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WORLD LEADERS OF CITIES AND REGIONS SPEAK OUT IN TANGIER



UCLG General Assembly became yesterday the political stage where local and regional leaders looked beyond the current mandate and towards the post-2030 agenda.

After the presentation of the Presidency Report for 2022–2026, the Assembly turned to the Local Social Covenant dialogue on the post-2030 strategy and local multilateralism for peace. The debate placed one question at the centre: how can the municipal movement help shape the next global agenda while ensuring that peace, care, public services and dignity are rooted in people's daily lives?

“We are not here just to reflect, we are here to act” – this statement by **Emilia Saiz**, UCLG's Secretary-General, guided the discussion.

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Mounir Laymouri, Mayor of Tangier, emphasised the importance of committing to democracy and peace, inviting participants to build common memories in the host city. “In Daejeon, we adopted the Pact for the Future of Humanity”, **Uğur İbrahim Altay**, Mayor of Konya, pointed out. “These convictions have guided our work, as you can see in the report on the UCLG Presidency 2022-2026. We must ensure that we speak with one voice that reflects the differences in the variety of our geographies. The true test will not be the promises we make, but whether people can live with dignity in the places they call home.”

For the post-2030 Agenda, it will be key to look beyond the implementation of current goals and consider how to further support universal local public services through the Local Social Covenant, placing care at the heart of our work. “Our movement has been guided by the simple but powerful conviction that our agenda can only thrive when people feel connected and respected”, **Jan van Zanen**, mayor of The Hague, stated. “The question of peace has become impossible to ignore. For local governments, peace begins much closer to home, with public life. When people have access to public services, healthcare, culture, education, when they embrace diversity rather than fear, when communities trust their institutions and when public spaces become places of encounter rather than of division, then we have peace.”

This perspective of local governments as peacebuilders that do not only rely on the absence of violence, but on the presence of rights, dignity, belonging, and hope, was present in all speakers. “We need proximity, dialogue and trust – this is something that local multilateralism offers and this is why it matters”, van Zanen added.

Bringing the realities of communities into global decision-making is key to supporting peace and is something that all speakers see for the post-2030 Agenda. “We have a clear message: Local governments are ready to become partners”, **Fatimetou Abdel Malick**, President of Nouakchott (Mauritania) and co-chair of the United Nations Secretary General’s Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments, said when talking about the planned United Nations reforms and the post-2030 Agenda.

“The future is local, and this space for local multilateralism is crucial. After all, societies are built from the ground up through inclusive, community-centred action. We believe that solutions must be rooted in justice, equity, and human rights”, **Binaifer Nowrojee**, President of Open Society Foundations, added, explaining that effective public safety depends on the trust between communities and the institutions that are meant to serve them.

The “Leave no one behind” principle of the 2030 Agenda is something that all participants want to carry beyond the year 2030 – after all, it is more important now than ever before. **David Perejil**, Director General for the 2030 Agenda for the Spanish Government, introduced the country’s new sustainable development roadmap that shows what the time after 2030 could look like. Housing and feminist care already play a key role in that agenda.

Paula Gaviria Betancur, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), explained that over 82 million (almost the population of Germany) people worldwide are

internally displaced. “This is a global crisis, but also a local reality. IDPs are, first and foremost, residents in your cities. Displacement is not just a crisis to manage but also an opportunity to strengthen civil society, spur innovation, and increase resilience. This is a chance to treat care as a public responsibility, embedded in policy, planning, and service delivery.”

Paola Pabón, President of Pichincha, affirmed this point, especially given the realities of climate change and armed conflicts all over the world. “I think that the lack of care is a form of violence too. We cannot achieve lasting peace when we destroy the common goods that define public life.”

Commenting on the statements, Utrecht’s mayor **Sharon Dijksma** was struck by the willingness of the group to reflect on how multilateralism itself needs to evolve. “The real test for a post-2030 Agenda will not be whether we can agree on a new framework, but whether international collaboration and multilateralism will become more successful in improving people’s lives, from finding a home to participating equally and safely in society as women or girls. Let’s make delivery our starting point.”

