

Summary of the UCLG World Council 2021: 17-18 November 2021

The United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) World Council 2021 meetings took place in the context of the Smart City Expo World Congress, of which UCLG is a strategic partner. The sessions were delivered in a hybrid format: in Barcelona, Spain, and online. The World Council is the principal policy-making body of the UCLG World Organization. It is composed of 342 political representatives nominated from all world regions. The World Council meets once a year to decide on policies and review their implementation.

The UCLG World Council 2021 met under the theme, “Smart Cities and Territories, Pillars of the Common Agenda,” on 17 November 2021. Key outcomes from the World Council were the adoption of the 2022 work plan, the approval of the budget and a new interim governance structure with a rotating UCLG Presidency, as well as preparations for the Seventh UCLG Congress, which will take place in 2022. The UCLG World Council Policy Debate and Business Session addressed how the municipal movement can contribute to the UN Secretary-General’s Common Agenda, and the ways in which the world needs to transform in the coming years, with an emphasis on the future of human rights.

On 18 November, a session themed, “A Pact for the Future: Renewing the Social Contract for the Great Reset,” built on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to demonstrate the essential role local and regional governments (LRGs) play in protecting communities around the world and provide policy recommendations to guide the development of the Pact. Convening the same day, the World Forum of Regions addressed the unique role of regional governments to improve ties and collaborative governance with national, city, and rural authorities towards a future of solidarity.

A Brief History of UCLG

UCLG was founded in 2004 to ensure subnational and regional governments and other local authorities have a voice in the international processes that are defining the sustainable development and climate change agendas. Since its creation, UCLG has been convening city and local government representatives around common issues affecting subnational jurisdictions and defending the interests of local governments on the world stage.



The UCLG governing structure centers on three bodies: an Executive Bureau that meets twice a year; a World Council that meets annually; and a General Assembly that meets during the triennial UCLG Congress. Since 2010, the Congress has also been known as the World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders.

UCLG Founding Congress: In May 2004, mayors, councilors, and elected city, local, and regional representatives gathered in Paris, France, to establish the UCLG Congress. The final declaration of the founding Congress addressed sustainable development, globalization, decentralization and local democracy, cooperation, diplomacy, and world health.

Second UCLG Congress: At UCLG’s second Congress, held October 2007 in Jeju, Republic of Korea, participants discussed

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cooperation with regions, the consequences of urbanization, and challenges of tomorrow's city. The final declaration lays out commitments on global warming and environmental protection, human rights, peace and development, and the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, a policy paper on local finance was approved.

Third UCLG Congress: First World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: In November 2010 in Mexico City, Mexico, the first World Summit convened in conjunction with UCLG's Congress, adopting a document titled, "[The City of 2030 – Our Manifesto](#)." The Manifesto lays out the common goals of local leaders and their determination to make the urban world a better place.

Fourth UCLG Congress: Second World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: Held from 1-4 October 2013 in Rabat, Morocco, the second World Summit celebrated the centenary of the international municipal movement and allowed participants to debate and exchange views on the most vital issues for subnational authorities and partners. The Summit's outcome document, the [Rabat Declaration](#), recognized the need to address change, innovation, and the issue of just societies by reinforcing bottom-up governance under the leadership of inclusive LRGs.

Fifth UCLG Congress: Third World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: The third World Summit convened from 12-15 October 2016 in Bogotá, Colombia, under the theme, "Local Voices for a Better World." The Summit approved the [Bogotá Commitment and Action Agenda](#), which provides a guide for LRG actions in the follow-up to the third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). It contains recommendations on: subnational contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global goals; reforming national legal, institutional, and policy frameworks; and securing LRGs' rightful place at the global table, especially in terms of global governance, international financing, and decentralized cooperation.

Sixth UCLG Congress: Fourth World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: Held from 11-15 November 2019 in Durban, South Africa, the 2019 Summit approved the Durban Political Declaration, "[Envisioning the Future of Our Renewed International Municipal Movement](#)." The Summit also approved, for the first time at a UCLG Congress, a compendium of integrated policy recommendations resulting from a six-month consultation process with diverse stakeholders, which offered bottom-up continent- and region-specific priorities.

