

# ANNUAL REPORT

Global Parliament of Mayors 2016



Dear Fellow Mayors  
around the globe,

It is my great pleasure to present you with the first Annual Report of the Global Parliament of Mayors. And what an exciting year it has been for the GPM. During my visit to Fordham University in New York City in February 2016, Dr. Barber, Prof. Sheila Foster, Prof. Nester Davidson and I proudly announced the Inaugural Convening of the Global Parliament of Mayors to be hosted in the city of The Hague. That moment marked the start of our joint preparations for the Inaugural Convening in September, which was the highlight of the year. Over sixty mayors attended this event and dozens of experts joined in. Afterwards, we set up a Steering Committee, a Consultative Committee under the guidance of Dr. Benjamin Barber, and a Secretariat based in The Hague. We are delighted to announce that in the last few weeks, the Secretariat has created a new website and, in cooperation with Socioneers, a virtual platform to facilitate year-round communication within the Parliament of Mayors.

As you know, the founding of the Global Parliament of Mayors could not come at a better time. We live in a troubled world where migration, urban security, climate change and poverty are pressing issues, especially for cities. We, the Global Parliament of Mayors, have stated principles and goals for various themes, and commit to putting them in practice. Later this year, in the fall, the members of the Global Parliament of Mayors will gather again for the Annual Convention.

As you may know, I will be leaving my post as of 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2017 due to my retirement. However, The Hague, the international city of Peace and Justice, will continue to actively support the GPM and its Secretariat. I wish you all great success for 2017, and another memorable year for the GPM and all its members and stakeholders.

My most sincere regards to you all,

Mayor Jozias van Aartsen  
City of The Hague  
Chair of GPM Steering Committee

## Inaugural Convening on September 9-11, 2016

During the conference, mayors agreed on 'The Hague Global Mayors Call to Action', stating that the GPM will facilitate cities and their pragmatic, problem-solving mayors to cooperate on critical issues such as climate change, refugees, pandemic disease, inequality and urban security. Mayors talked extensively about the themes and actions to be taken on migration and refugees, and climate change.

### Migration and refugees

Mayors exchanged best practices and underlined the importance of close cooperation between cities of departure and cities of arrival. The GPM framework offers ample opportunities to do so. Many best practices were exchanged, such as:

- Starting with the integration process at the moment of arrival, re-balancing the current focus on the legal process;
- Forecast migration flows: use a common approach to gather data and map our cities as nodes in a global network, in order to understand our migrant communities and the linkages they have with communities and cities elsewhere in the world;
- Foster platforms that connect host and refugee communities: foster cultural activities that promote intercultural understanding.

The main take away from the conference was that 'migration' is a topic that needs further deliberation and actions as it is considered a current and pressing theme all around the world. Furthermore, it seems there is a void in tackling these problems that are at the core of the challenges for many mayors in the world. The strength of mayors is that they can act on a local scale when it comes to global issues.

**For further information, see:**

[Position Paper Cities of Arrival](#) and [Summary Principles and Actions Cities of Arrival](#)

### Climate change

The mayors stressed the importance of being present on global events such as Habitat III. The GPM should be represented at these occasions, in order to put forward



practical and effective policies. In this respect, a broad range of activities and ideas were discussed, such as:

- Cities can agree on ambitious goals for their city pertaining to clean energy/CO2 reduction and take steps to incorporate the levers needed to meet these goals;
- Cities can incorporate incentives to support and facilitate citizen involvement (e.g. regulations, tax incentives, etc.). Seek opportunities to creatively finance resilience initiatives.
- Develop a joint perspective on contract terms with services providers like Uber.

**For further information, see:**

[Position Paper City & Nature](#) and [Summary Principles and Actions City & Nature](#)

### Governance

Besides migration and climate change, mayors discussed the issue of city and democracy: most cities have large networks and are well connected within and outside their borders. In addition, they are multicultural. Therefore, mayors of the GPM decided to share best practices, offer a united global voice and act as a permanent action-oriented platform. In addition, cities also connect citizens with each other and the city itself. Finally, the voices of cities should be heard while taking advantage of local expertise with city labs for experiments and global solutions.

