriella Gómez-Mont, Laboratorio para la Ciudad, noted riots related to Uber in Mexico City, Mexico, and efforts to elevate the conversation to find a workable solution. She described the resulting creation of a mobility fund financed by a 1.5% tax on Uber rides that will help taxis become more competitive and benefit non-motorized transport.

During discussions, participants raised, for instance, the negative implications of living in the periphery and the possibility of creating multiple, interconnected city centers.

**WORKSHOPS**

**GOVERNING WITH THE CITIZEN – TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN AN INCREASINGLY URBANIZED WORLD:** Carlos Martínez, Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and Mayor of Soria, Spain, said political institutions have lost citizens’ confidence, and therefore FEMP is engaging in efforts to increase transparency, participation and education to regain trust.

Daniel Martínez, Mayor of Montevideo, Uruguay, and Murat Aydin, Mayor of Zeytinburnu, Turkey, outlined efforts to improve information-sharing and transparency through online platforms, including one that allows citizens to vote on development proposals.

Alonso Cerdán, Open Government Partnership, outlined work with 70 countries to provide specific commitments and plans to increase accountability, outlining a pilot project with the same aims in 15 cities around the world.

Marcela Restrepo, Transparency International Colomba, said the fight against corruption is a political decision and citizen participation can reduce corruption by having “other eyes” watching the system.

During discussions, participants raised the importance of education to ensure meaningful participation and commented that providing information is not transparency. What is required, he said, is to explain the decisions.


**URBAN INNOVATION – IMPLEMENTING THE SDGs AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA:** Nicholas You, Advisor to the Guangzhou Awards, identified the objective of the awards as sharing knowledge, expertise and experiences among cities to meet current and future challenges. Song Jingwu, Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, discussed the Chinese government’s prioritization of urban development, inviting participants to an upcoming international innovation forum in Guangzhou, China, in December 2016.

Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montréal and President of Metropolis, celebrated the increasing prominence of the awards, which attracted 60% more applicants this year. Wen Guohui, Mayor of Guangzhou, announced the 15 shortlisted finalists for 2016: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Asunción, Paraguay; Boston, US; Brussels, Belgium; Copenhagen, Denmark; Jakarta, Indonesia; La Paz, Bolivia; Qalyubeya Governorate, Egypt; Luleburgaz, Turkey; Manashe, Israel; Ramallah, Palestine; Songpa-gu, Republic of Korea; Tempere, Finland; Tiajomulco de Zuniga, Mexico; and Malang, Indonesia.

Members of the Technical Committee of the 3rd Guangzhou Award highlighted projects focused on waste management, renewable energy, climate resilience, peace building, public awareness and safety, gender equality, transport systems and youth engagement.

During ensuing discussions, participants raised, **POLICY DIALOGUES**

**BUILDING THE SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY:** Luc Martens, Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities, reflected on finding happiness in connection with others, describing solidarity as an attitude and a practice. Carlos Martínez, FEMP and Mayor of Soria, called public officials “starring protagonists” in the development of a tolerant, just and free society. Fatimetou Mint Abdel Malick, Mayor of Tevragh-Zeina, Mauritania, revealed how she has had to “cry for help” on behalf of her constituents, calling solidarity a vocation we must carry in our hearts.

Several panelists shared concrete examples of solidarity in practice, with Isaac Ashai Odamtten, Mayor of Tema, Ghana, noting that competition should not derail the need to stand together. José Cruz-Ósorio, UNDP, identified elements of solidarity in the 2030 Agenda, while Paulson Pierre-Philippe, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, brought forward the harsh realities on the ground that are a result of natural disaster and imbalanced distribution of wealth and resources, requiring solidarity as social justice.

During ensuing discussions, participants raised, **THE RIGHT TO THE CITY AT THE HEART OF THE URBAN AGENDA:** Patrick Braouezec, President of Plaine Commune, France, urged the creation of cities of solidarity, not exclusion. Soo Kim, Gwangju, Republic of Korea, said they are a city of human rights and outlined efforts to continue this status.

Jan van Zanen, Mayor of Utrecht, the Netherlands, emphasized their role as a true human rights city focusing on healthy living. Abdoulaye Thimbo, Mayor of Pikine, Senegal, highlighted challenges his city faces in achieving the right to the city due to migration and private interests.

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Mexico City, outlined efforts to create a new constitution of Mexico City, with human rights at the core. Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona, Spain, said in Barcelona the “neo-liberal city,” riddled with privatization and speculation, has failed, especially in guaranteeing human rights.

Bahram Ghazi, OHCHR, said institutionalized urban-level mechanisms are needed to achieve human rights. Alison Brown, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, addressed the need to not marginalize the informal work force. Pablo Benson-Silva, Occupy Wall Street, said that young people engage in politics differently, and politicians often patronize their efforts.