UCLG World Council 2020: Held from 12-13 November 2020 and hosted by the City of Guangzhou, China, the meeting convened in a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It met under the theme, "The Role of the International Municipal and Regional Movement in COVID Times." Key outcomes included: the establishment of a UCLG International Solidarity Fund to strengthen local governance; the appointment of three new Ubuntu Advisors to contribute to expanding outreach and advocacy for UCLG; and the establishment of a new policy council on Implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA).



Emilia Saiz Carracedo, UCLG Secretary General

Report of the Meetings

World Council Policy Debate and Business Session

The United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) World Council 2021 opened with a discussion about human rights and contributions of LRGs to the to the UN Secretary General's report, "Our Common Agenda." Mohamed Boudra, UCLG President, chaired this session.

Emilia Saiz Carracedo, UCLG Secretary General, welcomed delegates to the meeting. Boudra said the UCLG Forum of Regions' first meeting is essential for coordinating cities and regions, transforming the social contract, and establishing a new mode of interaction with governments. He identified new trends for UCLG to address, including: a new relationship with the planet; "giving voice to the voiceless"; and partnerships for full pandemic recovery.

Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed inequalities and structural discrimination in societies but also brought creative solutions to the world's multifaceted crisis, noting a shift from technocratic to people-centered governance. She called for strengthening the UCLG network to protect human rights at the local level.

Philippe Rio, Mayor of Grigny, France, said the COVID-19 pandemic requires accelerating local municipalities' protection of human rights and the SDGs toward a fairer, more inclusive world. He called for improving access to housing and health, combating gender violence, and safeguarding vulnerable populations.



Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Linda Voortman, Co-Mayor of Utrecht, the Netherlands, observed that translating human rights to the local level showcases them as a tool for transformation. She said the outcome of the 2019 Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy was an historic milestone, and called for consolidating this work. She noted a revised version of the 2011 Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City will be adopted in 2022.

Saiz reported that UCLG is establishing a dedicated space for dialogue between LRGs and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, aimed at increasing capacity building and integrating human rights within the municipal movement.

The Council then addressed institutional matters, including the adoption of the Report of the 2020 World Council. Boudra shared highlights of the organization's work in 2021, including on equality and addressing emergency situations, and noted an emerging theme of caring for people under a new social contract. Saiz presented the work plan for 2022, highlighting the importance of the ongoing townhall process for consultation with civil society and work on learning and research fora and online platforms.

Alison Evison, President, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) reported on recent collaboration at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Glasgow, UK, where COSLA and others were able to strengthen references to local governments in the text of the final agreement by working in partnership.

Cemal Baş, Municipality of Kecioren, Turkey, called for the next Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization report to address a future city model.

Pilar Díaz, Barcelona Provincial Council, Spain, supported the 2022 work plan's strengthening of local and global governance to be more participatory. She said Barcelona is committed to: continuing to co-lead the Policy Council on Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing; strengthening the agenda on gender inequalities; and reinforcing the UCLG peace agenda.

Mohamed Wajdi Aydi, Deputy Mayor of Sfax, Tunisia, thanked UCLG for helping Sfax deal with migrants. He called Sfax a place of peace, and expressed a desire for governments on both sides of the Mediterranean to be able to manage the migration crisis in a sustainable way.



Linda Voortman, Co-Mayor of Utrecht, the Netherlands

Carlos Martínez, Mayor of Soria, Spain, said local governments should work with the UN "to enlarge the perspective of the NUA," including on gender inequality and climate change, and called for more attention to intermediate cities.

Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco, and Forum of Intermediary Cities President, said the report of their second World Forum, which took place in Kütahya, Turkey, in October 2021, places medium-sized cities at the center of UCLG.

Mohammad Farjoud, Municipality of Teheran, Iran, said COVID-19 has pushed cities into the digital age with digital platforms and data to help them understand what is happening, define their issues and plans, and execute their projects.

