



Global
Parliament
of Mayors

SUMMARY OF GPM ACTIVITIES 2021

21 OCTOBER 2021

Rethinking the City: How Mayors Respond to the Needs of a Post-COVID City

12-19 November, 2020

The GPM is proud to present this summary of its key activities since the Annual General Meeting in October 2020. Despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, the GPM had a successful year, actively advocating for the interests of mayors, organizing meaningful debates, and spearheading a major project on climate-related migration ahead of COP26. In this summary, you will find details about these activities and other highlights from the past year. Thank you for your support of the GPM and these activities. We look forward to another productive year ahead!

Together with UN-Habitat, the GPM organized a two-day webinar with the title, “Rethinking the City – How Mayors Respond to the Needs of a Post-COVID City”. The webinar brought together 24 mayors, as well as experts and city network representatives from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, ICLEI, Peace in Our Cities, the OECD, UN-Habitat, UNICEF and ICOMOS.

The debates addressed several key issues, including public health, urban sustainability, culture and education, as well as governance and democracy. In panels and open debates, mayors discussed how they have reframed their perspectives in light of the shifts caused by COVID-19. They also presented their visions for an improved post-COVID city. Read the [full webinar report here](#).



Joint Statement of Global Taskforce Presented at the United Nations General Assembly 11 December, 2020

As a member of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, the GPM supported a joint statement presented at a special session of the United Nations General Assembly on December 3-4, 2020.

In the statement, local and regional governments urged the United Nations to work with local leaders toward achieving the following goals:

1. Strengthening universal access to public services as key to the recovery
2. Strengthening local democracy and renewing the values of citizenship and new rights
3. Ecological transformation and renewed relationship with nature
4. Global solutions driven locally in a strong and more inclusive, multilateral governance system.

Please [click here](#) for the full statement delivered at the UN.

Statement on Violence at US Capitol Washington DC 8 January, 2021

After the violence at the United States Capitol in January, the GPM issued a public statement condemning the lawlessness and advocating for the peaceful transition of power. The GPM voiced support for its partner, the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), as well as the statement of USCM President Greg Fischer, Mayor of Louisville. [The full statement can be found here.](#)

Joint Statement on International Women's Day 8 March, 2021

On International Women's Day, 2021, the GPM signed a Joint Statement initiated by Peace in Our Cities in support of women's leadership and gender-responsive urban policy solutions to build peaceful and inclusive communities. Too few of our local leaders and mayors are women. Although women account for more than 50% of the global population, they make up under 5% of mayors. The statement committed to calling attention to important issues like the burdens placed on women throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Signatories also acknowledged the importance of collecting data on gender equity in local government in order to ensure that issues of representation can be addressed. These efforts directly contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDGs 5 (Gender Equality) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). [More details are available here.](#)

PEACE
IN OUR CITIES



Project Uniting Mayors: Local Solutions to Global Climate Challenges February - November 2021

At the start of 2021, the GPM together with the British Council developed a project on climate-related migration as part of the official programming ahead of COP26. Mayor Ricardo Rio (Braga, Portugal) and Mayor Rohey Malick Lowe (Banjul, the Gambia) were spearheaded the project as GPM Champion Climate Mayors,

bringing city leaders together from around the world to discuss this important issue.

The Uniting Mayors project includes several central activities, including a series of larger events, focus group sessions with small groups of mayors, an original research paper by professors Kamal Amakrane (Columbia University) and Sheila Foster (Georgetown University), and supported by Raghuvveer Ramkumar (ARUP Group), and a call to action, which mayors are signing ahead of COP26.



Uniting Mayors - Kick Off Meeting

25 February, 2021

At the project kick-off event on February 25, 2021, GPM Champion Climate Mayors Rohey Malick Lowe (Banjul, the Gambia) and Mayor Ricardo Rio (Braga, Portugal) shared their first-hand perspectives about the importance of addressing climate change and climate-related migration with the mayors of Afanloum (Cameroon), Bern (Switzerland), Duran (South Africa), Freetown (Sierra Leone), Hoima and Nebbi (Uganda), Glasgow (UK), Jerusalem (Israel), Heidelberg and Mannheim (Germany), Palermo (Italy), Quelimane (Mozambique) and Rochester Hills (USA) to learn from one another and discuss how mayors can work together in the future.

More information about the kick-off event is available here:

<https://globalparliamentofmayors.org/kickoffeventmayorspresent/>

Uniting Mayors - Focus Group Discussions

March-April 2021

The GPM organized four focus group sessions to facilitate in-depth discussions between the research team and small groups representing the cities of Antsirabe (Madagascar), Afanloum (Cameroon), Bristol (UK), Cape Town (South Africa), Denpasar (Indonesia), Durban (South Africa), Ghent (Belgium), Mansakonko Council (the Gambia), Nebbi (Uganda), Quelimane (Mozambique) and Trenggalek (Indonesia), to discuss the realities of climate change, the threat of rising sea levels, and the impact these factors have on migration. These intimate exchanges allowed mayors to go into much greater depth as they explained the situations on the ground in their cities, and explored ways in which cities could work together to address them. These discussions have been integrated into the [research report on Local Responses to Climate-Forced Displacement & Migration: Uniting Mayors and City Leaders as Global Champions](#).

