

NEWS



Metropolitan Governance

"Metropolitanists" present the diversity of partnerships and tools for the implementation of the NUA

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On June 22, the session "Partnerships and tools to support metropolitan areas for the implementation of the NUA" made part of the program of the XII Metropolis World Congress in Montréal, and was an opportunity of highlighting the very identity of Metropolis. The encounter brought together speakers from different backgrounds to debate the metropolitan phenomena and the available tools to deal with it in a global scale.

The session was opened and moderated by Alioune Badiane, President of Tutta – The Urban Think Tank Africa. A round of presentations was started by Lia Brum, Content Curator & Latin America/Europe Liaison for the Metropolis Secretary General, who explained that the association can be regarded itself as a tool to address the metropolitan phenomena. The Metropolis membership, currently composed of 136 institutions, shows a common concern with metropolitan issues, and, at the same time, a wide diversity of identities, which evidences that metropolitan governance is multilevel. Among the members of Metropolis there are metropolitan governments (e.g. metropolitan areas of Barcelona or Valle de Aburrá), municipalities of the largest cities of the world (e.g. Dakar, Guangzhou, Montréal), metropolitan planning offices (e.g. San Salvador), as well as counties, provinces, regions and other jurisdictions which carry out metropolitan policies (e.g. Gauteng, East Kalimantan).

To deepen the metropolitan governance debate, Metropolis offers, furthermore, tools which intend to support reaching “metropolises for an by their citizens, where participatory and effective metropolitan governance fosters economic development, sustainability, social cohesion, gender equality and quality of life” (vision of the association). During the session, Lia Brum showcased two projects that are developed within the association and that provide inputs for metropolises to improve their performance: the Metropolis Observatory and Policy Transfer Platform.

This institutional Metropolis presentation was followed by the speech of Rafael Forero, Program Liaison Officer in UN-Habitat, who shared the experience of RAMA, the Network of Metropolitan Areas of the Americas (whose acronym, in Spanish, means “branch”). He reinforced the need of specific networks for technical exchanges between metropolitan institutions to encourage synergies and interactions among them, and to foster, as well, the implementation of sustainable planning on functional metropolitan territories, recalling the commitment with articles 90 and 96 of the New Urban Agenda.

Next, a thought provoking presentation by Gabriel Lanfranchi, Cities Programme Director at CIPPEC and founder of the MIT Metro Lab initiative, sharply noticed that the themes in which Metropolis is focusing (economic development, sustainability, social cohesion, gender equality and quality of life) are purposely not sectorial, and allow transversal and multilevel approaches. Characterizing himself as a “metropolitanist”, Gabriel shared his vast experience working with different sectors of society around the challenges related to the metropolization of the world. He advocates for the importance of dealing with global challenges on a metropolitan scale, which, in turn, requires nurturing capacity in understanding the metropolitan phenomena, as well as raising awareness about the metropolitan identity that most of humanity shares. Among the many initiatives to work together towards the accomplishment of these goals, he suggests the promotion of a simple idea: the celebration of the “World Metropolitan Day”, a date to celebrate the anniversary of the Montréal Declaration on Metropolitan Areas (October 7, 2015) and unite the “metropolitanists” around the globe.

Then, Michel Max Raynaud, Professor from the University of Montréal, presented the RESAUD programme, which constitutes a network of universities with dedicated centers of research for urbanism in Africa, and providing consultancy and guidance for the governments of urban agglomerations in the continent, where there is a high demand for planning resources – the RESAUD acronym, from its original name in French, stands for “network of strategic exchanges for a sustainable urban Africa”, and connects knowledge among the metropolises of Abidjan, Dakar, Ougadougou and Yaoundé.

The round of presentations was finished by three representatives from UN-Habitat: Tefo Mooketsane and Stephanie Loose, both Program Managers (respectively, at the Urban Economy Branch and at the Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit), and Eduardo Moreno, Director of Research and Capacity Development. UN-Habitat has been a major player in the capitalization of knowledge about the metropolitan phenomena, with pioneering initiatives that helped systematizing the metropolitan knowledge, such as the City Prosperity Initiative. Since last year, the agency is taking a step further with the launch of MetroHUB, an initiative for metropolitan development that combines planning, governance, finance and socio-environmental

considerations with capacity development and the development of strategic projects while promoting horizontal and vertical coherence and a participatory approach.

The session was then opened for interventions from the audience, which enriched the debate with challenging questions. As part of the last block of concurrent sessions of the XII Metropolis World Congress, this session provided the general conclusion that global challenges arise - and therefore must be addressed - in the metropolitan areas of the world.