**For further information, see:**

[Position Paper Governance](#) and [Summary Principles and Actions Governance](#)

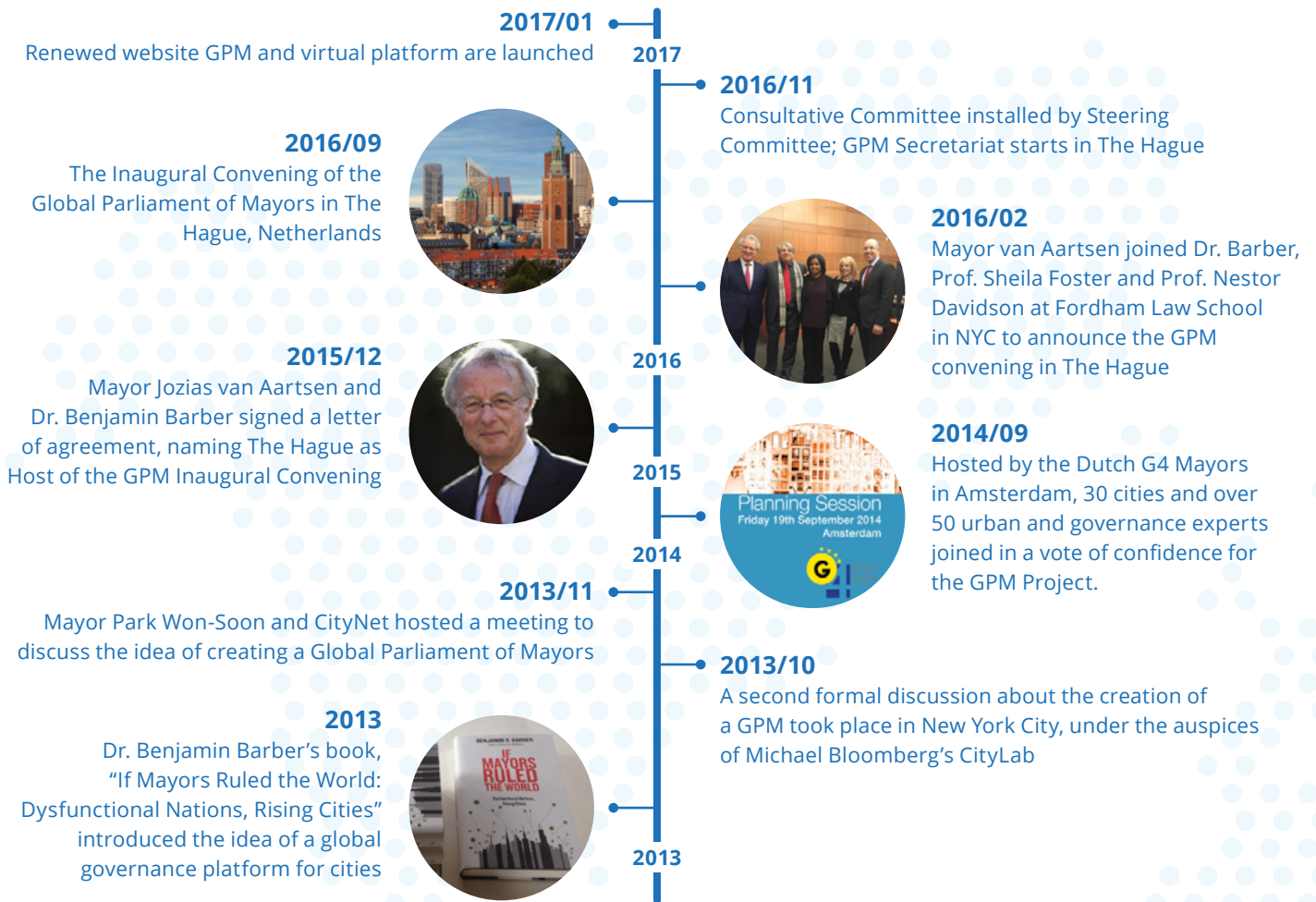


### Mayor Patricia de Lille, Cape Town, member of the Steering Committee

*"It is with great pride and satisfaction that I reflect on the Global Parliament of Mayors (GPM) and how it has grown in stature over the last year. It is even more encouraging to know that the GPM has the potential to grow even more in the coming years and fulfill a progressive role in the global governance system. I joined the GPM as I am a firm believer in the view that cities are the catalyst for change. Cities will be, and in some instances already are, the next frontiers; they are centers of innovation that are inspiring the next phase of exponential growth to the betterment of all concerned. In the near future, we as the GPM must continue to pursue our agenda as a global city rights movement focused on intervening in global strategy debates and underlining the need for practical, action-oriented solutions. Finally, the City of Cape Town is indeed proud to be associated with the GPM and is ready to take its ideals forward'.*



## History



## International Conferences, Fall 2016

After September 2016, there were several other international conferences on GPM-related topics, including the UCLG Congress (Bogota), the United Nations' Habitat III (Quito), OECD (Paris), and C40 (Mexico). At some of these conferences, GPM members were present, including: Mayor Kurz of Mannheim, Mayor de Lille of Cape Town, Mayor Cornett of Oklahoma City and Mayor Biltaji of Amman.

### Habitat III

In October 2016, the Habitat III conference took place in Quito. Mayor Kurz and Mayor Cornett spoke at the World Mayors Assembly, at the start of the conference. They stressed the importance of cities taking an active role in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Mayor Kurz spoke at the Special Session on "Urban Infrastructure and Basic Services, including Energy". Mayor Kurz referred to the inaugural session of the Global Parliament of Mayors and the role mayors need



to play in livable cities, now and in the future. His statement focused on the role of the GPM: to contribute to this development by exchanging experiences and strengthening the voice of the cities. Representatives of the cities of Mannheim and The Hague spoke with other cities and UCLG about the GPM. The meeting with UCLG will be followed-up in 2017. Important lessons learned were to differentiate from the work of UCLG by focusing on the role of the mayors in the network and representing the common vision of the GPM during meetings.