Josep Mayoral Antigas, Mayor of Granollers, Spain, recalled former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's observation that building peace starts in neighborhoods, not meeting rooms. He said the 2017 World Forum on Urban Violence and Education for Coexistence and Peace and the 2020 World Forum of Cities and Territories of Peace established agendas for local-level peace, noting the UCLG Peace Prize arose from this process.

Mohamed Saadie, President, UCLG Middle East and West Asia (UCLG-MEWA), and Union of Dannieh Municipalities, Lebanon, said the Union won the fifth Guangzhou Award on localizing the SDGs and confronting COVID-19 due to its use of participatory approaches, putting people first.

Participants then approved the UCLG work plan for 2022.

LRGs Breaking Through as One: The Common Agenda: Thembisile Nkadimeng, Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs of South Africa, and UCLG Co-President, chaired this segment.

Saiz reported that the Policy Councils had met virtually during 2021 and at this meeting, making important advancements in their respective areas, namely:

- Right to the City and Inclusive Territories;
- Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace;
- Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing;
- Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities, Capable of Facing Crises; and
- Implementation of the NUA.

Volker Türk, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination, presented on the UN Secretary General's Report,



Mohamed Boudra, UCLG President



Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona, Spain

“Our Common Agenda,” which had been mandated to address present and future challenges. He highlighted the important role of local governments and cities, which are often the first point of contact and thus key to addressing the challenges.

Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona, Spain, and UCLG Special Envoy to the UN, welcomed delegates to Barcelona, and expressed interest in collaborating on the Common Agenda. She noted the proposal to have an advisory committee of local governments, and said it is vital to ensure a structured relationship and inclusive multilateralism. Noting the growing general distrust in institutions, she said these “exceptional times” of climate change and other crises require new commitments and different ways of working that involve young generations and women.

Participants then took up the topic of UCLG Policy Councils working towards the Pact for the Future.

Tunç Soyer, Mayor of Izmir, Turkey, stressed the importance of working in harmony and using a “circular culture” perspective to underpin urban planning to reduce the footprint of cities.

Fatimetou Abdel Malick, President, Nouakchott Region, Mauritania, said the pandemic has shown the need to strengthen relationships and rethink ways of production and urban planning.

Joanne Vanderheyden, President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, reported on the unprecedented financial crisis Canada faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and how communities rallied to support each other. She called for building more resilience and capacity, and said areas identified in the Pact will help communities access financing to better serve their local citizens.

Qiang Sheng, Xi’an Municipal Government, China, reported on: the 2020 UCLG World Council, hosted virtually by Guangzhou; the recent presentation of the fifth Guangzhou Award for Urban Innovation; and multilateral activities to amplify local governments’ voices to the world. He also highlighted UCLG Asia Pacific’s (UCLG-ASPAC) continuous efforts to promote win-win cooperation within the UCLG framework.

Members took note of the Policy Councils’ deliberations and approved the initial work component on the Pact for the Future.

UCLG Peace Agenda and local economic development:

With Nkademeng chairing, Saiz reported on the Peace Agenda, highlighting preparations to launch the third round of applications for the UCLG Peace Prize, which aims to support local

governments in advancing a peace culture in their communities. She said the prize will be awarded at the UCLG World Congress in 2022.

Francisco Toajas, Mayor of Las Cabezas de San Juan, Spain, and UCLG Committee on Local Economic and Social Development Co-Chair, reported on the Fifth World Forum on Local Economic Development in Cordoba, Argentina, in December 2020. He expressed gratitude that local economic and social development is now part of UCLG’s agenda. Toajas summarized the Forum’s final declaration regarding three priorities: economic, social, and environmental innovation; work of the future and the future of work; and new, inclusive, and sustainable economic production and consumption models.

Rory Nisan, Halton Regional Council, Canada, stressed the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ support for the outcomes of the Forum. Members took note of the updates on the Peace Agenda and adopted the Fifth World Forum’s final declaration.

Saiz then updated participants on preparations for the Seventh World Congress themed, “Breaking Through as One,” that will take place in 2022, in Daejeon, Republic of Korea. Heo Tae-jeong, Mayor of Daejeon, spoke via video link on Daejeon’s preparations the Congress. He said he has requested the UCLG World Secretariat to invite the Korean Cities Federation of North Korea to the Congress, expressing hope that with the participation of North Korea, the Congress may deliver a strong message for peace on the Korean Peninsula and in the world.

