



Global
Parliament
of Mayors

SUMMARY OF GPM ACTIVITIES 2020

21 OCTOBER 2020

In February 2020 the Executive Committee established the Action Plan 2020 with a series of concrete deliverables towards the GPM Annual Summit 2020. The corona crisis was not foreseen during the realisation of the Action Plan 2020 and impacted the envisioned actions. The postponement of the GPM Summit 2020 to April 2021 was the most important revision to the Action Plan 2020. The pandemic led to new action developments such as the GPM campaign MayorsActNow and the strengthening of the partnerships with UN-Habitat and OHCHR by co-hosting webinars on Safer Cities and the Right to Adequate Housing, respectively in May and June. Here you will find a summary of the most important activities that the GPM has undertaken from the Summit 2019 up to October 2020.

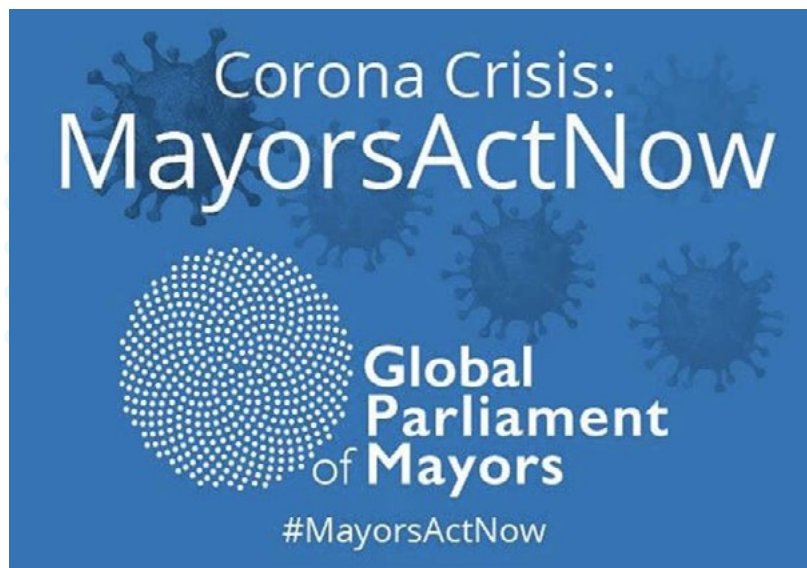


2020 WORLD URBAN FORUM

8-13 FEBRUARY

For the very first time, the Global Parliament of Mayors was officially represented at the World Urban Forum (WUF10) in Abu Dhabi, organised by UN-Habitat. This international conference discussed all aspects of urban policy and brought together 12.000 politicians and city experts from 168 nations. Together with the City of Mannheim, the GPM hosted a networking event on “The solution to accelerate digital democracy”. The event discussed the benefits of the Virtual Parliament, as well as the ways in which the GPM is harnessing new technologies to bring large, medium and smaller cities together in a compelling new form of advocacy. It also showed that digitally empowered and emboldened cities can stimulate action in multilateral fora. By showcasing the Virtual Parliament, the networking event solicited inputs and recommendations, and identifying concrete opportunities to scale-up the Virtual Parliament in participating city networks and cities.

The event brought together GPM Mayors Kurz (Mannheim, Germany), Lowe (Banjul, Gambia), Krupa (Katowice, Poland) and affiliated Mayors Sierau (Dortmund, Germany), de Araujo (Quelimane, Mozambique), Deputy Governor Ismail Ahmed (Duhok, Iraq). The event was moderated by Director Global Cities Juliana Kerr, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.



MAYORSACTNOW CAMPAIGN

19 MARCH-1 SEPTEMBER

At the start of this year the world faced a pandemic sparked by the Sars-CoV-2 virus, also known as Covid-19. The MayorsActNow was launched during the beginning peak phase of the virus with the [first open letter](#) by GPM Chair Mayor Kurz. Mayor Kurz urged for evidence-based sustainable leadership, and not to focus on populist shouting. The MayorsActNow Campaign underscored the unique position of cities to unite people and overcome the biggest obstacles, and was started on the premise that Mayors can control the pandemic by taking urgent and clear action such as minimizing physical social interaction. Such drastic measures have been essential in protecting the most vulnerable in our society. The campaign acknowledged that the possibilities of mayors varied from country to country and city to city. The GPM has been ready to connect mayors with each other through sharing best practices, highlighting media coverages, promoting urban assessment tools and sharing preventive measurements. A new tool for evaluating local-level public health preparedness was developed by the Center for Global Health Science and Security of Georgetown University called the Rapid Urban Health Security Assessment (RUHSA) designed primarily for local government leaders and policy makers to support decisions as they prioritize and build capacities to improve local-level health security. In addition to the campaign activities mentioned above, the GPM organised interactive discussions and webinars.

