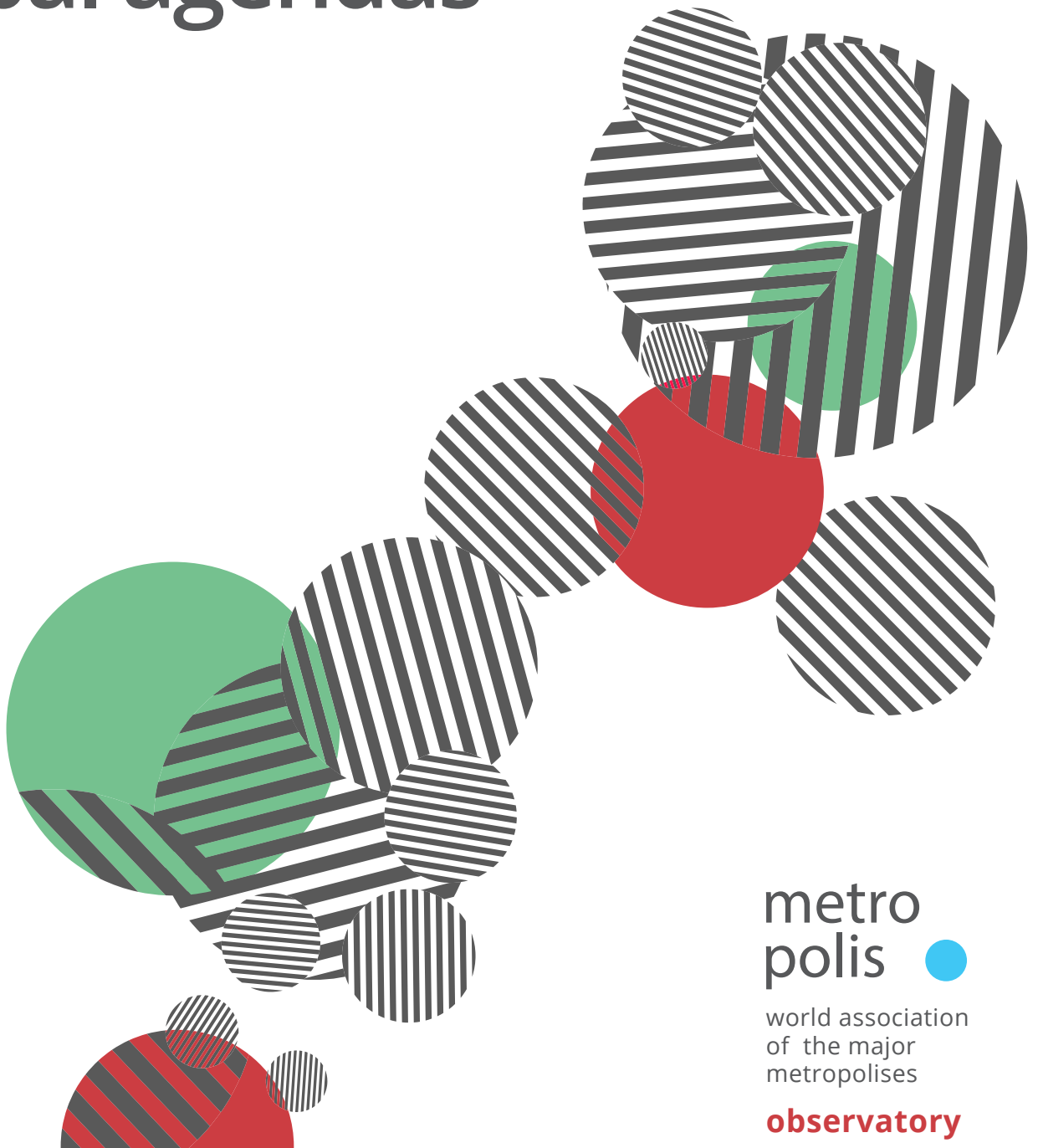


# Metropolises addressing the global agendas



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# Introduction

Our planet is advancing towards a metropolitan era characterised by major conurbations of unprecedented complexity and diversity. The challenges raised by the urbanisation process are becoming plain to see in metropolitan areas with more than a million inhabitants. Today more than 1.6 billion people live in these large metropolitan areas, which are expected to account for 40% of the global population by 2050.

