

MUNICIPAL *times.*

DAEJEON, 15 OCTOBER 2022
English version | Issue number 4

A publication developed with UCLG to leverage the knowledge mobilized by local and regional governments and stakeholders in key global events.

urbanjournalism.institute/municipaltimes

THE PACT IS ADOPTED!

The Pact for the Future of Humanity has been adopted by the UCLG World Council during its gathering on 14 October 2022 at the 7th UCLG World Congress in Daejeon, Republic of Korea.

Representatives from local and regional governments and stakeholders from around the world participated in the plenary consultations around the three key axes of the Pact: people, planet, and government. Pledges toward each of these core areas were made on behalf of the UCLG members and the organized constituency of local and regional governments. This outcome document will guide the work of the UCLG, and it is a "historic commitment" to "the power of collective action".

The Pact for the Future of Humanity is grounded in a deep understanding and sense of responsibility from UCLG members of the critical role they should play to ensure "a more equitable and sustainable quality of life for citizens and communities, protecting their rights and global and local common goods while protecting the planet for future generations."

With the approval of the Pact, the organization has also reinforced its identity with the Feminist Municipal Movement, the universal "Right to the City for All," the principles of gender equality and democracy, and its mission to put care at the center of local governance.

The increasing relevance of UCLG in multilateral spaces, especially in the last decade, will continue to be a strategic goal, especially towards the UN Summit of the Future and the post-2030 development agendas.

After its adoption, the UCLG World Council agreed to begin developing the monitoring framework for the Pact to ensure it becomes actionable and measurable.

The intense and fruitful five-day discussions of the last week ended with a unifying message: "United Cities and Local Governments, an equality-driven movement, is committed to facilitating the space for local and regional leaders to make this world a reality. We need to do it for our common future. For the people, for the planet, and for the government."

Read the Pact for the Future of Humanity [here](#).



The *Municipal Times* is a publication of the Urban Journalism Institute, an initiative of OnCities2030. For more information on the *Municipal Times*, contact the OnCities2030 team at municipaltimes@oncities.org

U.J.I. Urban Journalism Institute



Developed with



THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY: EMBRACING TRANSFORMATIVE GOVERNANCE

Through social movements and civil society, citizens are increasingly calling for governing systems to be more inclusive and to implement the global development agendas. Another challenge includes growing lack of trust between citizens and institutions that should be guaranteeing their rights.

Emilia Saiz, Secretary General of the UCLG, noted that in its pillar on government and democracy, the Pact for the Future of Humanity calls for redefining partnerships in governing systems. It seeks to promote universal quality of life as the essential metric to replace GDP, building peace and prosperity in a world of well-informed and empowered citizens that are treated equally and fairly in their diversity. Beyond jurisdictions, this vision seeks to build a new notion of citizenship which is the foundation of a life with dignity and rights for all. The Pact calls for a renewed democracy that delivers on the needs and rights of citizens. The Pact further calls for a renewed movement towards well-resourced decentralization and subsidiarity and for the cultivation of an active and informed civic participation.

Lucy Slack, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Local Governments Forum, says that local and regional governments are still recovering from the pandemic while other urgencies such as conflict remain real challenges. "All of that brings less trust in the government by the citizens," she stressed, and continued on to say that "placing people in the center of action will restore the trust in the government."

Florencio Vente, representing Local Governments at United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, said that "Mi casa es su casa [my house if your house]" is a proverb that correlates to how youth see urban areas, and he stressed the importance of peace for creating a future for youth.

Oleksandr Sienkevych, the Mayor of Mykolayiv, addressed the audience via video link from the Ukrainian city to share the challenges facing citizens and the need for a continuous support for recovery and reconstruction.

Genie Birch, President of the General Assembly of Partners, stressed that ideas need to be turned into actions and noted that stakeholders made recommendation to UCLG on steps to rebuild trust in the government. **Marina Ponti**, Director of the SDG Action Campaign, stressed that the public sector is important for local public action – which was especially seen during the COVID-19 pandemic – and that the SDGs are the best guidance we have to lead our actions.