Lucy Slack, Secretary-General, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, said: “We are one of the organisations that still has hope and faith. We are still here, and we believe in this work. Local government is at the heart of the delivery of services. That contract between local government and society is really what we are about here, and we need to build trust.” people’s lives, from finding a home to participating equally and safely in society as women or girls. Let’s make delivery our starting point.”

On today’s World Day of Public Services, this is perhaps the key message of the second conference day in Tangier. **Gino van Begin** from ICLEI, summed this up by saying: “Public service is an act of faith in public life, and this act of faith matters now more than ever.”

Alongside the statutory meetings, representatives from Africa, Europe and Asia-Pacific met on the margins of the Congress to discuss regional priorities and align regional perspectives ahead of the World Council and the political discussions that will continue throughout the Congress. The assemblies remain one of the main channels through which the diversity of the UCLG membership feeds into the political agenda of the World Organisation.



COALITIONS FOR LOCAL INNOVATION: *How local governments can solve problems together*

“We cannot solve the many challenges of local governments alone. We need to unite, get together, and overcome these problems with a more innovative, collaborative approach.” These were the opening remarks of **Uğur İbrahim Altay**, Mayor of Konya, during the afternoon’s session on coalitions for local innovation in the UCLG General Assembly. Participants discussed how local and regional governments can work with international organisations, innovation ecosystems, and development partners to accelerate solutions that respond to local priorities.

Yu-ning Hwang, Executive Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities of Singapore, recounted the recent World Cities Summit in Singapore and its “Act Now” theme. She emphasised that no single actor could solve problems like water resilience or the energy transitions: “None of us have all the knowledge, but we can come together and learn from each other.”

Sello Enoch Dada Morero, Mayor of Johannesburg, echoed these sentiments and added a financial perspective: “We have learned how finance institutions work in the last century. Now we must learn how to finance institutions, taking territories as the starting point for financial design.” Together with UCLG, the Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV) has the core mission to localise finance for sustainable and climate-resilient urban development with the Finance Your Cities initiative, a great example for the mayor’s point. “We will turn risk into resilience. We will turn investment into dignity. We will turn innovation into shared prosperity.”

Adnan Seric, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and Head of Innovation Lab, addressed the room by saying that the success of our common agenda, the SDGs, will depend on what happens in cities and territories. “Let’s translate innovation into investment and scale”, he said, mentioning UNIDO’s Bridge for Cities initiative as a global political and convening space. The Global ScaleX Alliance for Cities, part of this initiative, helps municipalities scale proven solutions for sustainable and inclusive urban development. Already, the first innovation scaling corridor is being tested in the Western Balkans, where cities like Podgorica, Sarajevo, Skopje and Tirana are joining forces to build greener, more competitive local industries and create better jobs for their citizens.

From the OECD, **Aziza Akhmouch**, Head of Urban Policies and Sustainable Development, reported that too many innovations remain at the pilot stage and do not grow enough. Conditions like place-based innovation, fiscal space, and the capacity for ideation must be met so that cities can be innovative. Together with UCLG and the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment, her team has tracked data across 135 countries and has shown that subnational governments are responsible for 55% of public investment, while also facing growing financial pressure.

Agustí Fernández de Losada, Secretary for European and Multilateral Affairs and Development Cooperation of the Government of Catalonia, spoke more about the localisation of financing. He mentioned the Global Observatory on Subnational Finance as a valuable resource. “Take the pandemic as an example: from the local point of view, there was innovation to find solutions to this global crisis of huge dimensions. But without resources, it is impossible to promote and maintain efficient public policies.”

Frédéric Blanc, Representative of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, affirmed that the European Union acts as a partner that doesn’t believe in a divide between the Global North and the Global South. Similarly, **Sébastien Vauzelle**, Head of Local 2030 Coalition, pointed out how many different stakeholders are coming together in Bilbao as part of the Coalition, ranging from United Nations entities to national governments, local and regional governments, civil society organisations, academia, the private sector, and youth: “We are bringing together all these stakeholders to make systemic change happen.”

Claudia Juech from Bloomberg Philanthropies shared more practical insights on how cities can benefit from coalitions: “It starts with you – it starts with leadership.” She explained that coalition building requires city governments to be organised for that work, mapping actors around the problem, understanding what each one can contribute, and keeping the work moving when disagreements emerge. “That is not super glamorous and it’s not always visible work, but it’s most often the differences between the coalition members that truly produce results.”