In addition to the demographic aspect, major metropolises are focal points for much of the world's well-being, economic activity and innovation. The GDP of some of these metropolises is greater than that of a number of nation states, as they rank among the top worldwide economies – Seoul, Paris and Mexico City have each overtaken the economies of countries such as Sweden, Austria and Chile. They are home to government bodies, leading companies, universities, research and cultural centres and the main civil society organisations; and they are nucleuses for a large proportion of the talent and creativity, technological innovation and artistic output worldwide. Major metropolises are globally connected and they have the ability to structure and galvanise the territories around them at a local, national and regional scale.

However, metropolitan areas must also address serious threats. The inequalities between and within metropolitan areas are intensifying. The increasing pressure to achieve economic growth and competitiveness is giving rise to negative externalities that are having an adverse impact on sustainable urban development. In almost every metropolis around the world, it is possible to see growing social segmentation, which translates into varying forms of gentrification such as segregation in housing and in the labour market, as well as the ghettoisation of the most vulnerable communities.

Furthermore, the existing models of consumption cannot be sustained. Seventy per cent of greenhouse gas emissions are generated in metropolitan areas, which are themselves extremely vulnerable to the consequences and natural disasters linked to climate change. Environmental sustainability requires new patterns of production and consumption.

The outcome of the convergence of global and metropolitan challenges is that a significant part of the new generation of global agendas linked to sustainable development focus on large conurbations and have a decisive impact on the policies that are implemented. Consequently, metropolitan areas are the setting in which some of the planet's most pressing problems can be solved.

The new generation of global agendas that will set the guidelines for sustainable development in the coming years addresses the main challenges faced by metropolises and offers a frame of reference for public policies that major cities must promote. In this second publication of the Metropolis Observatory, Agustí Fernández analyses the connection between six of the main global agendas on sustainable development and the principal metropolitan challenges: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. With this analysis, we hope to contribute a number of fundamental tools to the implementation in metropolitan areas of the commitments established at a worldwide level.



Felip Roca  
Metropolis Secretary General

# The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development







In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly approved the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a multidimensional, integrated and universal agenda structured around 17 goals (SDGs), 169 targets and 232 indicators that set out the roadmap of the development policies of every country around the world for the next 15 years.

From the moment the Agenda was formulated, there has been widespread agreement that it will require active participation by metropolitan areas, not only in the implementation phase but also during the process to define national strategies and in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting stages. The inclusion of the spe-

cific target of sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) is an outstanding achievement made possible by the efforts of a powerful alliance of actors, the main networks of local and regional authorities, agencies in the United Nations system, a number of national governments, civil society organisations and academic institutions.

In addition to SDG 11, most of the goals and targets defined are directly linked to the powers and responsibilities that are recognised in most countries around the world as being within the remit of local authorities. There is, therefore, a direct connection between the SDGs and the main metropolitan challenges.

## Direct connections between the SDGs and the metropolitan challenges

	Fight against poverty, especially in slums, access to basic services, resilience Targets: 1.2, 1.3, 1.5		Access to basic services, climate change Targets: 7.1, 7.2, 7.3		Climate change, governance, planning, economic development Targets: 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.7, 12.8, 12.b
	Social inclusion Targets: 2.1		Economic development, equity, migration, culture Targets: 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 8.9		Resilience, climate change, governance, planning, equity, development cooperation Targets: 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.b
	Health, access to basic services Targets: 3.6, 3.7, 3.9		Sustainable transport, access to basic services Targets: 9.1, 9.c		Climate change Targets: 14.1
	Education, equity, access to basic services Targets: 4.1, 4.2		Fight against poverty, especially in slums, resilience, equity, migration, governance Targets: 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.7		Climate change, planning Targets: 15.9
	Equity, governance Targets: 5.1, 5.5, 5.c		Housing, access to basic services, sustainable transport, equity, planning, governance, culture, climate change, fight against poverty, especially in slums, resilience, health, development cooperation Targets: 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b, 11.c		Governance, health Targets: 16.1, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.10
	Access to basic services, governance Targets: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.b				Governance, development cooperation, fight against poverty, especially in slums Targets: 17.1, 17.14, 17.16, 17.17, 17.18, 17.19

**Most of the SDGs and targets are directly linked to local authorities' powers and responsibilities**

**The contribution made by metropolises to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda must be measured and capitalised on**

Leaving this evident connection aside, let us analyse the opportunities and challenges that the 2030 Agenda will represent for metropolises around the globe.

