



Empowering, Engaging, and Caring Cities: Delivering Democracy and Development with the Next Generations

GPM Summit 2023, Skopje, North Macedonia
17th - 19th November 2023



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Skopje, cultural and economic center of North Macedonia

The City of Skopje as the country's capital, and the largest city nationwide, is an administrative, commercial, cultural, educational and scientific center. The city in the course of its existence, depending on the historical circumstances, was named by different names, and its ancient name is Skupi.

Skopje's development was hindered and altered by a devastating earthquake that hit the city on 26 July, 1963. It caused enormous damage in the city and killed 1,070 people, injuring 3,300 others. Many educational facilities, factories and historical buildings were destroyed.

Reconstruction was finished by 1980, and Skopje's cityscape was drastically changed. The city became a true example of modernist architecture.

Today, Skopje is a vibrant city with a very diverse cultural scene, hence one could see a large collage of different architectural styles. The mix of the ancient, old and modern, new.

Skopje is an ethnically diverse city, and its urban sociology primarily depends on ethnic and religious belonging. Over the years, and influenced by many different and shifting regimes and cultures, the town has turned into a multi-faceted and vibrant city, where a mixture of ethnic and socio-economic groups gives the city a specific character. The city is the sum expression of civil society, the character of the people and institutions that define the experience of working, multi ethnic living and being in the city.



GPM Annual Summit 2023 in Skopje, North Macedonia

Empowering, Engaging, and Caring Cities: Delivering Democracy and Development with the Next Generations

Around 100 participants, including mayors & deputy mayors, as well as leaders of city networks, and representatives of international organisations came together at the Global Parliament of Mayors (GPM) Annual Summit. The event was hosted by Danela Arsovska of Skopje, North Macedonia, with the title: “Empowering, Engaging, and Caring Cities: Delivering Democracy and Development with the Next Generations”

Mayors gathered in Skopje and participated in dynamic panels on issues such as Democracy, Empowering Cities, Caring Cities, & The Power of Culture, reflecting on the pressing issues

of the world. They discussed how they could work together to address some of these global challenges at the local level and push for change in existing governance structures.

The Summit was opened with keynote addresses by the President of North Macedonia Stevo Pendarovski, as well as Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe Mathieu Mori. Mayor Arsovska also provided opening remarks.



Mayor Ricardo Rio of Braga, Portugal and Chair of the GPM

"In the vibrant exchange of ideas and perspectives at this Annual Summit in the beautiful city of Skopje, we witnessed the power of collaboration among mayors, deputy mayors and networks from diverse cities worldwide. Our discussions on democracy, empowering cities, caring cities, and the transformative power of culture underscored the pivotal role cities play in shaping a sustainable and inclusive global future.

As leaders, we are not just representatives of our communities; we are architects of positive change. Together, we stand united in our commitment to address the complex challenges of our urban landscapes and forge a path towards a better tomorrow. As Chair of Global Parliament of Mayors, I am looking forward to develop more discussions among mayors and city activists."

Mayor Danela Arsovska of Skopje, North Macedonia and host of the GPM 2023 Annual Summit



"We, the members of the GPM, strive towards creating a better life and a better world, believing that cities are the core and power that can engage and unite in providing a fairer, safer and brighter future for our citizens.

By cooperating together in our global network of cities, we learn from each other, we exchange best

practices and implement projects that make our cities even more sustainable and inclusive. This is why the 2023 summit led by the Global Parliament of Mayors founded by and for mayors, will provide concrete conclusions which will create serious impact upon implementation through joint activities based on friendship and cooperation."



Mayor Rohey Malick Lowe Awarded GPM's Prestigious Dr. Benjamin Barber Global Cities Award 2023

17 November 2023

This year, the Global Parliament of Mayors awarded the prestigious Dr. Benjamin Barber Global Cities Award to Mayor Rohey Malick Lowe of Banjul, The Gambia. The award ceremony was part of the opening of the GPM Annual Summit 2023 hosted by Danela Arsovska, Mayor of Skopje, North Macedonia. The Dr. Benjamin Barber Award recognizes mayors for their outstanding contribution to further global urban governance and inspiring city leadership.

Mayor Lowe's dynamic and innovative leadership as the Mayor of Banjul, has not only transformed the lives of her constituents but has also served as an inspiring example to mayors and city leaders

worldwide. Her dedication to urban development, social progress, and sustainable initiatives is truly commendable. Her tireless efforts to improve the quality of life in Banjul and her relentless pursuit of positive change have not gone unnoticed.