A SEAT AT THE TABLE FOR THOSE WHO DELIVER



On the International Day of Public Service, the UCLG Executive Bureau opened the statutory programme of the Tangier Congress not with procedure, but with a signature. Meeting in the Hybrid Tent, local and regional government leaders and trade union representatives witnessed the launch of the Global Framework Agreement on Social Dialogue and Cooperation between UCLG and Public Services International (PSI), which is a structured space for dialogue that, in the words of the signatories, had been missing from the international architecture for more than a century.

Chairing the session, **Berry Vrbancovic**, Mayor of Kitchener, framed the day as the right way to begin a Congress devoted to a new generation of local public services, noting that he had started his own career on the staff side before being elected.

Daniel Bertossa, Secretary General of PSI, called the moment a homecoming and a milestone. He warned that years of austerity, under-investment and privatisation had weakened local services in many countries, with consequences far beyond service delivery. “When public services deteriorate, trust in public institutions declines,” he said, arguing that social dialogue is not an obstacle to change but one of the conditions for its success. There can be no universal access to public services, he added, without decent work for the people who provide them.

UCLG Secretary General **Emilia Saiz** was candid that the partnership would not be a simple one, describing a complex relationship that touches

both labour rights and the daily lives of people everywhere. The advantage, she said, lay in a long history of working side by side, from water and housing to migration. Recalling the COVID-19 pandemic as a point of inflection, she called for new missions for everyday life and a different financial architecture to deliver them. “Let us hope that public becomes the new trend,” she told participants.

The dialogue that followed gave the floor to mayors and workers in turn. **Rohey Malick Lowe**, Mayor of Banjul, spoke of public services as the front lines of dignity, insisting that strong cities are impossible without decent work and a seat at the table for those who deliver it. **Marta Prates**, Mayor of Reguengos de Monsaraz, brought a rural Portuguese perspective, warning that people can be excluded not for who they are but for where they live, and describing public services as the way democracy becomes visible in daily life.

Fernando Gray, Mayor of Esteban Echeverría and UCLG Vice-President for Latin America, placed workers at the centre as the backbone of public services, calling for governance focused on wellbeing rather than algorithms. From Spain, **Jordi Castellana** of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area argued that without good public services, societies become more unequal and polarised, and less resilient against authoritarianism. Strong services, he said, depend on decent work and social dialogue with trade unions. He illustrated this point through metropolitan policies on social transport tariffs, inclusive economic development, and accessible digital services. **Cristian Zamora**, Mayor of Cuenca, recounted how his municipality built hospitals it was not formally responsible for, treating 20,000 people in three months where the national health system had faltered.

Union voices reinforced the message. **Annie Enriquez Geron**, of the Philippines, anchored the agreement in transparency, accountability, and participation as the foundations of good governance. **Steve Joseph**, of the Dominica Public Service Union, recalled the climate disasters that make decent work a matter of survival in small island states. **Nadia Koubia**, government employment and union representative in the host country, described frontline staff as the face of local government, while **Rebecca Céspedes**, of the Global Network of Local Government Workers, noted it had taken ten years of dialogue to reach this day, pointing to remunicipalised waste collection in San José as proof that public delivery can outperform the private alternative.

Closing the dialogue, **Philippe Malaise** of the Fédération Interco CFDT linked the agreement to a gem with many facets: the recognition of public service workers, a tool for meeting climate and resource challenges, and an

affirmation of multilateralism at a moment when many heads of state are questioning it. Reached only through compromise, he said, it was a first stone rather than an end.

Anthony Berthelot, Mayor of Indre and representative of Nantes Métropole, said the city was proud to have contributed to the agreement, framing it as a shared vision of democracy, human rights, gender equality, and protection of the planet. Defending workers means defending public services, he argued, and with funding a persistent challenge, cities needed a place at the decision-making table.

The open floor sharpened the tone. **Paola Pabón**, of Ecuador, framed the choice as an ideological one between two models: one that defends the public sphere and one that erodes it for private gain. She cited the dismissal of 5,000 public servants in Ecuador in 2025 and called for services built around women's needs. **Dante Velázquez**, Mayor of La Quiaca, described roads left unmaintained after fuel-tax revenue stopped reaching municipalities, while **Andreas Wolter** of Cologne and the **Costa Rican delegation** offered the counterpoint of federal systems and remunicipalisation, where public delivery has held firm.