Firstly, there is a need to consider how metropolises are contributing to the shaping of national strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda. These strategies will influence a large number of national policies that affect metropolises from numerous perspectives (climate change, urban development, transport and infrastructure, housing, economic growth, etc.). This is why metropolitan authorities must work together to have a political impact to ensure that national strategies and the policies that stem from them meet the real concerns and needs of metropolitan areas.

The 2030 Agenda also constitutes an excellent opportunity for metropolitan authorities to mobilise the actors operating in their territory – civil society organisations, the private sector and academia – and to involve them in the Agenda's implementation process (as well as the monitoring and evaluation stages) through information and awareness-raising campaigns. The mobilisation of actors should also be central to the process of aligning metropolises' development, strategic or sectorial plans with the SDGs and with the national implementation strategies to achieve them.

The alignment processes, which must be pursued on the basis of metropolises' real needs, should serve to prioritise their contribution to the 2030 Agenda – they do not need to contribute to every goal and every target – in an approach co-ordinated with the various tiers of government and agreed with the main stakeholders in the territory. The involvement of these actors, in keeping with the theories of the Quadruple Helix, should help to mobilise all the resources available in the territory – knowledge, experience, technology, innovation, new solutions, funds, etc. – to develop specific initiatives in metropolitan sustainable development plans.

In addition, it is essential that the contribution made by metropolises to sustainable development and the new 2030 Agenda can be measured (in terms of outcomes and impacts) and capitalised on (in terms of learning). The 232 indicators gradually being formulated by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) are beyond the circumstances and capabilities of metropolises, since they are national in scope. In this respect, a very important challenge will be to strengthen metropolises' capacities to gather and process information and data. Having verified and reliable information is vital to the process of drawing up public policies, and it is also fundamental for demonstrating metropolises' contribution to the commitments in the 2030 Agenda.

### Metropolis members aligning their development plans with the 2030 Agenda

Madrid City Council has formulated a strategy to align its 2015-2019 Government Plan with the SDGs and targets in partnership with the main stakeholders in the metropolis who are members of the Madrid Solidarity Forum – an instance of multi-actor political dialogue that brings together representatives of various tiers of the public authorities, civil society organisations, academia, the private sector, trade unions and the media.



**The 2030 Agenda will consolidate the recognition of metropolitan areas as key actors in sustainable development processes**

As well as measuring their contribution to the SDGs, metropolises should also ensure they are in a position to report on everything they have done and the results attained. It is essential for national review reports to include metropolises' achievements and contribution. Similarly, it is also very important for cities themselves – and national associations of municipalities – to issue regular reports on how they are contributing to the implementation of the SDGs, on the way they have involved local actors and on the outcomes and impacts they have achieved. The 2030 Agenda should serve to consolidate the recognition of metropolitan areas as key actors in sustainable development processes: key actors that can mobilise and organise the

central stakeholders involved in development and which can bring them together in a joint development process; key actors at a world-wide level, participating actively in the design, implementation and monitoring of an agenda that should set the course of the planet's development up to 2030. As a result, it also gives them the possibility of accessing new opportunities in the form of financial resources for development (national, international co-operation and private funds) and in the form of knowledge and experience, new joint management approaches (particularly public-private partnerships), innovative solutions, etc.

## The New Urban Agenda

The New Urban Agenda (NUA), which emerged from the Habitat III Conference held in Quito in 2016, proposes a new development model for conurbations that encompasses every aspect of sustainable development, the goal

being to advance towards new standards of equity, well-being and prosperity for all. In this framework, the specific references in the NUA to metropolitan challenges focus on four main themes:

### Governance

- Effective metropolitan multilevel governance, across administrative borders, and based on functional territories
- Metropolitan authorities with the necessary powers – clear competences – and financial resources
- Metropolitan governance that is inclusive and encompasses various legal frameworks and reliable financing mechanisms, including sustainable debt management, as applicable

### Planning

- Metropolitan plans that encourage synergies and interactions among urban areas of all sizes and their peri-urban and rural surroundings
- Support for sustainable regional infrastructure projects that stimulate sustainable economic activity, and for the equitable growth of regions across the urban-rural continuum
- Promotion of inter-municipal co-operation mechanisms as effective instruments for performing municipal and metropolitan



### Inclusive multilevel governance based on functional territories

### Metropolitan plans that encourage synergies among all the urban areas and their peri-urban and rural surroundings

administrative tasks, delivering public services and promoting local and regional development