José Ribeiro, Mayor of Valongo, Portugal, presented the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD) Distinction Award on “Best Practice in Citizen Participation” meant to strengthen democracy and community engagement. He said 51 nominations had been received and reviewed by peers and an expert jury, and special mention went to the municipalities of Ankara (Turkey), Milan (Italy), Mexico City (Mexico), Gothenburg (Sweden), and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). The main Distinction Award went to the municipality of Lima, Peru, for their “Lima Joven Acciona” (Young Lima Action) programme. Tania Peña, Youth Manager of the municipality of Lima, talked about their work engaging youth, including in response to the pandemic, and to promote leadership, health, and entrepreneurship.

Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor of Kitchener, Canada, and UCLG Treasurer, presented the reports of the Financial Management Committee and of the Committee on Statutory Affairs. He said



José Ribeiro, Mayor of Valongo, Portugal



Incoming UCLG President **Ilsur Metshin**, Mayor of Kazan, the Russian Federation

that UCLG had a surplus of EUR 231,821.07 in 2020 and that the Financial Management Committee recommended allocating 20% to voluntary resources and carrying the rest forward. Delegates then approved the accounts and financial discharge for 2020 and the draft budget for 2022.

Vrbancovic then reported that UCLG President Boudra had not sought reelection as mayor and Co-President Nkadimeng had been appointed deputy minister in the South African government. Since they were no longer elected local government officials, he said, they were no longer eligible to serve on the UCLG Executive Bureau. He reported that the matter had been discussed collegially at the Statutory Affairs Committee, and the Committee recommended rotating the presidency among the members of the Executive Bureau until the end of the term in 2022, with Boudra serving as Honorary President and Nkadimeng as Honorary Co-President until then. Delegates agreed to these changes in governance, and thanked Boudra and Nkadimeng for their service.

Ilsur Metshin, Mayor of Kazan, the Russian Federation, as the incoming UCLG President, promised to: continue Boudra's work; try to apply what he has learned; and take UCLG to new levels.

Saiz closed the meeting at 6:24 pm CET.

A Pact for the Future: Renewing the Social Contract for the Great Reset

This session brought together Ubuntu Advisors (“ubuntu” is a Nguni Bantu term meaning “humanity”) and mayors from different regions to share thoughts on the future transformation at the local level.

Aromar Revi, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, warned that with increasing environmental crises and declining economic output cities will face food and water insecurity. He said intergovernmental frameworks are not designed for the reset needed, and called on cities to: clarify whether reset is possible; work in solidarity to mobilize their constituencies; pool their resources; deliver services as they did during the pandemic; and prepare for other interests to contest their actions.

Gissela Chala, Vice Mayor of Quito, Ecuador, called for inclusive multilateralism with a stronger gender approach for caring cities.

María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, called on LRGs to foster social ownership



María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly

and understanding of multilateral decisions. She recommended translating abstract terms into policy and then action, and regaining the trust of citizens, especially younger generations.

Noraini Roslan, Mayor of Subang Jaya, Malaysia, said cities learned many lessons during the pandemic. Since they attract migration, and disease can spread in crowded settings, an extra burden with regard to providing housing emerged. This, she said, requires support from all levels of government.

Tunç Soyer, Mayor of Izmir, Turkey, reiterated the importance of a circular culture in addressing the crises that are increasing in frequency and intensity – of which humans are both the cause and the victims – and noted that cities can mobilize rapid responses to emergencies. Explaining how the ecological footprint of cities exceeds jurisdictional boundaries, he said responsibility must be shared through multi-level collaboration.

José Ribeiro, Mayor of Valongo, Portugal, reminded delegates that those are local governments that implement decisions, and they can drive the agenda from the ground up to higher levels of government.

Carola Gunnarsson, Mayor of Sala, Sweden, explained how her city is using the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a roadmap, including in developing its budget and climate strategy, and urged closing the gender gap, including in technical fields and digitization.