The session's most striking words came from **Abdel Karim Al Zubaydah**, President of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities: "The only form of equality a Palestinian citizen gets is, actually, death. Everyone is equal in death."



A MOROCCAN WELCOME TO THE MUNICIPAL MOVEMENT

The official opening ceremony of the Eighth Session of the World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders and UCLG World Congress took place yesterday evening in the Auditorium of the Palais des Arts in Tangier.

In a message addressed to participants, **His Majesty King Mohammed VI** welcomed local and regional leaders to Morocco and presented territorial governance as a strategic instrument for reducing inequalities, strengthening trust between citizens and institutions, and translating international commitments into concrete improvements in people's lives. He linked the Congress theme to Morocco's experience with decentralisation and advanced regionalisation, describing them as pillars of the country's development model.

Mounir Laymouri, Mayor of Tangier, highlighted the growing importance of cities and regions in addressing global challenges. He presented UCLG's mission as a bridge between global ambitions and everyday realities, arguing that democracy, participation and social cohesion are built closest to citizens. "The challenge is no longer limited to providing basic services but has become our collective ability to provide higher quality, more effective, equitable and sustainable services," he stressed.

Lee Jang-Woo, President of UCLG World and Mayor of Daejeon, linked Tangier to the mandate that began in Daejeon in 2022 with the adoption of the UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity. He highlighted the adoption of the UN Pact for the Future in 2024, particularly Action 55(e), as a milestone in the recognition of local and regional governments within the multilateral system. Calling for stronger cooperation among cities and regions, he also placed care at the centre of the future agenda. "Local governments are no longer secondary participants in global affairs; they have become essential actors capable of responding directly to people's needs and transforming global commitments into practical action," he said.

The ceremony concluded with a celebration of Moroccan culture and a shared call to advance a new generation of local public services rooted in proximity, inclusion and cooperation.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOOKS TO JOHANNESBURG

Local and regional governments are no longer only implementing economic policies. They are helping shape the economies that communities need.

Held as part of yesterday's Local4Action Track, the dialogue on the leadership of local and regional governments in inclusive and sustainable economic development brought together local leaders, international organisations and partners to discuss how territories can build more inclusive, sustainable and resilient economies.

Convened by the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI) in collaboration with the UCLG Commission on Local Economic and Social Development, the session focused on how territories can respond to ecological, digital and social transitions while generating decent work, reducing inequalities and strengthening territorial cohesion.

Francisco Reyes, President of FAMSI and representative of the International Committee of the World Forum on Local Economic Development, underlined the need to strengthen multilevel cooperation and territorial action to respond to global challenges from an inclusive and sustainable perspective.

Speakers including Anthony Berthelot, Mayor of Indre, Sithole Mbanga, Chief Executive Officer of SALGA, Pieter Jeroense, Director General of VNG, and Brittany Merrifield, Mayor of Grand Bay-Westfield, addressed competitiveness, social justice, youth employment, local capacities, financing and the role of small and medium-sized municipalities.

Sandra Moreno, Executive Secretary of RIPESS, stressed the contribution of the social and solidarity economy to building more democratic, inclusive and sustainable territories.

The session also marked the official presentation of the seventh edition of the **World Forum on Local Economic Development**, to be held in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa, in October 2027. FAMSI and RIPESS also announced a cooperation agreement to strengthen their joint work around the Forum and other initiatives linking local governments with the social and solidarity economy.

YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION TO SCALE

More than 300 cities are now part of the Youth Climate Action Fund, a Bloomberg Philanthropies initiative helping city halls place young people at the centre of climate action.

Held as part of the Local4Action Track, Cities Shaping the Future of Youth Climate Action gathered mayors and city representatives from across regions to look back at the first cycle of the Fund and set ambitions for its next phase. Organised by Bloomberg Philanthropies and UCLG, the session focused on how local governments can respond to climate challenges while creating meaningful space for youth leadership.

The experiences shared in Tangier demonstrated that cities are increasingly treating young people as co-creators of climate solutions. Through the Fund, municipalities have supported youth-led projects ranging from urban greening and community gardens to waste reduction, biodiversity initiatives and climate resilience actions.