- The use of digital platforms and tools, including geospatial information systems, will be encouraged to improve long-term integrated urban and territorial planning and design, land administration and management, and access to urban and metropolitan services

### Sustainable transport

- The formulation of measures to develop mechanisms and common frameworks to evaluate the wider benefits of urban and metropolitan transport schemes, including impacts on the environment, the economy, social cohesion, quality of life, accessibility, road safety, public health and action on climate change, among other things
- The development of mechanisms and frameworks for sustainable, open and transparent procurement and regulation of transport and mobility services in urban and metropolitan areas, including new technology that enables shared mobility services

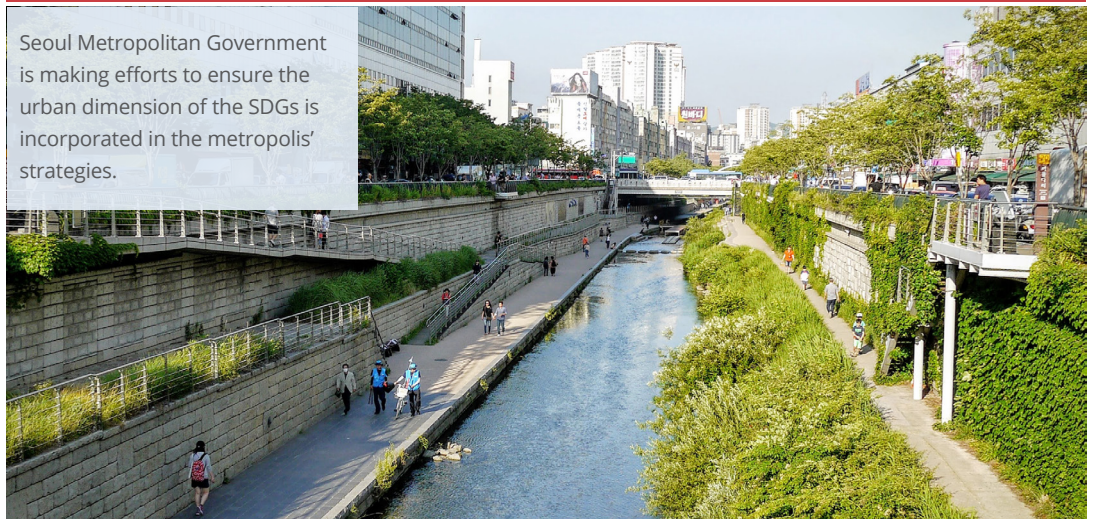
- The development of clear, transparent and accountable contractual relationships between metropolitan authorities and transport and mobility service providers, in particular on data management, thereby protecting the public interest and individual privacy and defining mutual obligations
- The development of sustainable urban and metropolitan mobility and transport plans

### Climate change and resilience

- The development of feasible solutions to climate and disaster risks in cities and human settlements
- The establishment of mechanisms to collaborate with stakeholders who can facilitate investments in urban and metropolitan infrastructure, buildings and other urban assets, as well as to enable local populations to meet their financial and housing needs

### Metropolis members aligning their development plans with the 2030 Agenda

Seoul Metropolitan Government is making efforts to ensure the urban dimension of the SDGs is incorporated in the metropolis' strategies.



**For the first time in a worldwide pact, the NUA includes the concept of the 'right to the city'**

In addition to these explicit references, which we might regard as limited within the metropolitan environment, the NUA is a guide for directing the efforts of all the actors operating

