

The Hague Declaration

On the occasion of the Launch of the Global Parliament of Mayors (GPM) in The Hague
September 9-11, 2016

Preamble: 'An action-oriented platform'

This Declaration marks a first milestone in the commitment of cities to an action-oriented platform in our interdependent world. This commitment is formalized by the Inaugural convening of the Global Parliament of Mayors, and the signing by its founding members of the Declaration. The context for the Declaration is conditioned by the following:

Considerations

- **Considering** that for the first time in history the majority of the global population lives in cities and metropolitan regions, and
- **Considering** that cities and metropolitan regions are increasingly taking their responsibility in intergovernmental relations and city diplomacy, and
- **Considering** that Mayors and regional leaders in cities and metropolitan regions will most effectively collaborate in enacting common policies and pursuing common action to pressing cross-border issues, when they work together with national governments, the United Nations, and international institutes and networks such as the UCLG, the OECD, ICLEI, the C40 Climate Cities, Eurocities, CityNet, Mayors for Peace, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities.

The founding Mayors of the GPM do commit:

To fully support the UN Sustainable Development Goals and in the coming year to report on successful actions taken by cities to reach these goals, specifically related to the two global issues that will be deliberated at the Launch of the GPM: **Migration** and **Climate Change**. In doing so, the GPM acknowledges and builds upon the aspirations and achievements of the United Nations, the OECD, COP21, HABITAT III, The 'Inclusive growth Mayors Network', The World Bank and the many vital urban networks already addressing these challenges, including the C40 Climate Cities, ICLEI, Eurocities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and many others.

In pursuing these vital forms of cooperation, the GPM acknowledges this important context:

- **The UN and the Sustainable Development Goals:** UN Goal 11 b urges: "By 2020, [to] substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels". The agenda accompanying the SDG states: "We will cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status of refugees and of

displaced persons”.

- **HABITAT III:** The views formulated by Mayors during the GPM in The Hague will also be presented to the UN Habitat III Conference taking place on 17-20 October in Quito, Ecuador.
- **The OECD – Paris:** The Mayors fully support the OECD Inclusive Growth campaign. The OECD concludes: “City and regional governments are critical actors in the policy domains that matter for inclusive growth. Sub-national governments carry out around 40% of total public spending in the OECD, with 60% of this investment for economic affairs and education – key areas for inclusive growth... Cities and metropolitan regions have a crucial role in making inclusive growth happen. They are major generators of growth and economic opportunity, and key actors in many domains that matter to inclusive growth, including education, health, care services, social protection, training and employment services, as well as housing, neighbourhood regeneration and transport”. The Mayor of Paris will host the OECD Conference on inclusive growth on 21 November, where the GPM will offer best practices to tackle inequality from cities and metropolitan regions all over the world.
- **The OECD – Rotterdam and The Hague:** Champion Mayors of Inclusive Growth Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb of Rotterdam and Mayor Jozias van Aartsen of The Hague will host an OECD Conference in 2017 in the Metropole Region Rotterdam-The Hague. The recent COP21 in Paris on climate change action is proof of the involvement of cities and regions’ leaders from the five continents. The Paris City Hall Declaration stated: “We declare solemnly that climate change is our common challenge and that advancing climate solutions is a shared responsibility, and a matter of rights, equality and social justice. An effective, global response to climate change presents one of the greatest economic opportunities of the 21st century, will protect public health, and strengthen sustainable development mindful of human rights and women’s employment”. The Mayors will build further on such actions.
- **COP21 (Paris) and COP22 (Marrakesh):** The GPM fully supports the COP21 Paris Pledge for Action and will report in the coming year to international organizations like the United Nations what progress has already been achieved in cities in the process of fulfilling the COP21 goals. In order to let the voices of cities be heard, a preliminary report stating this intention will be sent in November 2016 on the occasion of the COP22 Conference in Marrakesh, and in December 2016 on the occasion of the Paris Agreement’s first anniversary.
- **The Launch of the Global Parliament of Mayors** in The Hague will allow cities and their pragmatic, problem-solving mayors to cooperate on critical issues such as climate change, refugees, pandemic disease, inequality and urban security, problems that other institutions have not always been able to address. These founding cities will serve as the foundation for what will expand to be an even broader and more encompassing association. The GPM will share best practices, offer a common global voice for cities, and act as a permanent action oriented platform. It will also function as a permanent advisory platform for international organizations like the United Nations, the OECD, and the World Bank.

- **The GPM will build on the vital work already done by existing urban networks.** Until now the collaboration between urban leaders has largely been focused on specific and ‘sudden’ crises. The GPM is an opportunity for city leaders to gather around all important issues and to act together in a structured process involving cities around the world. The GPM will, wherever possible, cooperate with nation-states and international networks and organizations, especially the United Nations. The GPM — representing cities from every part of the world, North and South, prosperous and developing, large and small — will continue to meet annually in a global city. The Hague, the ‘City of Peace and Justice’, will establish a new International Secretariat.

Honouring Dr. Benjamin Barber

The GPM will honour Dr. Barber who is the Founding Father of the GPM and who had the foresight to bring cities and metropolitan regions together to the benefit of the world.

The GPM Pledge

We, local government and municipal leaders from across the world, commit ourselves to work together. We will engage in partnerships among ourselves and with global organizations, national governments, the private sector, and civil society to advance the UN, OECD and COP21 and other global agendas, to enhance cooperation and capacity-building programs, scale-up climate change solutions, develop metrics and promote innovative finance mechanisms and investments in low-emission projects across the world. The GPM cannot pretend to represent everyone, but will manifest the ultimate right of urban majorities across the globe to take action together, across borders, in domains where the global agenda has been stalled or thwarted. In this, it will serve a sustainable and just planet and all those who live on it.

We — the undersigned Mayors and local government leaders — do then recognize and value the political and economic power of cities. We share the view that cities play a central role in shaping national and international policies, and are witnesses to the impact these have on our citizens. Cities are the world’s best chance to achieve a more equitable, sustainable future for all. In witness whereof the attending parties of the Global Parliament of Mayors have signed the present Declaration in the city of The Hague, on the eleventh day of September, two thousand sixteen.