Uniting Mayors - High Level Meeting

20 April, 2021

In April, the GPM organized a high-level meeting, which brought together more than 20 mayors and city leaders from 19 countries. Antonio Vitorino, director general of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) opened the event with a keynote address, followed by a plenary debate moderated by Ian Klaus of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Mayors then had the opportunity to join one of three thematic discussions on culture and heritage, innovative policies on financing tools, and governance. Mayors were joined by representatives of city networks and international organizations, including UN-Habitat, OECD, MMC, and ICLEI. [A full readout of the High Level Meeting can be found in this report.](#)



Uniting Mayors - Call to Action “Climate Change, Cities and Forced Migration: Advancing Knowledge”

July – October 2021

Based on the mayors’ global dialogue, including large events, focus groups, and original research of the Uniting Mayors Project, the GPM developed a multi-level Call to Action, “Climate Change, Cities and Forced Migration: Advancing Knowledge, Action and Collaboration”. The goal of this Call to Action is to unite mayors on this urgent issue, make their voices heard in the lead up to COP26, and outline the steps that local governments, national governments, and international institutions can take to affect change. Mayors from around the world, along with representatives of city networks, NGOs and international organizations have signed the Call to Action and committed to pushing for change locally and globally.

[All signatories and supportive partners can be found here.](#)

The GPM endorses Joint Statement at Core Cities UK G7 U7 Summit

9 June, 2021

On the sidelines of the G7 in June 2021, city leaders and mayors from around the world gathered for the first U7 conference. GPM chair, Mayor Peter Kurz, represented the GPM at the event. Urban networks from France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the USA as well as the G7 guest countries of Australia and South Korea were joined by a number of international city networks

including ICLEI, EUROCITIES, OECD, United Cities and Local Government, and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. In a signed declaration, they called on world leaders to set out a clear vision for the role cities can play in recovery efforts and asked them to draw on the expertise of local leaders and mayors. Signatories also asked national leaders to provide appropriate resources and freedoms for cities and support city-to-city dialogue, including with places that have low vaccination rates.

The declaration concludes: “As globally-facing cities we all share common values of openness, tolerance and the need to address health inequality and sustainability. By continuing our shared dialogue, we can learn from each other and find new ways to turn these values into action”.



UN High Level Political Forum Side Event on Climate Change and Human Mobility 6 July, 2021

Mayors from around the world came together with representatives of national governments and UN officials at “Climate Change and Human Mobility,” an official side event of the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (UN HLPF 2021). They discussed the pressing development challenges related to climate change and related migration in cities, as well as interrelated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 13 (Climate Action).

Mayors convened at the HLPF to meet with national and UN leaders to identify how different levels of government can better work together to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs at a global scale. The event was a joint initiative of several organizations working together to address climate-related migration, including the GPM, the British Council, under the Climate Connection programme, the C40 Cities-Mayors Migration Council Global Mayors Task Force on Climate and Migration (C40-MMC Task Force), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

[Please see the full GPM report on the UN HLPF side event here.](#)



UN High Level Political Forum Side Event on Culture July 7, 2021

The GPM joined the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and others for “Partnering through Culture, Heritage and Art for Resilient and Inclusive Recovery”, an official side event of the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (UN HLPF 2021). The event addressed the importance of culture as the fourth dimension of sustainable development. GPM Chair, Mayor Peter Kurz (Mannheim, Germany), spoke about the key role that culture has played in the Uniting Mayors project.

GPM endorses Statement Mayors Migration Council: “Welcome Afghan Refugees Now” 26 August, 2021

As the US and other foreign forces withdrew from Afghanistan, thousands of Afghans attempted to flee the country to protect their rights and freedoms. This prompted mayors worldwide to welcome Afghans seeking refuge in their cities. In August alone, 300,000 Afghans have fled their homes in search of safety, joining six million Afghans who have been displaced by decades of conflict.

The GPM, along with more than 50 mayors and local government executives and international organizations representing over 240,000 cities around the world, has endorsed a statement of solidarity launched by the Mayors Migration Council (MMC) on Thursday 26 August. GPM Mayor Naseer Ahmad Lilizai, the former mayor of Puli-Alam (Afghanistan), led the efforts and met with the GPM Executive Committee to brief them on the situation on the ground and explore how mayors can help refugees and those in danger who have not been able to leave Afghanistan.