During the consultation session, Mayor of Dakar **Barthélémy Dias** reminded the audience of the rapid population growth and urbanization that is taking place in Africa, requiring appropriate actions by local and regional governments. He questioned the financing of infrastructure for rapidly growing settlements during in times of uncertainties. Mayor of Tunis, **Souad Abderrahim** stressed the importance of collaboration between different levels of the government, which would encourage citizen participation in decision-making.



“Multilateralism will only work if the local and regional governments are institutions of trust. The trust of our communities is within the Pact, as is how we can realize the implementation of the new social contract we propose.”

- Eugenie L. Birch,
President of the General Assembly of Partners

“I am encouraging more women to seek office and participate, to run, win and lead local and regional governments,” says **Taneen Rudyk**, President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Councilor of Vegreville. She concluded that trustworthy governance is possible, and that we should not wait to achieve it.

“If women leads community, participation in the community is better,” said **María Mercedes Ortiz Diloné** of Union de Mujeres Municipalistas Dominicana. She continued by saying that differences are less important, as problems seem to be common in many cities and that we can only solve them by working together. “We, local and regional governments, are closest to the people as their lives are directly influenced by our decisions,” stated **Carola Gunnarsson**, Mayor of Sala. She continued by declaring that “peace, democracy, gender equality and inclusion is an imperative.”

José Manuel Ribeiro, Mayor of Valongo says that he is a citizen that is temporarily elected, and addressed the issue of participation and democracy saying, that “democracy is not a result, it is a process, we have to strengthen the process.” **Emilio Jatón**, Mayor of Santa Fe says that Pact for the Future of Humanity

is crucial, as today more than ever there is a critical need to center people, which is what the Pact does. He stressed, “more than ever we have to be absolutely responsible for every action we take.”

“Local and regional governments are the main partners for implementing global development agendas such as, for example, New Urban Agenda,” stressed **Cemal Bas**, Municipal Councilor of Koceioren. **Clir Bheke Stofile**, President of SALGA says that decentralizing governance is key, and should take a central stage in changing the realities of our communities.

At the end of the session, **Maria Fernanda Espinosa**, President of the 73th General Assembly, summarized the discussions of the day by noting that the Pact for the Future of Humanity is a compendium of collective intelligence. She pointed out that “placing care at the center” also means creating a true governance transformation, a systemic shift. She continued that placing UCLG’s longstanding experience seeking for peace, reconciliation, feminism, and justice should be at the heart of its policies.



UCLG PRESIDENCY PLEDGE ON THE GOVERNMENT COMPONENT OF THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

During the Pact for the Future of Humanity plenary session focused on the “government” pillar of the Pact, **Ugur Ibrahim Altay**, Mayor of Konya, delivered a pledge on behalf of the UCLG Presidency for the approval of the World Council.

“We, local and regional government leaders

Pledge that we will endeavour to strengthen and retool democracies and citizenship, and contribute to the much-needed reform of the international governance architecture.

We further pledge to pursue an **open, constructive and sustained structural dialogue with national governments** to ensure joined-up delivery for all citizens, and communities. We commit to the development of an interurban system of small, intermediary and large cities and metropolises, strengthening the urban-rural continuum to ensure that the next generations benefit from placing local democracy at the centre of sustainable development.

Conscious of the challenges and willing to fulfil this endeavour, we are ready **to contribute to the revitalisation of the multilateral system** through a creative, constructive and influential voice in the United Nations’ reform process and by providing substantive contributions to key international summits and fora, including the 2023 SDG Summit, the Summit of the Future in 2024 and the World Social Summit in 2025.

This is the pledge of the united cities and local leaders from around the world to care for government.”



NEW UCLG EXECUTIVE BUREAU ELECTED

The UCLG World Council gathered yesterday to decide on the strategic priorities of the organization for 2022-2028 and to adopt the Presidency’s Report for 2022, the Pact of the Future of Humanity, and the work plan for 2023.

The session was chaired by Jan Van Zanen, UCLG Governing President. Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General, explained the main work components in coming years is to start the process to make the Pact’s vision actionable, to develop a monitoring mechanism and concrete actions.