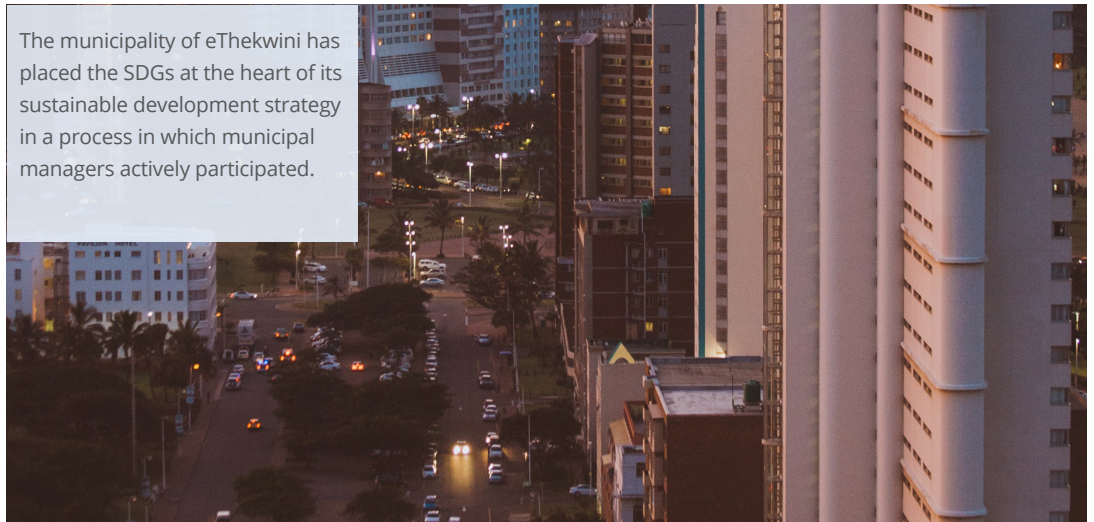
- 1)** The right to adequate housing as a basic component of the right to an adequate standard of living without discrimination
- 2)** Universal access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation
- 3)** Equal access for all to public goods and quality services in areas such as food security and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, mobility and transportation, energy, air quality and livelihoods
- 4)** Civic participation and engagement, cohesion and social inclusion

in a city (and a metropolis). To this end, it takes a universal, integrated and inclusive approach and supports a city that offers:

- 5)** Women's effective participation and equal rights in all fields and in leadership at all levels of decision-making
- 6)** Natural disaster risk reduction
- 7)** Lasting, inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- 8)** The restoration and promotion of the city's ecosystems, water, natural habitats and biodiversity

#### Metropolis members aligning their development plans with the 2030 Agenda

The municipality of eThekweni has placed the SDGs at the heart of its sustainable development strategy in a process in which municipal managers actively participated.



Créditos: David Preston

For the first time in a worldwide pact, the NUA includes the concept of the 'right to the city' and supports the entire system consisting of three 'facilitators' of sustainable urban development: local fiscal systems, urban planning and the provision of basic services and infrastructure. In this context, the NUA presents three challenges for metropolises and for the other actors who operate in cities.

Firstly, there is a need to define and specify the scope of some of the most innovative concepts in the NUA, in particular the right to the city. Even though the notion was formulated in 1968 (in Henri Lefebvre's book *Le Droit à la ville*), its inclusion in the NUA was strongly resisted, with the result that it was limited to the formulation of a vision of a city for all: a city that fosters prosperity and quality of life for all; a city for



**National governments must guarantee a favourable environment to ensure that local and metropolitan authorities are able to operate**

equal use and enjoyment; a city that is “just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable”. This is, in any event, a concept with enormous potential and one that offers a frame of reference for devising more sustainable and inclusive urbanisation processes.

Secondly, there is a need to make progress in the roll-out of the NUA by the actors operating in cities and metropolises. National governments must review their legislation and urban development policies in the light of the items agreed in the NUA. Cities and metropolises must work to ensure that national governments revise their policies effectively and align their own development plans (strategic and sectorial) with the guidelines formulated in the NUA.

All of this will require an integrated approach to sustainable urban development. Development plans – key elements in the implementation of the NUA – must ensure coherence between the various sectors and public policies involved in the development of cities and metropolises (regional planning, economic growth, social inclusion, the environment, resilience, housing, transport, waste management, etc.). In addition, there is a need to continue advocating forums that will bring together the various tiers of government operating in a city (national government and regional, metropolitan and local

authorities), as well as mechanisms for forging links with the various stakeholders active in the city as well (civil society, academia, the private sector, etc.), thereby ensuring their involvement in every stage of the formulation and implementation of public policies (design, execution, monitoring and evaluation).

For the roll-out of the NUA in cities and metropolises to be viable, there is a need to continue demanding that national governments guarantee a favourable environment to ensure that local authorities are able to operate (decentralisation, clarity in the assigning of powers and responsibilities, sufficient financial, human and technological resources, etc.). This is even more important in the metropolitan context given that in most countries, metropolitan governance is not equipped with adequate competences or legislative frameworks and that the financing and resource provision systems are far from satisfactory.

Lastly, the third challenge is related to the need to ensure that there is a coherent connection between the 2030 Agenda and the NUA: national sustainable urban development policies and the processes to align cities and metropolises’ sustainable development plans must conform to both the 2030 Agenda (which provides the frame of reference for sustainable development) and the NUA (the frame of reference for sustainable urban development).

