



UCLG AFRICA
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis d'Afrique
CGLU AFRIQUE



DECLARATION OF MAYORS AND LEADERS OF LOCAL AND SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS OF AFRICA

We, the Mayors and Leaders of Local and Subnational governments of Africa gathered in the framework of the 8th edition of the Africities Summit held in Marrakech from November 20 to November 24, 2018, under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, around the theme of " **The transition to sustainable cities and territories: the role of local and subnational governments in Africa** ";

Aware of the new role that Africa will play in the coming years as the world's first human home with nearly 40% of the world's population by 2100;

Noting that by 2050, one out of every two young people in the world will be African, and that in the next ten years Africa will see about 200 million of its young people entering the labour market, offering to the economy the opportunity to benefit from the demographic dividend if this workforce is well used, or on the contrary opening a period of social tensions if this workforce is not properly employed;

Taking into account the acceleration of the population changes brought about by the rapid demographic growth of the continent, whose population that was mainly rural 30 years ago will become predominantly urban within 30 years , with an urban population estimated at 1.5 billion inhabitants by 2050;

Given the large migratory flows that the changes in pattern of settlements generate, with people moving from rural areas to urban areas, from poor regions to rich regions, but also from countries and regions experiencing socio-political tensions or displacement related to the consequences of climate change to localities, countries and regions considered at peace and more welcoming;

Concerned by the alert given by the International Panel of Climate Experts (IPCC) warning that the addition of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) proposed by states in compliance with their commitment pertaining to the implementation of the Paris Agreement to Combat Climate Change still results in an increase of the planet's temperature by 3 degrees Celsius by the end of the century, well beyond the bar of 2 degrees Celsius defined as the threshold beyond which the climate trajectory would become irreversible, the ideal being to aim for a rise in temperature of the order of 1.5 degrees in relation to pre-industrial temperatures;

Feeling the urgency of the international and continental agendas whose implementation requires a strong commitment of local authorities, especially in Africa;

Convinced that such an engagement is possible only if the local and subnational governments of the continent benefit from a favorable institutional environment, with the human and financial means of action required to exercise the competencies that the laws of decentralization now recognize to the local and subnational governments;

Recognizing that in this matter, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union have shown their firm will to implement and deepen decentralization policies in Africa by adopting in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the African Charter of Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development; as well as the creation of the High Council of Local Authorities as an advisory body to the Union;

Recalling the key role played by the cooperation between local and subnational governments in accelerating regional integration, conflict prevention, and the preservation of peace among African communities;

DECLARE THE FOLLOWING:

1. **We want** to make of our cities and our territories living areas which are productive , creating jobs, inclusive, and open to all, where all the inhabitants have the same rights and the same obligations, without exclusion or discrimination, with special attention being dedicated to populations with disabilities and to migrant populations, so that cities and territories are in line with the UN recommendation to leave no one behind;
2. **We pledge** to promote more participatory governance and a greater presence and effective participation of women and youth in the governing bodies of our cities and territories. In this regard, we are delighted by the launch of the Pan-Africa Campaign for African Cities Without Street Children, initiated by the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa (REFELA) and under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Meryem of Morocco. We encourage cities of Africa to participate in this campaign so that the phenomenon of street children is eradicated in our cities as quickly as possible, since it is true that our life is only as good as the one we offer to our children;
3. **We are committed** to planning and managing our cities and territories more effectively, following a strategic approach to address the pressing issues facing people, while preparing the conditions for a shift to a ecologically more responsible and socially fairer road to development;
4. **We recognize** that informality is one of the specific characteristics of African cities and territories, both in terms of the organization and occupation of urban space, as well as the supply of economic activities and jobs in urban and territorial economies. We therefore commit ourselves to mobilizing the informal settlements dwellers and the actors of the informal sector of the economy so that they contribute effectively to the structural transformation of Africa, relying particularly on the creativity and innovation of the youth of our cities and territories;
5. **We reaffirm** our commitment to make our cities and our territories eco-responsible actors, decided to contribute to the achievement of the Nationally Determined Contributions (CDNs) defined by the national governments for the

implementation of the Paris Agreement. We intend to extend the efforts of our national governments through the definition and implementation of Locally Determined Contributions (LDCs) in order to participate in the increase of the ambition of the Paris Agreement and limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. We invite cities and territories of Africa that have not yet done so to join the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy thus participating in this collective effort to increase the ambitions of the Paris Agreement;

