



Meeting of the Friends of the Forum

Report of the GFMD Mayors Mechanism

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Mr. Chair, Excellencies, partners:

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to speak and update you on the Mayors Mechanism activities and plans the coming months.

I. Co-Chairing the Ad Hoc Working Group on Narratives on Migration

First of all let me support the statement my colleague Sophie van Haasen made on behalf of the 3 co-chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group to Balance Public Narratives. We are delighted to be co-chairing this work, and to have 5 cities and city-networks, including Montreal, Johannesburg, Sao Paulo, Mechelen and Welcoming International closely involved in its activities. We are excited about the development of the international campaign, which will very much build onto local communities' sense of belonging and solidarity, including in the context of COVID-19 response and recovery. The working group and its plans for the international campaign, really showcase the ability of the GFMD to create concrete partnerships with the entire GFMD community, and we're looking forward to the work ahead of us.

II. Membership COVID-19 working group

We're equally excited to be a member of the Ad Hoc Working Group on COVID-19 and look forward to contributing to its activities.

III. Practitioner Groups and Thematic Roundtables Preparations

We've participated actively in the Practitioner Group discussions and look forward joining the Government Roundtable preparations going forward. We're in the process of drafting short position papers, which will highlight local perspectives, and lift up a number of city practices that will help illustrate local realities and solutions.

IV. LaMP partnership track and Migration Labs

We have actively engaged with the colleagues from LaMP as they rolled out their strategy the coming months, and with regards to the specific thematic workstreams, city actors are



actively co-leading 3 thematic groups, in direct partnership with national governments or intergovernmental organisations:

- Topic 2 and 5: on local data collection and decentralisation in Africa, we co-chair directly with the African Union and IOM.
- Topic 4: Regional Coordination in Latin America and the Caribbean, we co-chair directly with the government of Guatemala and ICMPD.

The opportunity to work closely with government actors has been of key importance for the Mayors Mechanism and has already created new entry points for city actors at regional level.

A few thoughts on the next steps of the partnership track towards the Summit: COVID-19 has complicated the ability to create the space to build interpersonal connections, an important cornerstone for building sustainable partnerships. We welcome the dedication of LaMP to implement its partnership track with an eye to propose a number of fundable proposals at the Summit, and we stand ready to discuss ways to achieve this in a largely virtual context.

V. The MM engagement in the GFMD Summit

With regards to the preparations of the Summit we have been deliberating within our Steering Committee on how to best to engage in light of a Summit taking place in a time where COVID-19 will still be with us and we have taken the difficult decision to not send an in-person city delegation to the Summit: aside from the sanitary risks that international travel might imply, many of our city colleagues are still facing challenging situations at home and in their communities. This decision is ofcourse based on the current situation and information available to date, which we can reassess should such conditions change.

In light of this virtual-only engagement, we stand ready to ensure meaningful engagement of cities in all elements of the Summit, including their participation in the Thematic Roundtables and Opening and Closing sections of the Summit. We are also considering the organisation of a number of smaller tables, designed to bring together a small number of GFMD actors with cities for an in-depth conversation on specific topics. On this, we will also be coordinating closely with the Chair, and the other two mechanisms to see whether there are topics we would want to jointly organise around.

We are convinced that a virtual component to the Summit can be used as an important opportunity, for example to engage those leaders and actors who have not been participating in past GFMDs due to a number of reasons. We therefore look forward to upcoming discussions on the structure of a hybrid summit and stand ready to think with all of you on how this might work best.

Thank you.