### Metropolis members aligning their development plans with the 2030 Agenda

Bogota City Council (left) and Medellín City Council (right) have incorporated the SDGs into their Development Plans for 2016–2019, in efforts co-ordinated with the Colombian National Planning Department.



# The Paris Agreement

**The Paris Agreement recognises the importance of cities and other subnational administrations in the fight against climate change**

**Seven hundred representatives of local and regional authorities pledged to achieve ambitious targets to protect the planet**

The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21), held in Paris in late 2015, ended with the adoption of the Paris Agreement, which establishes the global framework for combating climate change from 2020 onwards. It is an ambitious, functional and legally binding historic agreement that promotes a transition towards a low-emission economy that can withstand climate change in order to limit global warming to a rise of two degrees.

The Paris Agreement recognises the importance of cities and other subnational administrations, in addition to civil society, the private sector and others as non-party stakeholders. The Climate Summit for Local Leaders was held as part of COP 21, where 700 representatives of local authorities from all over the world, including metropolises, signed the Paris City Hall Declaration. In this Declaration, the leaders of the participating cities and regions pledged to achieve ambitious targets to protect the planet and ensure a sustainable future.

It is highly significant that the local leaders set more ambitious targets than those adopted by national governments to reduce urban greenhouse gas emissions, committing to securing up to 3.7 gigatonnes of annual greenhouse gas reductions by 2030, which is equivalent to 30% of the predicted difference between current national commitments and the emission levels recommended by the scientific community to limit warming to two degrees.

The local authorities also pledged to work towards the full transition to renewable forms of energy at the local level and an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Aware of the inextricable link between these climate-related measures, the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, the signatory local leaders promised to “join global organisations, national governments, the private sector and civil society to provide a joint response to climate change that protects our planet”, taking advantage of existing platforms like the Compact of Mayors, the Covenant of Mayors, the Compact of States and Regions, the NAZCA platform and the Local Government Climate Roadmap.

It is vital that local authorities, including metropolitan authorities, remain linked to global political processes in the fight against climate change, especially at a time when the United States government has abandoned the Paris Agreement. In this context, large US cities have already made clear that they will continue to fight against climate change and the other metropolises around the world are also generally reaffirming their role and determination to meet the commitments made. Likewise, the metropolises must do all they can to involve and engage people and local stakeholders in this shared effort. Finally, the commitments made must be reflected in metropolitan sustainable development plans and in actions defined in their frameworks whilst necessary measures are established to assess the results and provide accountability to the people.

# The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

**The Sendai Framework recognises the role of local authorities in reacting and providing basic services during crises and emergencies**

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was adopted in the third United Nations World Conference held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015. This is a voluntary and non-binding agreement that recognises the responsibility of all stakeholders in society to reduce disaster risks.

The Sendai Framework identifies four priority areas in relation to which specific measures should be taken in all sectors, as well as at local, national, regional and worldwide levels: to understand disaster risks; strengthen disaster risk governance to manage those risks; invest in reducing disaster risks for resilience; and enhance disaster risk preparedness in order to respond effectively and to “build back better” in terms of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The document recognises the role of local authorities several times, as they are the first to react to crises and emergencies and to provide resilient basic services (education, water and sanitation and transport). The cities and regions are committed to the Framework (through the Declaration of Local and Regional Governments at the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Cancun in May 2017, for example) and have urged the national governments to provide the necessary financial, institutional and legislative support to develop risk prevention strategies and take other steps as set out in the Framework.

At the individual level, the metropolises must develop risk prevention and reduction plans that involve all citizens and local stakeholders and coordinate efforts with the different tiers of government with competence in the matter (national, regional and local governments).

# The Addis Ababa Action Agenda

**Most local and metropolitan authorities lack adequate funding**

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) is another international agreement milestone reached in recent years. The Action Agenda provides the basis for funding implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The mobilisation of domestic financial resources, more effective international co-operation, access to new forms of funding and public-private partnerships are just a few of the subjects covered in the Action Agenda.

Paragraph 34 of the Action Agenda makes special mention of the role of subnational governments in sustainable development-related spending and investment. Metropolises face this fundamental challenge as well, since most countries in the world lack the right resources to ensure the infrastructure and basic services necessary for sustainable development.