6. **We also affirm** our commitment to participate in the implementation of Agenda 2063 of the African Union defining the path that leads to the Africa that We Want a century after the birth of the Organization of African Unity to which the African Union has succeeded. We are also determined to work on the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations as part of Agenda 2030, and to participate in the preparation of national reports and specific reports to local and subnational governments produced to measure and verify progress made in achieving the SDGs and their impact on improving the living conditions and the living environment of the populations in our cities and in our territories;

7. **We encourage** local and subnational governments to group themselves within national associations in each country to promote their synergy of action, and to join our continental umbrella legitimate organization representing the voice of the local and subnational governments of the African continent, United Cities and Local Governments United of Africa (UCLG Africa). In this regard, we welcome the creation of the Forum of African Regions and the Forum of African Metropolises within the framework of UCLG Africa.

8. **We are deeply convinced** that a strong State is a highly decentralized State. We therefore ask our national governments to put in place an institutional, legal and regulatory framework conducive to decentralization and the application of the subsidiarity principle in the management of public affairs. We draw their attention in particular to the urgency of putting the competencies recognized to local and subnational governments in consistency with the human and financial means necessary to exercise effectively and efficiently these competencies for the benefit of the local populations;

9. **We reiterate** our call to our National Governments to sign and ratify the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union since June 2014 ; and to the African Union Commission to accelerate the process of setting up and bringing into operation the High Council of Local Authorities as a consultative body of the African Union;

10. **We call** on development partners to reserve to local governments at least 30% of the budgets dedicated to their cooperation programs. We also request that part of the budgetary support programs negotiated with National



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Governments be directed towards the achievement of the SDGs at the level of cities and territories;

11. **We draw the attention** of National Governments, Regional Economic Communities and of the African Union to the urgent need to conduct strategic thinking on the issue of the rapid urbanization of the African continent and its economic, political, social and cultural consequences; and to make it one of the priorities of the political agenda at the national, regional and continental levels. In this regard, we propose that the theme of one of the next Summits of Heads of State and Government of the African Union be : "The contribution of African cities to the structural transformation of the continent ".

12. **We urge** National Governments to define and implement national urban policies as well as national spatial planning policies to better manage the dynamics of urbanization of our continent, in accordance with the New Urban Agenda adopted by the United Nations in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. These policies must be defined in accordance with the principle of leaving no territory aside. They must take into account the potential of each locality, each city and each territory. These policies must organize the interconnection of these territories, cities and localities to promote the mobility of people, goods and factors of production; contribute to the development of local, national and regional markets; and to the establishment of a coherent system of human settlements that creates harmonious relations between cities and their hinterlands, and between major cities, intermediate cities, small towns and rural centers.

13. **We call** for the strengthening of decentralized cooperation between African local and subnational governments especially in terms of cross-border cooperation. We are convinced that cross-border decentralized cooperation contributes to rooting the dynamics of regional integration on a daily basis and among citizens. In this regard, we call for the establishment of appropriate frameworks for the development of the international action of cities and territories. We are indeed of the opinion that this action broadens the field of international relations and contributes to humanizing relations between Nations. Through this action, we want to participate in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and the preservation of an atmosphere of peace and harmony between communities and peoples of Africa. In this regard, we ask the African Union to include local and subnational governments in her early warning mechanism on conflicts through the involvement of national associations of local and subnational governments at the national level, and of UCLG Africa at the regional and continental level.

14. **We welcome** the excellent organization of the 2018 Africities Summit and extend our thanks to His Majesty King Mohammed VI who has agreed to grant His High Patronage to this flagship event of UCLG Africa.

15. **We thank** the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Communal Councils (AMPCC) and the City of



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Marrakech for the quality of their welcome and for all the arrangements made available to delegates and which have largely contributed to the resounding success of the 2018 Africities Summit.

16. **We sincerely congratulate** the Summit's organizing team for the appropriateness of the theme chosen, the quality of the preparation of the various sessions, the quality of the debates they gave room to, and for the recommendations to which these sessions have led.

17. **We salute and congratulate** the Association of Mayors of Gabon represented by its President, Mrs. Rose Christiane Ossouka - Raponda, for her brilliant election as President of UCLG Africa for the next three years.

18. **Finally, we congratulate** Kenya's Kisumu County and its Governor for having been chosen to host the ninth edition of the Africities Summit in 2021, and urge them to get down to work right away to mobilize the President and the Government of Kenya as well as the Council of Governors of Kenya to ensure that the Africities Summit in Kisumu lives up to the reputation of this important global event.

Done in Marrakech, on November 24, 2018

The Participants