Ana Falú, National University of Cordoba, Spain, said we are not facing a gender problem but rather a structural problem, and urged bringing human rights and multilateralism into daily life, including to address violence against women and girls.

Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco, said resilience and solidarity are important for readjusting cities' priorities after the COVID-19 pandemic, such as on inequality. He noted isolated intermediate cities need to establish dialogue and partnership with other government entities and citizens and obtain easier access to funding, especially international funds, to implement multilateralism.

Noting that the sustainable development and human rights roadmap cannot be achieved without cities and local governments, Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo, Uruguay, recommended they demand their place at the global table. She said cities and local governments must “diagnose” their situation based on



Marcela Petrantonio, Tandil District Municipal Government, Argentina

evidence and ensure citizens know the importance of their work in the great transformation.

Jorge Perez Jaramillo, Government of Antioquia, Colombia, identified a “pandemic of crises,” which needs response from the local and regional levels. He called for more strategic planning and strategic projects, focusing on social and affordable infrastructures. He recommended: integrated planning to overcome community isolation; bold and participatory actions; a long-term vision; and enhancing municipal authorities’ role while strengthening the relationship between universities and public institutions.

Marcela Petrantonio, Tandil District Municipal Government, Argentina, said alliances among all stakeholders are needed for deconstructing societies’ patriarchal characteristics. She called for intermediate cities laboratories for the 2030 Agenda.

Qiang Sheng, Xi’an Municipal Government, China, observed that erasing gaps between the rich and poor will take governments a long time, but basic services such as equal access to vaccinations must be given to all citizens. He called for effective, resilient, and people-centered local governance.

During the discussion, Mohamed Wajdi Aydi, Deputy Mayor of Sfax, Tunisia, noted many “unhappy” cities, such as those in Palestine or conflict areas or those lacking in resources. He urged recognition of cities that have managed difficult situations despite this.

Jon Aguirre Such, URBACT, said “the power of we” can bring ideas to fruition. He said language can build reality and transform it, but multilateralism is not a simple concept. He called for action now, together, at the multilateral and international levels, to put cities at the center of the global debate.

Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, Chair, General Assembly of Partners (GAP), said GAP is a multistakeholder platform that channels collaboration on sustainable development in cities. She said UCLG’s participation in everything related to women is important, including coining the terms “city of care” and “feminist municipality.”

Sergio Arrendondo, Federation of Latin American Cities, Municipalities and Associations of Local Governments, asked about the role of regional associations in addressing the lack of employment in Latin American cities, with more than half the work being informal, and also in regard to environmental emergencies.

Several Ubuntu Advisors offered additional points on: building a global inter-urban system; empowering women, putting care at the center of the agenda; and building a feminist municipal movement.

Agustí Fernández de Losada, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, reflected on the relevance of cities and LRGs to ensure no one is left behind in these times of transformation. He recommended linking the transformational narrative to public policy, measuring the impact of accountability, ensuring there are sufficient resources, and defining clear competencies for multi-level and more inclusive governance.

UCLG World Forum of Regions

The World Forum of Regions addressed the theme, “Smart Territories in the Urban Era.”

Uğur İbrahim Altay, Mayor of Konya, Turkey, and UCLG Co-President, opened the Forum, saying local governments must protect their citizens and fight the crises they face, but to do this they need vertical links and improved coordination and integration at all levels. He highlighted the Forum’s role in facilitating the understanding of common objectives and how to cooperate to strengthen them.

Pablo Jurado, President of the Region of Imbabura, Ecuador, and President of the Forum of Regions, noted the complementary experiences of many Forum participants as first mayors and then governors. He lauded this first gathering of the World Forum of Regions, noting the seven-year process leading to it. He stressed the importance of ecological transformation, social justice, competitiveness, care for citizens, and cohesion at all levels, saying regions must act together to position themselves in the international arena.

Dialogue I: Building territories as integrated ecosystems:
A pact for the planet: UCLG Secretary General Emilia Saiz moderated this session.