**FINANCING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA:** Luiz de Mello, OECD, presented the findings from the study ‘Subnational Governments around the World - Structure and Finance: A First Contribution to the Global Observatory on Local Finances.’ He highlighted that even being a particularly large subnational government does not necessarily imply policymaking autonomy.

Rémi Rioux, French Development Agency (AFD), highlighted, the Agency’s goal to support urban sustainability, mentioning that, currently, AFD spends €8 billion per year but expects to reach €12 billion annually by 2020.

Luis Revilla Herrero, Mayor of La Paz, noted that Bolivia has one of the lowest budget allocations for local authorities (11% of the national budget), adding that the challenge is not only distribution, but also the effectiveness of financial resource use.

Daria Cibrario, Public Services International, alerted panelists to: the large tax evasion of big companies; an unparalleled transfer of risk from the private to the public sector; and the impact of international trade agreements on local authorities’ budget and autonomy.
George McCarthy, Lincoln Institute for Land Policy, noted the ambition of the New Urban Agenda, which will require an annual €4-5 trillion investment in infrastructure alone over the next 20 years.

Marco Kamiya, UN-Habitat, spoke on the “atlas of urban expansion,” a tool to analyze city development that can be used by several partners, and noted the manual ‘Finance for City Leaders,’ which helps empower local leaders and will be launched at Habitat III.

COMMUNITY FORUMS

REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS: Maria Julia Reyna, Santa Fe, Argentina, said regions deserve a space to exchange and reflect on experiences regarding public policies. Sarath Ethnayake, Central Province, Sri Lanka, outlined national and regional efforts to localize the SDGs.

Benoît Faucheux, Centre-Val de Loire, France, emphasized the need for solidarity between rural and urban territories and the role regional governments can play to reduce this divide. Rashid Seedat, Gauteng, South Africa, outlined work initiated by the regional government for the three cities of the region to have a common approach to achieve the SDGs.

Stefano Bonaccini, President of Emilia Romagna, Italy, outlined plans to achieve sustainable development through: consuming less soil; initiating a circular economy approach; and investing in renewable energy.

Didier Alberto Taveras Amado, Governor of Santander, Colombia, said problems in his region often originate from rural-to-urban migration and outlined efforts to tackle this. José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, International Labour Organization (ILO), emphasized the need for improved collaboration at all levels to create better work for everyone.

LOCALLY ELECTED WOMEN: Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris, France, celebrated the advancement of women in the UN, explaining that increased access to power for women decreases the risk of corruption. Fatimetou Abdel Malick, Mayor of Tevragh Zeina, encouraged gender equality for the benefit of all society.

Several panelists contributed personal experiences to overcome inequality and capacity gaps in order to be able to lead and address gender equity. Manuela Carmena, Mayor of Madrid, Spain, warned against the “trap to access power by becoming like men,” sharing policy approaches to support feminine leadership. Fatma Şahin, Mayor of Gaziantep, Turkey, stated the inclusion of women is “not an option, but a necessity.”

Ibon Uribe, Mayor of Galdakao, Spain, outlined necessary political commitments to ensure fair gender participation and representation. Céleste Ketcha Courtès, Mayor of Bangangté, Cameroon, called for toolkits to empower women to overcome financial and capacity barriers in order to participate in politics. Other panelists highlighted initiatives such as using caravans to reach rural women.

LEARNING FORUMS

PRACTICAL SESSIONS – LOCAL FINANCE, PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE: In the context of a case study on the city of La Paz, three mayors from the Philippines, Colombia and Spain provided insights on innovative urban financial mechanisms.

Roger Quiroga Becerra de la Roca, La Paz, discussed financial management; financial decentralization; and governance of the participatory budget in his city. He explained how legal changes in 2010, which gave greater competence to local authorities, allowed tests in this area and stressed one major challenge was the lack of qualified professionals that could make finance management more strategic. He added that it is “impossible to compete with the State for strategic investments in infrastructure,” considering that they still hold 80% of resources.

Panelists recalled inequality as a key barrier for participatory budgets, while another participant recalled the lack of budget literacy in schools. Participants provided a set of recommendations, including: improving effectiveness in finance decentralization; creating innovative finance within cities to foster sustainability; achieving local-level finance that represents 20% of national budgets by the next decade; and creating a multi-partner observatory on local finances.

PRACTICAL SESSIONS – CITY-TO-CITY AND SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FOR DECENT WORK: Pierre Martinot-Lagarde, ILO, specified that the session aimed to share experiences and set up criteria on good practices for city-city cooperation. Facilitators noted the need to engage the private sector in municipalities’ efforts to improve finances and the urgency to focus on decent jobs for all.

In the reporting section, participants highlighted key points to enhance cooperation in developing cities, for instance: having multi-actor involvement; directing finances to reach municipalities; empowering civil society; and fostering the principle of horizontality.