In a world facing numerous challenges, Mayor Lowe's leadership stands out as a beacon of hope and progress. Her commitment to addressing issues such as climate change, public health, education, and social inclusivity resonates deeply with the core values of the Global Parliament of Mayors. Her endeavors are setting a remarkable precedent for cities around the globe to follow.

Mayor Lowe stated “I wish to thank our host, my sister, Mayor Danela Arsovska, her team and the GPM secretariat for a well-organized summit. I am going to dedicate this award to the residents of Banjul who trusted my leadership in the first place and agreed to work with me and voted me into office for a second term. I wish to thank you for watching me do my thing – day and night. I love what I do and I will continue to do my utmost best and even do better henceforth since I am aware now that someone is watching.”

The Global Parliament of Mayors created the award to honor outstanding actions or research on urban governance and contributions to advancing the roles and principles set out by the GPM. The award is named in memory of the founder of the GPM, Dr. Benjamin Barber, author of the book ‘If Mayors Ruled the World’ (2014), who continues to inspire Mayors from around the world.

The GPM Annual Summit gathers mayors from all over the world, strengthening the voice of cities and elevating city leadership. Mayors, city network leaders, and representatives of international organizations gathered in Skopje to convene on the topics of Democracy, Empowering Cities, Caring Cities, & The Power of Culture, reflecting on the pressing issues of the world.



The Summit in Socials

Global Parliament of Mayors @gpmayors · Nov 17, 2023 **Promote** ...
This year, the Global Parliament of Mayors awarded the prestigious Dr. Benjamin Barber Global Cities Award to Mayor @LoweMayor of Banjul, The Gambia. Read more: globalparliamentofmayors.org/mayor-rohey-ma...
#GPMSummit2023 #UnitingMayors



Stevo Pendarovski @SPendarovski ...
Годишниот Самит на Глобалниот парламент на градоначалници е можност градоначалниците преку размена на меѓународни искуства да ја засилат улогата на локалната самоуправа и да обезбедат подобар, подемократски, поодржлив и поинклузивен свет за нашите граѓани. @gpmayors @CityofSkopje #unitingmayors



Global Parliament of Mayors @gpmayors · Nov 21, 2023 **Promote** ...
The GPM Annual Summit 2023 in Skopje, North Macedonia has just concluded! 🌍 Mayors from across the globe came together to tackle pressing issues, foster collaboration and chart a course for positive change. 🗳️ #GPM2023 #SkopjeSummit #GlobalLeadership
globalparliamentofmayors.org/press-release-...



Global Parliament of Mayors @gpmayors · Nov 29, 2023 **Promote** ...
Congratulations to @LoweMayor for earning the Dr. Benjamin Barber Global Cities Award at the 2023 GPM Summit in @CityofSkopje! Her commitment to tackling global issues resonates with the core values of our organization, inspiring positive change worldwide 🌍

Mayor of Banjul Rohey Malick Lowe @LoweMayor · Nov 17, 2023 ...
Another Win for the City Of Banjul

I am deeply privileged to announce the receipt of the distinguished Dr. Benjamin Barber Global Cities Award, presented to me by the Global Parliament of Mayors during the GPM Annual Summit 2023 in Skopje, North Macedonia.

#MayorLowe



Delivering Democracy

The summit began with a debate on democracy. This session delved into the global challenge of democracy in urban governance. It highlights the worldwide variation in democracy and underscores the need for urban democracy in addressing pressing urban challenges. The speakers explored the democratization of institutions, society, and the urban spirit, emphasizing the importance of effective governance, citizen engagement, and education. The session called for a global agenda, with mayors and cities at the forefront, to address complex urban issues.

On the panel:

Bryan Barnett, Mayor of Rochester Hill, **Olivera Injac**, Mayor of Podgorica, **Eric Corijn**, Professor of Urban studies at Free University Brussels and GPM Director of Policy and Research, **Sabine Gimbrere**, Director of the International Office in Amsterdam, **Paul Costello**, Senior program Manager for the GMF Cities program at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

Moderator:

Jasmina Siderovski, CEO at eYs Global and Chief Editor of eYs Magazine

The Power of Culture & Art

The mayoral summit session delved into the crucial role of culture and art in city development, emphasizing their significance as the fourth pillar of the GPM's focus. The discussion highlighted the impact of urban culture on planning, economy, and social life, emphasizing the need for cultural literacy in urban strategy. The arts were recognized as central to fostering an open-minded and resilient culture, with creativity essential for problem-solving, sustainability, and citizen well-being. The session stressed the importance of integrating arts and culture into urban projects for vibrant, innovative, and inclusive city development.