In this regard, according to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, progress must be made in empowering local authorities to generate their own resources (fiscal decentralisation), ensure predictable systems for participation in state revenues (transfers) that are established by law and commit to making the most of locally available domestic resources. Indeed, in a context of scarce resources, local budgets must be aligned efficiently with the priorities identified and established by the local governments themselves in the development plans.

Similarly, city governments must be able to access both official and decentralised international co-operation funds and alternative

sources of financing, whether through public debt or other forms of funding (private debt, philanthropic funds, crowdfunding, etc.), or by establishing alliances with other stakeholders, especially through public-private partnership mechanisms that provide access to funding, knowledge, new solutions and technology.

In order to do this, it is essential to support city governments in improving their institutional and operational capacities through more efficient planning and management systems aimed at achieving results. These systems must also be more transparent, geared towards preventing corruption and fraud; and more responsible, aimed at accountability.

## Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation

**It is crucial for the cooperation programmes to focus on metropolises so they can meet their real needs**

In 2011, the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness was held in Busan, marking a turnaround in international discussions on aid and development. The forum culminated in the adoption of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, a statement that for the first time establishes an agreed framework for moving towards more effective forms of development co-operation that accommodate traditional donors, South-South co-operation stakeholders, developing countries, civil society organisations, philanthropic organisations and other public and private donors like subnational administrations.

Recognition of subnational administrations as fully-fledged stakeholders of the international development co-operation system (they sit on the Global Partnership Steering Committee) results from their recognition as key players in sustainable development processes.

In this regard, one of the main challenges before the metropolises is their lack of direct access to the official development co-operation programmes of traditional donors (and of new South-South donors), which have thus far only worked with national governments. Changing this would help to guide them towards the priorities set by municipal authorities in their development plans.

It is also crucial for the co-operation programmes promoted by other private stakeholders and especially by philanthropic organisations to focus on metropolises, ensuring that they meet the cities' real needs and the priorities set forth in their development plans.

Finally, decentralised co-operation has become established as a type of development co-operation naturally oriented towards the principles of effectiveness that may help considerably to



strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of city governments. Decentralised co-operation provides metropolises with an exceptional tool to define platforms for sharing experiences, transferring knowledge and learning from each other; for innovating and

sharing new solutions; for building bridges between territories involving local stakeholders, providing them with a framework for exchanging and defining shared opportunities; and for, in short, sharing the challenges and opportunities resulting from urban development.

## Recommendations for the metropolises

- Approach the global agendas of sustainable development from a comprehensive perspective, becoming aware that they are the setting in which some of the planet's most pressing problems can be solved. On the one hand, these agendas have a cross-cutting impact on their strategic and sectorial plans; on the other hand, the actions included in these plans are how the metropolises help to implement the targets set by the international community to make progress in sustainable development.
- Define advocacy strategies, directly or through associations or networks representing them, so that national sustainable development programmes, and particularly those designed to implement the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, meet the metropolises' needs and interests.
- Make an effort to delve deeper into the most innovative concepts of the New Urban Agenda and especially into that of the right to the city.
- Encourage revision of the strategic and sectorial development plans of metropolitan authorities (or of the cities that make up a metropolis) to align them with the new agendas in close coordination with the different tiers of government, structuring the effective participation of local stakeholders (grassroots and civil society organisations, the private sector, academia, etc.).
- Identify and set priorities and promote specific, measurable actions that involve the local stakeholders.
- Work to make the most of the resources available for the revised development plans, investing in improving management systems (especially the public contracting system) and mobilising the domestic resources of the territory through public-private partnership systems and other systems to access new forms of funding.
- Lobby for transparency, accountability and steps aimed at preventing corruption and fraud.
- Provide accountability of their contribution to the global development agendas through reporting systems designed for this purpose. To this end, they must establish and use indicators as aligned with those defined within the framework of the United Nations as possible.
- As part of the work with the associations and networks that represent them at the national, regional and global levels:

- Participate in and influence the process to define the indicators linked to the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda so they properly reflect metropolitan situations.
- Strengthen their advocacy strategies on subjects like decentralisation, competence systems, metropolitan governance, local funding and the adaptation of human, material and technological resources.
- Continue providing information and data about the situation of the metropolises in the world and generating knowledge about it.
- Stress the establishment of direct channels between the programmes of bilateral and multilateral agencies (including those operating in the South-South) and the metropolises, without having to pass through the filter of national governments.
- Enhance their strategies of decentralised co-operation and international action through which they build bridges with other metropolises in the world.

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