Since its launch, more than 300,000 young people across five continents have participated in the programme, contributing to over 1,600 green spaces, more than 235,000 trees, thousands of community gardens and other locally led environmental projects.

The message for the next phase was practical: climate action gains strength when young people are given resources, responsibility and a real place in local decision-making.



CARING CITIES AND TERRITORIES

Care is not a private matter, nor a passing policy trend. It is a public responsibility that must be built in territories.

That was one of the messages of the roundtable Caring Territories: Partnerships for Integrated Policies, convened by Mercociudades in collaboration with UCLG, the Regional Government of Catalonia, FAMSI, the Diputación de Sevilla and the Global Alliance for Care.

Moderated by **Jorge Rodríguez** from the Permanent Technical Secretariat of Mercociudades, and **Marga Barceló**, Head of International Projects and Development Cooperation at the Diputació de Barcelona, the session brought together local and regional governments, researchers and partners to discuss how territories can build integrated care systems.

Francisca Medina Teva, Vice-President of FAMSI and deputy of the Diputación de Jaén, presented care as an element of urban sustainability, stressing that care is neither infinite nor free. She called for a new social pact that places life at the centre of municipal action.

Paola Pabón, Prefect of Pichincha, argued that care is a political conversation about how societies organise life in common. She linked care to justice, equality and democracy, and warned that it is impossible to speak about care without addressing violence against women and the destruction of community ties. **Ana Falú**, Director of CISCESA and a long-standing reference on feminist urbanism and women's right to the city, warned that when the state withdraws, care responsibilities are pushed back into families, often increasing household debt and falling disproportionately on women. She linked this dynamic to the need to build public care systems grounded in rights, proximity and territorial justice.

The discussion also highlighted the need to move from care services to care systems. **Francisco Tojas**, Vice-President and Deputy for Development Cooperation at the Diputación de Sevilla, presented the work being developed through FAMSI and Mercociudades to understand how care is organised in municipalities, make care work visible and move towards multiactor and multilevel systems.

Agustí Fernández de Losada, Secretary for European, Multilateral and Development Cooperation Affairs of the Government of Catalonia, connected the care agenda with feminist cooperation, democratic governance and social cohesion. From Canada, **Kathy Jeffery**, Councillor of Collingwood, stressed that care becomes tangible at the local level through housing, transport, services and community support.

Speakers from Benin, Scotland, Indonesia and other territories also brought different perspectives on care across the life course, including disability, unpaid care, early childhood, climate vulnerability and the role of women in sustaining communities. **Marta Galceran-Vercher**, researcher at CIDOB, linked the debate to decentralisation, arguing that caring cities require governments with the means, legitimacy and mandate to act.

The session concluded with a shared message: care is social infrastructure. Building caring territories requires human rights-based approaches, co-responsibility, gender equality and strong alliances across sectors and levels of government.



PHOTO TANGER

*Discover
Morocco's pluralistic identity
through photography*

Did you miss last night's Long Night of the Museums and Cultural Venues, or simply not get enough of the host city's cultural offer? And did you notice that there is a special emphasis on photography in this year's cultural activities? That is because Photo Tanger, the International Image Festival, is also happening throughout the city, giving you many more opportunities to dive into Tanger's cultural scene.

THE CALL OF THE SEA

Between 17 June and 31 August 2026, you can visit the festival, currently celebrating its first edition in various cultural venues and public spaces across the city of Tanger. The theme is "The Call of the Sea", which pays homage to this city that faces the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, evoking openness to otherness and travel since antiquity. It also underscores Tanger's enduring cultural appeal, as Moroccan writer Tahar Ben Jelloun said:

"Photo Tanger, the first international image festival, does justice to the city and its history. Photo exhibitions, film screenings at the Ciné Alcazar, dear to my heart. Tanger will be part of the celebration, thus reconnecting with its traditional openness to the sea."

Together with friends and colleagues, Tahar Ben Jelloun realised in summer 2025 that despite its urban and economic dynamism, Tanger lacked a unifying cultural event. This is how the idea for Photo Tanger was born – and 2026 marks a particularly fitting year since it has been 200 years since the oldest surviving camera photograph, titled "View from the Window at Le Gras", was captured by French inventor Joseph Nicéphore Niépce.