On the panel:

Stevcho Jakimovski, Mayor of Karpoš, **Jerôme Auslender**, Deputy Mayor of Clermont-Ferrand, **Charles Landry**, Expert in urban development and innovation, **Marko Filipovic**, Mayor of Rijeka

Moderator: Rainer Kern Executive Director, GPM

Caring Cities

The concept of “Caring Cities” was introduced, advocating for localized social policies, economic analysis, and spatial planning to address citizens’ needs and promote sustainability, inclusivity, and human rights. The session underscored the importance of state support for city initiatives and GPM’s role in elevating cities’ voices globally.

On the panel:

Rohey Malick Lowe, Mayor of Banjul,
Alix Desulme, Mayor of North Miami,
Frédérique Hanotier, Senior expert in
human rights and governance

Moderator:

Jasmina Siderovski, CEO at eYs Global
and Chief Editor of eYs Magazine

Empowering Cities

The summit session on “Empowering Cities” addressed the urgent need for strengthening municipal and metropolitan levels in global governance. It emphasized the vital role of mayors in driving transformative change at the local level, tackling complex issues cross-sectorally. The discussion focused on three dimensions: building true multi-level governance, expanding competencies and resources, and preserving urbanity against divisive nationalism. The session called for international recognition and inclusion of cities in addressing global challenges, emphasizing democratic, caring, and culturally innovative urban development.

On the panel:

Ricardo Rio, Mayor of Braga and GPM
Chair, **Benjamina Karić**, Mayor of
Sarajevo, **Peter Kurz**, Former Mayor of
Mannheim and former GPM Chair, **Octavi
de la Varga Mas**, Secretary General of
Metropolis, **Anh Thu Duong**, Co-Director
of Global Cities Hub.

Moderator:

Jasmina Siderovski, CEO at eYs Global
and Chief Editor of eYs Magazine.

Building global governance for an inclusive and sustainable world

GPM, A UNIQUE GOVERNANCE BODY

Strength in Unity

Established in 2016, the GPM is a unique governance body of, by, and for mayors from all corners of the world. The core goal is to empower cities to play an important role on the international stage, engaging in global strategy debates with nation states and international organisations, such as the UN, and bringing local knowledge to the table. The mayors are focused on developing, sharing, and adopting action-oriented solutions.

VISION

A world in which mayors, cities, and networks are equal partners in building a global governance structure for an inclusive and sustainable world.

Global City Rights Movement

The GPM is envisioned as a global city rights movement that brings a different voice to the political arena: the voice of mayors, cities and their citizens. It is designed to harness the power of the proximity of mayors to urban residents and leverage cities' approaches to problem solving. Mayors can drive solutions in their cities that are more progressive, faster, and more targeted than those put forward at the national level.

The GPM is promoting collective action, connectivity, and solidarity among mayors at a time where the common global voice of mayors is especially needed as a driver of change.

Online Community

GPM Mayors have direct access to the GPM Virtual Parliament and existing urban networks that offer research, best practices and city-to-city cooperation. The GPM's goal is to enable the physical and online debate between mayors without regard to political affiliation, and within their competences, and to give a common voice to the many distinct and important voices of mayors around the world.

GPM Membership

The more mayors join the GPM, the stronger the GPM voice in global debates will be. The membership includes mayors from cities large and small, north and south, developed and emerging. Members are brought together physically at an Annual Summit for city leaders and networks to deliberate as a Parliament and online, through the Virtual Parliament, allowing mayors to communicate, vote and act during the year.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



From left to right: **Ricardo Rio**, Chair, mayor of Braga, Portugal **Rohey Malick Lowe**, Vice Chair, mayor of Banjul, The Gambia, **Bryan Barnett**, Vice Chair, mayor of Rochester Hills, USA, **Danela Arsovska**, Treasurer, Mayor of Skopje



From left to right: **Marcin Krupa**, mayor of Katowice, Poland, **Jefferson Koijee**, mayor of Monrovia, Liberia, **Mathias de Clercq**, mayor of Ghent, Belgium, and **Rainer Kern**, Executive Director, GPM, Secretariat, The Netherlands

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