The World Council also elected the Executive Bureau for the period of 2022-2025. The newly elected include:

COLLEGIAL PRESIDENCY

Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo, Latin America (1 year)
Uğur Ibrahim Altay, Mayor of Konya, MEWA (1 year)
Jan Van Zanen, Mayor of The Hague, Europe (1 year)
Lee Jang-Woo, Mayor of Daejeon, ASPAC (1 year)

CO-PRESIDENTS

Li Mingyuan, Mayor of Xi’an, ASPAC
Bekhe Stofile, President of SALGA, Africa
Altay Kulginov, Mayor of Astaná, Eurasia
Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor of Kitchener, North America
Johnny Araya, Mayor of San José, Latin America

TREASURER

Asmaa Rhilalou, Mayor of Rabat, Africa

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY

Fatimetou Abdel Malick, President of Nouakchott Region, Africa

SPECIAL NOMINATIONS

AMBASSADORS OF THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE

Ambassador for the future of people: **Ada Colau**, Mayor of Barcelona, Europe
Ambassador for the future of the planet: **Anne Hidalgo**, Mayor of Paris, Europe
Ambassador for the future of government: **Yücel Balikesir**, Mayor of Balikesir, MEWA

SPECIAL ENVOYS

Special Envoy for the New Urban Agenda to the United Nations: **Carlos Martínez**, Mayor of Soria, Europe
Special Envoy for Food Systems: **Mohamed Sefiani**, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Africa
Special Envoy for Freedom, Solidarity and Fighting violence against political leaders: **Carola Gunnarsson**, Mayor of Sala, Europe

TOWARDS A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT: REBUILDING TRUST IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Trust is essential to building healthy societies; however, recently citizens' trust in government institution has been declining. In his annual address, "Our Common Agenda," the United Nations Secretary-General has called for a new social contract of the 21st century, where trust plays a central role.

The last Town Hall of the UCLG Congress, held on Friday 14 October, focused on rebuilding international trust, which is a foundational piece of the success of a wide range of public policies, especially to tackle long-term societal challenges such as climate change or supporting aging populations. Research has shown that this lack of trust is present in all sectors of society, and is felt especially among women, people with low income, persons with disabilities, minorities, and young people. Climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and other crises, along with misinformation and the emergence of populist leaders, has led to further declines in the public's trust.

The distrust leads to the rejection of government decisions, a lack of respect for rules, lower voter turnout, fiscal evasion, and even violence. Furthermore, the lack of trust and its resulting impacts lead to a shortage of the solidarity needed to jointly address and prevent various threats, including critical environmental challenges.

Two core challenges have emerged. One is to create a mutual understanding among all parties of the responsibilities and rights of local government, encompassing the roles of the provider, educator, innovator, regulator, and enforcer. In order to carry out these roles, the local government needs to exhibit foundational attributes, which include humanity, transparency, capability, and reliability.

The second challenge is to create a mutual understanding among all parties of the responsibilities and rights of residents. These include, as examples, the right to exercise civil rights peacefully; access to political participation mechanisms to ensure healthy democracies and societies; the rights to use public resources consciously and take advantage of the opportunities provided by the institutions, among others; and the right to hold governments accountable via inclusive, transparent, and accessible mechanisms and platforms.

To develop a new social contract, an enabling environment governed by principles of inclusion, citizen commitment, and subsidiarity among governments is required. Finally, the set of recommendations to achieve such a contract include five main points: (1) Draft a new social contract; (2) Develop a handbook or code to guide its implementation; (3) Acknowledge the people and places that have adopted the new social contract; (4) Working collaboratively, establish a research and evaluation process to disseminate and monitor best practices under the new social contract; (5) Communicate the results, through the Global Task Force, in international meetings especially to the Summit of the Future.

Moving forward, local governments must share the role of both implementing the recommendations and providing an enabling environment to build a new social contract that is fit for purpose in the 21st century and ready to incorporate current and future citizens' concerns.