A FESTIVAL ROOTED IN LOCAL COMMUNITY

This international photography festival aims to contribute culturally to the dynamism of the city on the Strait of Gibraltar, by reconnecting with its rich photographic heritage and exploring contemporary visual practices and their creative evolutions. It strives to be a festival rooted in the local community yet open to the world, highlighting new perspectives and fostering intercultural exchange through the presentation of works by established and emerging artists, both local and international.



The first edition of Photo Tanger highlights the young generation through its flagship exhibition: [Perspectives of Moroccan Photographers Around the World: Existing Between the Certainties of the World](#). This exhibition reveals the richness of their journeys and the uniqueness of their perspectives, nurtured by mobility, exchange, and the experience of both shores of the Mediterranean.

This exhibition was made possible thanks to the support of the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad, committed to promoting creators from the diaspora and convinced of their role in cultural renewal.

Committed to its international outlook, the festival highlights artists from a different country each year. For this inaugural edition, Spain was a natural choice, given its historical and cultural ties with Morocco. On this occasion, an exhibition dedicated to [Isabel Muñoz](#), a major figure in Spanish photography, will be presented at the Instituto Cervantes in Tanger. It will be accompanied by a [series of Spanish films](#), screened in the legendary Alcazar cinema, tracing the evolution of Spanish cinema from the 1950s to the present day.

The festival is supported by the Wilaya of Tanger, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Communication, the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad, the National Museums Foundation and the Port Tanger Medina. In addition, the Alliances Foundation and the TGCC Foundation are co-producing initiatives within the festival.

Read more: <https://phototanger.com/>

SDG CORNER

Cities Countdown 2030 goes online

The Cities Countdown to 2030 website is now available as the digital entry point to UCLG's initiative connecting city-led transformation with the global agendas. The platform presents the political framing of the initiative, the Cities Countdown to 2030 Missions Portfolio, and a dedicated section on the UN Six Transitions, including six thematic chapters developed as UCLG's contribution to these global transformation pathways.

Led by UCLG under the auspices of UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, Cities Countdown to 2030 is a political initiative that identifies, structures and communicates territorial evidence from cities already advancing transformative action. It shows how city governments are improving everyday life through public investment, public services and long-term local missions, while strengthening their role in SDG localization and renewed multilateral cooperation on the road to 2030.

The initiative shows how cities are improving everyday life through public investment, public services and long-term local missions, while strengthening their role in SDG localization and renewed multilateral cooperation on the road to 2030.

For more information:

<https://uclg.org/cities-countdown-2030/>



CARE CORNER

Care takes its place in Tangier, not at the corner, at the centre

The Care Corner opened on Tuesday as a small but strategic space inside the UCLG World Congress: a place to introduce the Global Alliance for Care, amplify the voices of its members and show how care can be part of local public policy and multilateral action.

The opening brought together members of the Alliance, local government representatives and civil society actors. **Ana Moreno**, Technical Secretary of the Global Alliance for Care, welcomed participants, followed by **Pablo Fernández Marmissolle-Daguerre**, UCLG Assistant Secretary-General for Partnerships, and **Nadine Gasman Zylbermann**, Head of the Ministry of Health of Mexico City, who reflected on the evolution of the Alliance over the last five years and the growing visibility of care in public agendas.



For the Global Alliance for Care, the Tangier Congress is part of a broader effort to bring care into major multilateral spaces and connect it with global debates on equality, sustainability, rights and public services. With more than 350 members across governments, civil society, academia, international organisations and the private sector, the Alliance is a unique open multistakeholder platform for advancing the global care agenda.

UCLG's role in the Alliance, including as a member of its Management Committee, has been strategic. The message from the Care Corner is clear: care is no longer at the margins of policy discussions. In Tangier, it has been consolidated as part of the future of local public services and as a central dimension of more equal, inclusive and caring territories.