Fatimétou Abdel Malick, President, Regional Council of Nouakchott, Mauritania, said regional and local governments have the same goals, citizens, and challenges, and called upon them to join efforts to help their communities, share positive experiences, and create synergies. She observed that the pandemic made inequalities more visible, noting her territorial government’s efforts to help families achieve agricultural self-sufficiency.



Fatimétou Abdel Malick, President, Regional Council of Nouakchott, Mauritania



Anibal Gaviria, Governor of Antioquia, Colombia, and Cities Alliance Assembly President

Anibal Gaviria, Governor of Antioquia, Colombia, and Cities Alliance Assembly President, noted rural and urban areas need better balance and harmony. He suggested UCLG speak of “united” actors rather than actors “together,” to show common purpose and thereby increase influence. He said concepts should be universal and easy to remember, such as the right to a 90-year lifespan no matter where one is born.

Kim Borisov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Russian Federation, explained how his region, half of which is in the Arctic circle, has been affected by climate change, including rapid decline in sea ice, permafrost thaw, and increased forest fires, requiring effective protection systems and funding.

Sergio Graf, Secretary of Environment and Territorial Development of Jalisco, Mexico, and Regions4 Vice President for the Americas, lamented climate change and the loss of biodiversity, stating that collaboration at all levels is fundamental, including through transfer of resources.

Marcela Villarreal, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), described the impacts of broken food systems, resulting in hunger and food waste, and called for food systems’ transformation, including by interlinking cities and territories that support them. She urged accelerated food systems’ transformation, including through vertical and horizontal integration and global multi-purpose coalitions such as the Urban Food Systems Coalition recently established under FAO, of which UCLG is a member.



Marcela Villarreal, FAO

Dialogue II: Accelerating the urban agendas from regional governments: A pact for the people: Antonia Sabartes, UCLG Secretariat, moderated this session.

Edgar Pieterse, Director of the African Centre for Cities, called for: different forms of collective enterprise, including social enterprise; looking at history as an archive that includes local and social aspects; and building problem-solving skills and literacy.

Magnus Berntsson, Regional Minister of Environment, Västra Götaland, Sweden, and Assembly of European Regions President, said regions are crucial in terms of providing connectivity and regional planning that links urban and rural areas, addresses territorial imbalances, and ensures more effective use of resources.

Mercè Conesa, Government of Catalonia, Spain, said Catalonia is using digitization to advance the NUA while empowering its citizens to make the SDGs concrete and accelerating decarbonization.

Luciano Rivas, Governor, Araucanía, Chile, noted the great diversity among regions’ populations and climates, even within one country, and said Chile is decentralizing and democratizing regional governments. He recommended using a local perspective to understand the problems and potential solutions.

Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Governor, Central Macedonia, Greece, and European Committee of the Regions President, urged unity within Europe and beyond to successfully tackle the societal changes defined by the SDGs, given that many SDGs are implemented at the regional and local levels. He said subnational governments are not just implementers but can sometimes be far more ambitious than national governments. Tzitzikostas called for linking “regionally and locally determined contributions” with the nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement on climate change and for coordinated efforts on climate neutrality. He noted that cities must undertake 90% of global mitigation measures, calling for investment in every region and city in the world.

Adama Diouf, President, Regional Council of Kaffrine, Senegal, and Vice-President, United Regions Organization / Forum of Regional Governments and Global Associations of Regions, said climate change has worsened COVID-19-related problems in Africa, especially in agriculture and fishing. He said a resilience programme, undertaken with fiscal relief and private sector and other support, was unable to address all the difficulties in the country due to insufficient support. He observed that countries must have resilient health services, strategies for survival, and community solutions.

Dorothee Allain-Dupré, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), spoke to trends in regional governance leading the “silent revolution” of decentralization and to regions being the best place to fight inequalities, including through economies of scale.

UCLG Honorary Co-President Nkadimeng explained that “ubuntu” is a South African concept championed by Nelson Mandela, meant to ensure mutual support and diversity, which can pave the way for economic spinoffs, innovation, and economic growth.

Forum of Regions President Jurado welcomed participants' thoughts on the interaction between regional and national, urban, and rural levels of government.

UCLG Secretary General Saiz closed the meeting at 4:33 pm CET, welcoming the UCLG's renewed leadership, clear work plan, approved budget, and reinforced vision.