LOCAL DEMOCRACY FOR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

The transformation required to achieve the global agendas on sustainable urbanization, climate change, and sustainable development can only occur if development models respond to the actual needs and expectations of local communities. Often, there is a significant gap between global policies and the needs and experiences of municipal governments. Therefore, local democracy plays a key role in creating collective responsibility for global goals. [UCLG's Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization \(GOLD\)](#) works to establish a framework for monitoring and reporting on the progress made towards the implementation of the global agendas.

On Friday 14 October, local democracy was the main topic at the #Local4Action Track at UCLG's World Congress in Daejeon. [UCLG and KNOW](#) launched the sixth edition of the [GOLD Report \(GOLD VI\)](#), entitled "Pathways to Urban and Territorial Equality: Addressing inequalities through local transformation strategies." The aim of this report is to understand the state of urban and territorial inequalities worldwide and to call for a change in local and regional governments' place in tackling this global challenge. It presents evidence of and solutions to the multiple manifestations of inequalities and their territorial dimensions, while recommending practical and collective action for local and regional governments. Six different pathways to equality help to build strong local alliances between governments, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders.

The International Observatory on **Participatory Democracy** hosted a session on innovative practices of participatory democracy. According to the organizers, active participation of the population in deliberation and decision-making processes is key to guaranteeing rights and co-creating solutions. A session by the Barcelona Provincial Government showcased how effective and fair multilevel governance can reinforce local democracy to deal with regional and local inequalities. Participants agreed that no sphere of government has the ability to tackle complex crises and achieve the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs on its own.

Cités Unies France (CUF) hosted two events on local democracy, asking **how to provide more social inclusion and leave no one behind**. This has become a priority



during the COVID-19 crisis, where decentralized cooperation, community network meetings, and expressions of solidarity were key to integrating vulnerable groups. Local and regional authorities have demonstrated international solidarity during the pandemic and other major crises, and have coordinated resilient initiatives responding to emergencies and paving the way to recovery. Throughout the sessions, CUF demonstrated how city-to-city partnerships can be an efficient solidarity system.

Local government action on achieving the 2030 Agenda and SDG 11 requires tools and financing to be successful. The UN SDG Action Campaign presented an overview of **tools for local governments**, while the Special Envoy to the New Urban Agenda called for more recognition of the role of local and regional governments in working towards meeting the goal and targets of SDG 11. Intermediary cities, which connect urban and rural areas, particularly play a key role for the future of the global agendas.

The Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV) and UCLG World Secretariat hosted a session on **financing sustainable urbanization**. Most local and regional governments, especially intermediary cities in the Global South, are facing large financial gaps when it comes to delivering basic services to their communities. UCLG's strategy on "[localizing finances for sustainable urbanization and territorial development](#)" provides an overview of the missing links and shows how to scale up support to achieve more and better financing for local and regional governments. The World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment also presented compelling research results from its third edition report on subnational government finance, to be published on 24 October 2022.



THE NEW URBAN AGENDA: AN ACCELERATOR FOR AN INTER-URBAN FUTURE

The session “The Future of the New Urban Agenda: Moving towards an Inter-Urban Future” took place on the last day of the World Congress, with discussions on the role that the New Urban Agenda plays in the implementation of integrated and balanced territorial development. Representatives from local governments’ associations, academia, and mayors from cities of various sizes presented their perspectives on the paradigm shift proposed by the New Urban Agenda and how to advance the implementation of its inclusive, age-sensitive and gender-sensitive multilevel and multistakeholder approach.

The New Urban Agenda was unanimously adopted by all UN Member States in the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito, Ecuador in 2016. It was the last one of the so-called “sustainable global agendas,” after the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Considered a key tool for the acceleration and the localization of the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda recognizes the diverse realities of urbanization processes from metropolitan areas, peri-urban areas, intermediary cities, and small towns. It calls

for joint development strategies from national and subnational governments, and for the strengthening of rural-urban linkages. Local and regional governments were strong supporters and key actors in the Habitat III preparatory process and in the adoption of the of the New Urban Agenda. More than five years on since its adoption, there is a need for national governments to reiterate and accelerate their implementation of the New Urban Agenda and to recognize the key role of local and regional governments in its achievement.

