

## NEWS



### **First-ever forum of African metropolises**

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Metropolis and UCLG-Africa brought together political decision-makers from African metropolises to take part in the official launch ceremony for preparations for the 8th Africities Summit, held on 15 May, 2018 in Rabat, and this was seized as an opportunity to hold the first-ever forum of African metropolises.

Chaired by Mr. Parks Tau, President of UCLG, a representative for Mr. Makhura, Premier of Gauteng Province and Co-president of Metropolis, and Vincent N'Cho, Deputy Mayor of Abidjan and Vice-president of Metropolis, the meeting brought together twenty-five mayors and political leaders from African cities, including seven members of Metropolis (Abidjan, Accra, Dakar, Gauteng, Libreville, Rabat and Victoria). The leaders met to identify the main challenges facing African cities, as well as to debate key global concerns and to start discussing how metropolises can overcome new issues.

The workshop was held against a backdrop in which experts predict that the urban population of Africa will reach nearly 1.2 billion by 2050, the equivalent of the current population of the entire continent. By that time, 70% of Africans will live in a city, and there will be one hundred African cities with over one million

inhabitants.

The starting point for reflections on how to establish a network of African metropolises has come from both Africa and an international context and has been marked by:

- The drafting and implementation of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, a strategic framework for the structural transformation of the continent seeking sustainable, inclusive and participatory development;
- The 2030 Agenda, which sets out 17 sustainable development objectives that are universal in scope, establishing milestones along the way to build a world that is socially just, environmentally sustainable, without poverty and in which no one is left behind;
- The Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which defines the steps that need to be taken to ensure that global warming does not exceed the limit of 2 degrees Celsius;
- The New Global Urban Agenda, in which the international community acknowledges the key contribution made by cities towards the development and emergence of a more inclusive world — provided that these cities are better planned, better financed and better managed, and that they are part of a system of human settlements that strengthens the connection between rural and urban areas, between different kinds of urban areas, and between villages, towns, and cities.

The forum, which connects Africa to the rest of the world, represents a united voice that aims to influence the global agenda and the African Union. It also represents an opportunity for Africa to contribute to the narrative on metropolitan governance. Political leaders from African metropolises will be brought together once more at two key events in Africa this year: the Metropolis Annual Meeting, to be held from 26 to 29 August in Gauteng Province, South Africa, and the Africities Summit, scheduled for 20 to 29 November 2018 in Marrakesh, Morocco.