## Organization

As the GPM is action oriented, by and for mayors, and a platform for exchange and connecting, this body will steer clear of being a bureaucratic, top-down institution. The GPM will be a lean and hands on organization.

### GPM Council

The GPM Council consists of mayors of cities and agglomerated metropolitan regions. In December 2016, the GPM Council counted 47 GPM-members from all continents. From now on, the Council meets face-to-

face at the annual GPM world convention. In 2017 that will be in the fall. The Council also meets via a GPM-developed virtual platform, available from January 2017, which allows member cities to make decisions, network, and exchange practical solutions.



**Jozias van Aartsen**  
The Hague (Chairman)



**Peter Kurz**  
Mannheim



**Patricia de Lille**  
Cape Town



**Akel Biltaji**  
Amman



**Sanjeev Nayyar**  
North-Delhi



**Mick Cornett**  
Oklahoma City



**Diego Valenzuela**  
Tres de Febrero/Buenos Aires



**Marvin Rees**  
Bristol

### Steering Committee

The Steering Committee consists of eight members of the GPM Council and is responsible for all issues pertaining to the governance, structure and organization of the GPM. The Committee meets via online conferencing and if necessary, face-to-face. The Steering Committee has had two video conference meetings, one in September and one in November 2016. As of September, it is chaired by Mayor Jozias Van Aartsen of the City of The Hague and its six other chosen members are: Peter Kurz (Mannheim, Germany), Sanjeev Nayyar (North-Delhi, India), Akel Biltaji (Amman, Jordan), Patricia de Lille (Cape Town, South Africa), Mick Cornett (Oklahoma City, USA) and

Diego Valenzuela (Tres Febrero/Buenos Aires, Argentina). In January 2017, Mayor Marvin Rees from Bristol, UK, joined the Steering Committee.

### Consultative Committee

The Consultative Committee is a team of knowledgeable individuals and organizations who work together to advise the Steering Committee on relevant issues. It falls under the guidance of the Consultative Committee Chair, Dr. Benjamin Barber, and has been under development since November 2016. In January 2017, Dr. Barber will invite 17 prospective members from the non-profit, private and academic sectors to join the committee.