Upcoming Meetings

20th International Observatory on Participatory Democracy Conference:

The IOPD 2021 conference will be held in collaboration with UCLG. Sessions will focus on citizen participation in ecological transformation, revisiting local democracy, and feminist municipalism and participatory democracy. The IOPD General Assembly will also take place. **dates:** 29-30 November, 1-2 December 2021 **location:** virtual **www:** oidp.net/en/conference2021.php

International Association of Public Transport (UITP) Global Public Transport Summit:

The UITP Global Public Transport Summit is the world's largest event dedicated to urban mobility where public transport professionals debate and implement the next steps for our cities. **dates:** 14-17 December 2021 **location:** Melbourne, Australia **www:** maas-alliance.eu/event/uitp-global-public-transport-summit/

High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the NUA: This meeting is expected to convene in April 2022. **dates:** 28 April 2022 (TBC) **location:** New York, US **www:** www.un.org/pga/76/wp-content/uploads/sites/101/2021/10/Letter-from-the-PGA-HLM-New-Urban-Agenda.pdf

9th Africities Summit: UCLG Africa will host the ninth Africities Summit under the theme, "The Role of Intermediary Cities of Africa in the Implementation of Agenda 2030 of the United Nations and the African Union Agenda 2063." **dates:** 17-21 May 2022 **location:** Kisumu, Kenya **www:** unhabitat.org/events/9th-africities-summit

Stockholm+50: The UN General Assembly is convening a two-day international meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the UN Conference on the Human Environment, which took place in Stockholm, Sweden, in June 1972. The General Assembly invites "all relevant stakeholders, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and local communities" to contribute to the meeting and its preparations. **dates:** 2-3 June 2022 **location:** Stockholm, Sweden **www:** www.government.se/government-policy/stockholm50/

11th Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF11): WUF11 will be held under the theme, "Transforming Our Cities for a Better Urban Future." The Forum will highlight a state of informed preparedness that provides the opportunity to anticipate change, correct the course of action if necessary, and become more knowledgeable on the different possibilities that the future of cities offers. It aims to show how policy, strategies, and actions can promote desirable futures. **dates:** 26-30 June 2022 **location:** Katowice, Poland **www:** wuf.unhabitat.org/

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2022: The HLPF is the main UN platform on sustainable development, with a central role in the follow-up and review of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. All UN Member States as well as representatives from civil society organizations participate in the HLPF. **dates:** 5-15 July 2022 **location:** New York, US **www:** sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf

UN High-level Meeting on Road Safety: The UN General Assembly will hold a high-level meeting on improving global road safety in July 2022 in pursuit of SDG target 3.6, to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes, and SDG target 11.2, to improve road safety in the provision of access to transport systems and expanding public transport. The theme is "The 2030 Horizon for Road Safety: Securing a Decade of Action and Delivery." **dates:** 5 July 2022 [tentative] **location:** New York, US **www:** undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/308

IWA World Water Congress and Exhibition: Water for smart liveable cities: The World Water Congress and Exhibition will report on the water sector's progress towards the SDGs. The emphasis will be on SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation). The event will also highlight and explore the interlinkages between water and all 17 SDGs. The call for content is open until 31 December 2021. **dates:** 22 September 2022 **location:** Copenhagen, Denmark **www:** worldwatercongress.org/

Seventh UCLG Congress: The fifth World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders will take place in late 2022 under the theme "Breaking Through as One." Having evolved from a gathering of mayors, councilors, and partners, it now provides an opportunity for the full constituency and members of civil society to "be a part of the future of the municipal movement." **dates:** 10-14 October 2022 **location:** Daejeon, Republic of Korea **www:** www.uclg.org/en/media/news/daejeon-will-host-next-uclg-world-congress-2022

Glossary

COP	Conference of the Parties
IOPD	International Observatory on Participatory Democracy
LRGs	Local and regional governments
NUA	New Urban Agenda
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UCLG-ASPAC	UCLG Asia Pacific
UCLG-MEWA	UCLG Middle East and West Asia Section
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change