Mayors were invited to participate in the campaign through the following options on the Virtual Parliament and the GPM website:

- **Share local Initiatives** on distinctive actions, best practices to cope with this pandemic and be inspired by other city leadership initiatives.
- **Consult a weekly updated overview of publications** on monitoring and tackling the pandemic by city networks, partners and international organisations to stay updated and informed on global activities.
- **Share questions and answers with fellow colleagues** around the world on a Mayor-to-Mayor Forum.
- **Connect with other cities and local administration** through #MayorsActNow.

The campaign has brought about fifty new contacts with mayors and their offices that either shared their local initiative or put forward their solidarity with the MayorsActNow campaign. Please [click here](#), for all city contributions on the Virtual Parliament. More contributions can be viewed on the GPM website [here](#).

SECOND OPEN LETTER FROM THE GPM CHAIR

13 APRIL

A second open letter to Mayors around the world was shared by GPM Chair Mayor Kurz in April 2020 after many cities started opening up after a period of lockdown, drawing some conclusions and urging for solidarity in every possible way. Starting with Mayors in overcoming the pandemic by continuing to act with a great openness about possible solutions, and guided by evidence from scientific research. To reflect on the letter, [click here](#).



WEBINAR “STRENGTHENING THE SAFER CITIES WHILE RESPONDING TO COVID-19”

27-28 MAY

In a two-day webinar the GPM partnered with UN-Habitat in exploring the impact of the pre-Covid process on the implementation of the UN systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements with the current pandemic on urban safety and security challenges.

The webinar was organised by the following topics:

- The emerging lessons from Covid-19 on vulnerability and safety
- Useful tools for systemic and sustainable safer cities approaches
- Inclusion, social cohesion and safer urban environments
- Integrated benchmarking and measurement tools for safer cities
- Next steps towards a workplan Safer Cities Programme and WUF 2022

The webinar was opened by Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat and GPM Chair Mayor Peter Kurz with reflections from UN Woman, UNODC and UNICEF.

GPM Mayors Rio (Braga, Portugal), Benjamin (Columbia, USA), Rees (Bristol, UK), GPM Deputy Mayors Darawsha (Palermo, Italy) and Skiba (Katowice, Poland) and affiliated Mayor de Araujo (Quelimane, Mozambique) participated in the panels. Further, representatives from the cities of eThekweni/Durban (South Africa), Helsinki (Finland), Advisory Committee members Elizabeth Johnston (EFUS), Robert Muggah (Igarape Institute) and professor Eric Corijn (Vrije University Brussels) participated in the panel as well as the organisations UNESCO, OIC, UCLG and NGOs such as Plan International and Red Dot Foundation.

In total some 200 people registered for the webinar

To reflect on the programme, [click here](#). A detailed report on the goals, the thematic sessions and position papers is available on the GPM website, [click here](#).

WEBINAR “THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING: LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVES”

24 JUNE

The GPM partnered with UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal. On the forefront fight against COVID-19, housing has become a central defence tactic and issue for local governments. During the webinar, participants discussed the importance of housing adequacy to ensure protection against COVID-19, and the challenges faced by the local and regional administrations to ensure access to safe, affordable housing, stopping evictions of tenants and homeowners during the crisis. The debate also reflected the safety of children, women, older populations and people with disabilities.

The event mapped out potential strategies to counter the impacts of the pandemic related to housing at a local level. Furthermore, the outcomes of the webinar helped to inform the forthcoming report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, to the UN General Assembly, in which he will make medium and long-term recommendations to states, local and regional governments all to realise SDG 11.

Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing Balakrishnan Rajagopal, OHCHR chief of the Sustainable Human Development Section Natacha Foucard and GPM Chair Mayor Kurz opened the webinar.

The panel brought together GPM Mayors Aki-Sawyer (Freetown, Sierra Leone), Mugasa (Hoima, Uganda), and affiliated Deputy Mayor Luca Montuori (Rome, Italy). The panel was moderated by Professor and Co-Chair of the GPM Advisory Committee Sheila Foster.

Representatives of the following cities participated: Amman, Bristol, Cape Town and Chicago. Further, representatives of the organisations of OHCHR, UN Habitat and Habitat International Coalition participated in the panel.

In total 250 people registered for the Webinar. For further reading please refer to the summary note of the webinar, [click here](#).

STATEMENT AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY

10 JUNE

The GPM wrote a [statement against police brutality](#) in response to the nation-wide demonstrations in the United States by people standing up against acts of race-based violence that stem back from a history of systemic economic inequality, political exclusion and the erosion of hope. The GPM supported the statement by USCM President and GPM Mayor Bryan Barnett of Rochester Hills and was united with US Mayors in their efforts to overcome mistakes made at higher level of government, and to establish the peace, and security that the US Constitution grants all people.

RESOLUTION ON VIOLENCE REDUCTION

1 JUNE-1 OCTOBER

This resolution was led by Mayor Marvin Rees of Bristol (Rapporteur) and supported by Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee Robert Muggah. The GPM partnered with Peace in Our Cities to develop the resolution to halve violence by 2030 which was put forward to all GPM members with the possibility to offer amendments or comments. On 15 June the resolution was adopted by the GPM by a majority of votes. After the GPM invited Mayors from around the world to sign off for the resolution and used its Virtual Parliament tool to make the voting process accessible. City networks and international organisations have also been invited. City leaders from Budapest, Madrid, Los Angeles, to Santiago, Sao Paolo, Haifa, Brisbane, Taipei and Tepebasi committed to this objective. The resolution is supported by AFUS, EFUS, MMC, Peace in Our Cities, UNICEF, UN Habitat and Strong Cities Network representing over 1,500 cities and urban areas. About 60 cities have individually signed the resolution, [click here](#) to view the full list of cities.

OPEN LETTER UN75 TO UN SECRETARY-GENERAL GUTERRES

21 SEPTEMBER

Mayor Steve Benjamin of Columbia (Rapporteur) together with Advisory Committee member Professor Eric Corijn has initiated the open letter to call on UN Secretary-General Guterres to launch and lead the global dialogue with cities and leaders about

the United Nations that the world needs 75 years after its founding. In it, the GPM urges the UN to recognize the important role of cities for a multilateral and rule-based international political system and launch a global dialogue with cities with the aim of an institutional reform which will lead to a formalised participation of cities in international decision-making process. Due to the advocacy work of GPM Mayors by sharing the GPM Open Letter with their UN Ambassadors, the GPM was able to reach out not only to the UN institutions but also to the Heads of State and Government.

At the special high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on 21 September with the slogan "The future we want, the UN we need" to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the UN Secretary-General Guterres referred to the need for a network multilateralism in which nations states are not the only actors. GPM Chair Mayor Kurz said, "Secretary-General Guterres emphasised in his speech the role of cities as important partners for the future of multilateralism and an inclusive UN. In doing so, he took up a central demand of the GPM. Even if today's address by the UN Secretary-General does not yet mean that cities are being formally included in the UN decision-making system, it is clear that the United Nations has recognised the need for far-reaching change which includes the participation of cities. The GPM will use this window of opportunity to further underline its expectation of genuine multilevel governance." [Click here](#) for the UN report "The future we want, the UN we need" with the efforts of the GPM on page 132.

CALENDAR NOVEMBER

12 AND 19 NOVEMBER

(15.00 - 17.30 HRS CEST)

High level webinar meeting for Mayors and leaders of city networks and international organisations on post-corona urban policies with thematic sessions focused on public health, housing and urban security, education and culture and governance and democracy.

NOVEMBER

On line consultation of GPM Mayors on the Leipzig Charter

MID-JANUARY

Follow-up of the high-level meeting on post-corona urban policies in November 2020

17-19 APRIL

GPM Annual Summit in Palermo, Sicily, Italy



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