The Global Alliance for Care: www.globalallianceforcare.org
GOLD VII report: www.uclgmeets.org/processes/CoCreatingGold7/

LOCAL4ACTION SPOTLIGHT

HUMAN RIGHTS CITIES: FROM CAMPAIGN TO CHARTER

OHCHR, UCLG and the Global Platform for the Right to the City presented the New Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City, building on the “10, 100, 1000 Human Rights Cities and Territories by 2030” campaign launched in Daejeon. The renewed framework recognises 37 human rights in the city and reinforcing the role of local governments as duty-bearers. The session also highlighted the Guidance Framework for Creating a Human Rights City, developed jointly by UCLG and OHCHR, as a practical tool to integrate human rights into governance, public policies and service delivery.

More information:

https://www.uclg-cisd.org/sites/default/files/UCLG_Global_Charter_Agenda_HR_City_0.pdf

VIOLENCE PREVENTION: LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX CHALLENGES

Organised by Peace in Our Cities, Open Society Foundations and Mercociudades, the dialogue showcased initiatives addressing gender-based violence, youth recruitment into organised crime, disappearances and community safety. Speakers stressed the importance of prevention, public trust and long-term investment in communities, while highlighting the value of peer exchange between cities facing similar challenges across different contexts.

More information:

<https://peaceinourcities.org/>

PEACE THROUGH LOCAL ACTION

Convened by Open Society Foundations, with the UCLG Peace Prize and VNG International, the session explored how local governments are advancing public safety and peace through prevention, social policies and partnerships. It also drew on experiences from the finalists of the 2026 UCLG Peace Prize, showing how local governments can turn peacebuilding into everyday practice.

More information: <https://peaceprize.uclg.org/>

ECOCIDE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Convened by Stop Ecocide International, the dialogue challenged the idea that severe environmental destruction happens only in remote places. It highlighted how local and regional governments are often on the frontline of ecological harm, while the global debate on criminalising ecocide continues to gain momentum.

More information: <https://www.stopecocide.earth/>



LAUNCHED IN TANGIER

FROM CASCAIS 2026 TO BRUSSELS 2027: THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

Cascais is the 2026 European Capital of Democracy (ECoD) and Brussels will take over in 2027, following Barcelona in 2023/24 and Vienna in 2024/25. The title is awarded through a multi-stage selection process combining expert evaluation and a pan-European Citizens' Jury. Awarded cities host a year-long programme of flagship events — including the ACT NOW Mayors' Conference and the Innovation in Politics Awards — showcasing democratic innovation and best practice exchange. The initiative also connects awarded cities through the European City Network, enabling long-term peer learning and the scaling of democratic solutions across city administrations.

More information: <https://capitalofdemocracy.eu/>

NEW PUBLICATION: LOCAL MULTILATERALISM AND PARADIPLMACY IN A TIME OF CHANGE

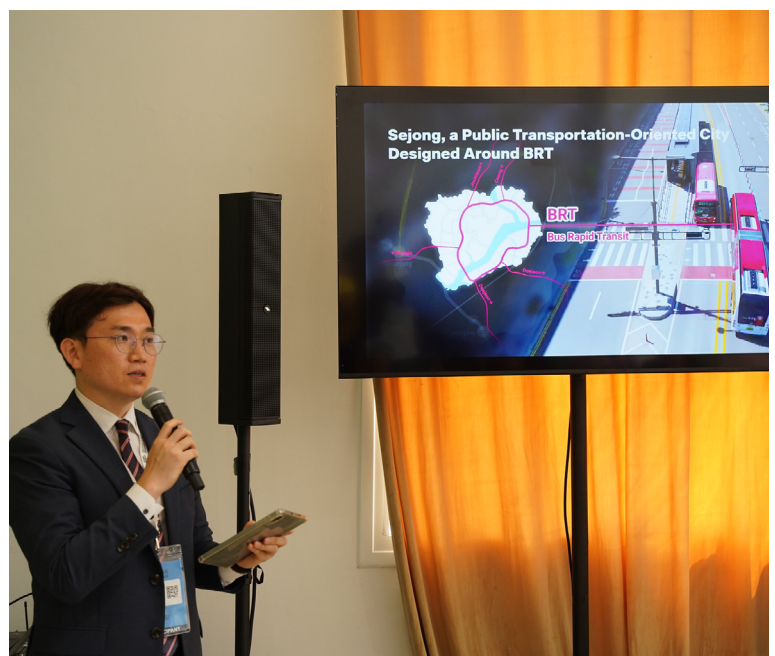
Editorial TIP, in partnership with UCLG, launched a new special edition on *Local Multilateralism and Paradiplomacy in a Time of Change*. The joint publication brings together voices from five continents, 16 countries, 24 cities and 26 institutions to explore how cities and regions are building more pragmatic international cooperation to deliver real change in people's lives. This edition marks a milestone in TIP's trajectory. Since its first publication in 2011, the journal has contributed to strengthening an international community of research, analysis and practice around paradiplomacy, subnational international action and decentralised cooperation.