In April 2022, the High-level Meeting to assess progress on the New Urban Agenda was convened by the President of the UN General Assembly. At the same time, the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments convened the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, demonstrating its commitment to the task of sustainable urban development and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, while also highlighting its request to elevate its recognition and have a “seat at the table” at the multilateral level.



UCLG AND THE CITY OF GENEVA COMBINE EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN MULTILATERALISM

Today, the City of Geneva and UCLG have strengthened their relationship, agreeing to promote a framework of cooperation between local and regional governments. The mayor of the city, Sami Kanaan, and the Secretary General of UCLG, Emilia Saiz, have solidified their close collaboration to strengthen the role of local governments in multilateralism. The agreement supports both institutions to facilitate interactions and influence at the international level.



EDITORIAL

CARING MEDIA FOR CITIES

During its first week, the Municipal Times has already witnessed a unique event taking place: the adoption of the Pact of the Future for Humanity by mayors and local leaders from around the world. Among its bold, courageous, feminist, ecological, inclusive, and collective commitments, the Pact also reaffirms “the importance of free media, freedom of expression, agency and critical thinking in ensuring well-informed and empowered citizens.”

To make the Pact actionable and as “part of a global initiative committed with hope, that demonstrates that another way is possible,” there is an urgent need for the media to care about cities. There is also a need for cities to care about strengthening the presence of media in dialogues and consultation mechanisms at all levels.

Urban journalism has the potential to impact current conversations about cities and to shape narratives and cultural movements. Rigorous and accessible information on how cities are planned, built, managed, and, most importantly, democratically governed, is key for empowering women and men to understand and evaluate the impact of the decisions made by the national, regional, and local governments that represent them. Providing this information requires trained journalists and dedicated media outlets to relay effective messages that facilitate a positive change in local communities. The Municipal Times strives to play a role in filling this gap, and reporting on the discussions and outcomes of the past week has been the most fitting way to begin.

We would like to thank all of our readers for following the UCLG 7th World Congress and Summit of Local and Regional Leaders via the Municipal Times. On behalf of OnCities2030 and the Urban Journalism Institute, we are grateful for this opportunity to accompany local and regional leaders in achieving this milestone in the Pact for the Future of Humanity. We believe that the Municipal Times is an important tool for supporting policy-makers and leaders in leveraging the knowledge mobilized in global events such as this one.

The adoption of the Pact demonstrates that there is a wealth of actionable ideas, inspirational urban actions, and a strong will among local governments to work hard towards the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The Feminist Municipal Movement deserves special recognition, and the Urban Journalism Institute fully supports this and will stand ready to further its work.

We are looking forward to continuing our support and collaboration with local and regional governments and stakeholders. With only eight years to go until 2030, the time for action was yesterday!

The Municipal Times team

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: BEST PRACTICES

The International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD) Best Practice Award for Citizen Participation recognizes the successful experiences of local and regional governments in the field of participatory democracy, citizen deliberation, community empowerment, open government, democratic innovations, and public participation.

This year was the 16th edition of the Award, and organizers received 120 submissions and selected 14 finalists from the following cities: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Belém, Bogotá, Cascais, Darniech, Florence, Imbabura, Manchester, Mitcham, Brussels, Quintana Roo, Salvador, and Sud-Kivu region.

The outcome of the Award deliberations will be announced during the IOPD Conference in Grenoble, from 7 to 10 December 2022.

UCLG TV. SHOWCASING URBAN CHALLENGES

Over the last days of the Congress, two short documentaries produced by UCLG have been viewed and discussed by participants.

The first documentary, “From Risk to Resilience: the Case of Palu,” showcased the coordinated response by local and international actors after a natural disaster took place in 2018. The documentary was followed by a discussion, which included the Mayor of Palu, which delved into how the community, driven by solidarity, came together stronger to build resilience at the local level. The discussion also examined the context on how the local authorities led with decentralized cooperation efforts and engagement of partners from civil society.

The second short documentary, “From Inequality to Care-based Communities: The case of Bogotá,” showcased the city’s care systems and policies, highlighting the lessons and recommendations, guided by the values of the Feminist Municipal Movement, for other cities seeking to create people-centered policies.