### Dr. Benjamin Barber, Global Parliament of Mayors Project

*"In this difficult year marked by fear and reactionary nationalism, where so many feel pessimistic, the new role of cities in promoting just policies in immigration and sustainability should foster hope. The founding of the Global Parliament of Mayors in September was a crucial moment in this rise of cities as beacons of hope in dark times. I know that in the new year the leadership of The Hague, Cape Town, Mannheim, Amman, Oklahoma City along with new members of The Steering Committee like Bristol, will make the GPM a powerful voice for justice and peace and an agent of sustainable change."*



## Action Plan GPM

Over the last few weeks, the Secretariat has worked on further developing the organization and governance of the GPM. Four workflows have been defined: 1) the mission and the related strategy; 2) the governance and funding; 3) agenda-setting and communication strategy; 4) thematic communities. Actions completed in 2016 include the following:

- The Mission Statement has been determined
- Governance principles and new membership procedures have been established
- A new website and a virtual platform have been developed.

## Website and virtual platform

With the support of former website manager and current Director of Haring Woods Studio Eileen Haring Woods, we have renewed the GPM website. Check out the latest news items, calendar, and other GPM issues on:

[www.globalparliamentofmayors.org](http://www.globalparliamentofmayors.org).

Any media coverage, news items and events related to the GPM can be added to the website by emailing to [gpm@denhaag.nl](mailto:gpm@denhaag.nl).

In addition, Socioneers has developed a new virtual platform for GPM members where you can share discussions, questions, knowledge, and documents, regarding the GPM themes of Migration, Climate Change, and Governance. Check it out on [www.mayors-app.com](http://www.mayors-app.com).

### Lic. Diego Valenzuela Mayor Tres Febrero, Argentina

*'Last December we completed our first year of government in the Municipality of Tres de Febrero. Among the many management achievements we had was that we implemented a management that was stopped by the inaction of a local government that did not take responsibility for its neighbors.*

*Why did we mention it? Because it is the spirit of GPM. The leadership that must be shown by mayors in the face of the city's challenge, which now belong to the world stage where mayors and local governments cannot be excluded, and working together with other mayors, provincial or state governments, and nations.*

*It is an honor to belong to the Steering Committee of this network representing Latin America. Working in networks is something that enhances our ability to govern. As the Declaration cites, more than 50% of the world's population live in cities, and we produce over 80% of GDP, making us key players in the implementation of public policies for the benefit of citizens.*

*This year and for the first time, our Municipality also joined the Mercociudades network that has 300 other Mercosur local governments. We have much to work on, this is just the beginning."*



## GPM Secretariat

Caroline Schep (Project Manager) and Lavinia Warnars (Project Assistant) started working for the GPM Secretariat in November 2016. They have been handling organizational issues and correspondence, and preparing communication tools such as this annual report.

The GPM Secretariat is part of the International Program of the city of The Hague, directed by Dr. Elisabeth Minnemann. The Secretariat serves the GPM and manages relationships with other stakeholders and the media, and is also in close contact with the Steering Committee and Consultative Committee. In addition, it also contributes to the content and knowledge of the GPM and its themes.

## GPM in the media

In 2016, the GPM and related topics have been highlighted in the international media on numerous occasions, both online and in print. Here is an overview:

- Benjamin Barber: “A Governance Alternative to Faltering Nation-States” CityLab, December 5, 2016
- City limits: introducing the Global Parliament of Mayors Geographic Magazine, November 5, 2016
- Debating the role of cities at the Global Parliament of Mayors — and leaving most details for later’. Citiscope, September 15, 2016
- The West’s major cities are a bulwark against the tide of right-wing nationalism. Washington Post, November 22, 2016
- Mayor Ada Colau (Barcelona): “After Habitat III: a stronger urban future must be based on the right to the city” The Guardian, October 20, 2016.

For more newstems published in 2016: see [www.globalparliamentofmayors.org](http://www.globalparliamentofmayors.org).



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