Appointments

May, 2021

In May, Ivo Daalder took on the role of Chair of the Advisory Committee of the GPM. He succeeds Professor Sheila Foster (Georgetown University, Washington DC, USA) and Dr. Robert Muggah (Igarapé Institute, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), who led the committee from 2017-2020. Ambassador Daalder is president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and has been an active member of the GPM Advisory Committee since 2017.



June, 2021

In June, Grace-Mary Mugasa, former mayor of Hoima, Uganda was appointed Minister of State for Public Service in Uganda.



Former Mayor Mugasa was one of the founders of the Global Parliament of Mayors in 2016 and 2nd Vice-Chair of the GPM Executive Committee until her appointment as Minister of State.

In Memorium

This year, the GPM mourned the loss of two respected and admired member mayors. With both mayors, we lose capable and ambitious cities leaders who contributed greatly to their own communities and the GPM community.

In December 2020, Mayor Daviz Simango (Beira, Mozambique) passed away.

In 2018, Mayor Simango was the winner of the Dr. Benjamin Barber Global Cities Award of the GPM.



In February 2021, Mayor Itambi Tagyen Andrew (Njikwa, Cameroon) passed away. Mayor Andrew was an active supporter of the GPM since its start in 2016 and joined GPM Summits in Stavanger (2017) and Durban (2019).

Calendar

- 10 November 2021 - Roundtable on Violence Reduction with Peace in Our Cities
- November 2021 - Launch of the GPM Call to Action on Climate Change, Cities and Forced Migration during COP26
- May / June 2022 - G7 U7 Event in Germany
- 26-30 June - World Urban Forum, Katowice, Poland

The GPM Annual Summit 2022 will be part of the WUF programme in Katowice.

Members of the Global Parliament of Mayors 2021

Mayors of Afanloum (Cameroon), Amman (Jordan), Amsterdam (The Netherlands), Banjul (The Gambia), Beira (Mozambique), Bern (Switzerland), Braga (Portugal), Bristol (UK), Brussels (Belgium), Cape Town (South Africa), Columbia/SA (USA), Dakar (Senegal), Dayton/OH (USA), Freetown (Sierra Leone), Ghent (Belgium), Gjilan (Kosovo), The Hague (The Netherlands), Hebron (Palestine), Hoima (Uganda), Itahari (Nepal), Janjanbureh (The Gambia), Katowice (Poland), Le Port (Reunion Island), Leicester (UK), Mafra (Portugal), Mannheim (Germany), Monrovia (Liberia), Nebbi (Uganda), Nijmegen (The Netherlands), Palermo (Italy), Puli Alam (Afghanistan), Rabat (Morocco), Rochester Hills/MI (USA), Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Mansakonko Council (The Gambia), Utrecht (The Netherlands), Vyas (Nepal) and Wroclaw (Poland).

Honorary Members of the Global Parliament of Mayors

Former Mayors Van Aartsen, Den Haag/Amsterdam (The Netherlands), De Lille, Cape Town (South-Africa), Johnson, Asbury Park/NJ (USA), and Termont, Ghent (Belgium).

Supportive Mayors 2021

Africa: Mayors of Bamenda II and III, Esse, Tiko (Cameroon), Bopolu, Gbarnga, Voinjama, Kakata (Liberia), Antsirabe (Madagascar), Quelimane (Mozambique), Eunugu, Ohaji, Isu, Obowo, Orsu, Owerri North (Nigeria), Mogadishu (Somalia), Basse (The Gambia), Keur Maba Diakhou (Senegal), Buffalo City, Port Shepstone (South Africa), Carthage (Tunisia), Entebbe, Kabale, Masaka, Mityana, Nansana (Uganda) and Bulawayo (Zimbabwe).

Asia: Mayors of Tirana (Albania), Denpasar, Trenggalek (Indonesia), Kolkata (India), Jerusalem, Haifa (Israel), El Qrayeh (Lebanon), Izmir, Konak (Turkey), Dura (Palestine) and Kalmunai (Sri Lanka).

Australia/New Zealand: Mayors of Adelaide, Hobart and Wollongong (Australia) and Christchurch (New Zealand).

Europe: Mayors of Burgas (Bulgaria), Tallinn (Estonia), Dresden, Heidelberg, Munich (Germany), Nicosia (Greece), Montpellier, Paris (France), Gdansk (Poland), Viana do Castelo (Portugal), Cluj-Napoca (Romania), Glasgow (Scotland), Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Breda (The Netherlands), Manchester, Oxford, Sheffield (UK) and Kyiv (Ukraine).

North/South America: Mayors of Santa Fe de la Vera Cruz (Argentina), Cuenca (Ecuador), Palmira (Colombia), Pittsburgh/PA, and Wilksburg/PA (USA).



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