More information: <https://paradiplomacia.org/>
Full edition available at: <https://bit.ly/4ey5JZe>

SEJONG SPECIAL SELF-GOVERNING CITY: A NATIONAL PILOT CITY

Representatives from the Government of Sejong Special Self-Governing City presented practical insights on how to integrate cutting-edge technology into daily urban life to enhance efficiency and citizen wellbeing. The de facto administrative capital of the Republic of Korea was created in 2012 as a special self-governing city directly under the central government. As a National Pilot City, Sejong showcased inclusive and safe urban models, including the "I-Eung Bus" — an AI-driven demand-responsive transport system — and pioneering autonomous transit services.

More information: <https://uclg-aspac.org/member/sejong-city/>
<https://uclg-aspac.org/sejong-city-a-public-transportation-oriented-city/>



What's on Today?

24 JUNE 2026

FROM REPRESENTATION TO DELIVERY

The Congress moves today from institutional transition to questions that shape daily life in cities and territories: who is represented, how rights are guaranteed, and what people need to live with dignity.

The morning brings a historic milestone: the **first-ever UCLG Women's Assembly**, from 10:30 to 12:00 in the Hybrid Tent, with discussions on participation, equality, care, climate justice, accessibility and the fight against violence against women.

Housing will also be a thread to follow. The **Local4Action dialogue Housing Futures: Foresight for Cities Delivering Homes for All** will take place from 11:00 to 12:00 in Room C Medina, before the World Council opens the housing agenda in the afternoon with the launch of the Housing Justice Academy.

From 14:00 to 18:00, the **UCLG World Council** will bring forward the dialogue on everyday essentials — housing, care, food, health and culture — as foundations of dignity, inclusion and local democracy.

Beyond the Statutory Track, the **roundtable Localising Means Transforming** will take place from 14:30 to 16:00 in Room B Atlantic, followed by discussions on financing the next generation of territorial public services and justice-based climate action on the road to COP31.

Regional assemblies and caucuses, the **UCLG Forum of Regions**, the Tangier-Morocco Track and the Networking Hub will continue to bring territorial perspectives, launches and exchanges into the Congress day.

TRENDING NOW!

STILL TALKING, STILL POSTING

The second day of the #UCLGCongress 2026 in Tangier has undoubtedly taken the debate beyond the walls of the General Assembly and the Executive Bureau. That's because it continues to unfold on X, where the hashtag has become a live archive of quotes, reactions, and key moments, almost a parallel dialogue in which the Congress continues to be written in real time, in other words.

It's also important to document these conversations. In the words of @AnaLuciaReisBol: "When we share knowledge, we accelerate processes and improve the quality of our communities." From a more analytical perspective, Claudia Juech (@BloombergDotOrg) adds: "Ambition is important, but ambition alone isn't enough. Cities need people, systems, data, partnerships...". And Aysen Nikolaev brings another dimension to the discussion by highlighting the need for cooperation between institutions and societies to preserve cultural heritage and drive local development.

The idea that local and regional governments are not mere implementers, but active co-authors of global agendas, continues to resurface in various remarks throughout the Assembly and the feed.

Continuing the theme of cooperation, one of the most prominent topics on social media is the new agreement between @uclg_org and @PSIglobalunion to establish a structured global framework for social dialogue in local and regional public services.

As Marta Prates points out in a tweet: "Public services are not just administrative functions; they are the way democracy becomes visible in everyday life," and, as an added note, @NadiaKoubia reminds us that public servants remain the backbone of local communities, even if they do not always take center stage in political discourse.

In summary, what emerges from the General Assembly and the Executive Bureau at the end of the day is that multilateralism is being reshaped at the local level—through cities, regions, workers, and communities — and is being documented in real time, both on the internet and during official sessions.

CREDITS

(of all issues)

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