Item 2 – Annex 1

COVID-19 AFTERMATH
AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
TOWARDS FUTURE GENERATIONS
DECALOGUE FOR THE POST-COVID19 ERA

Local and Regional Governments, allies at the forefront leading solidarity

1. In a context of unprecedented and universal challenges we, the local and regional governments around the world, are at the forefront of the efforts to overcome these proving times as allies of other spheres of government, of the scientific community, and as global actors with important transformational and convening power.

2. This pandemic has galvanized how critical our role is in raising public awareness and maintaining the functionality of basic public service provisions and has required the rapid development of new and adapted services to support sanitary measures, all while ensuring the protection of the local public officials who facilitate them.

3. Further, we are making special efforts to support the most vulnerable in our cities and towns, we are fostering solidarity among territories and putting measures in place against discrimination, exclusion, and addressing inequalities to ensure the right to the city of our populations.

4. Solidarity has become a beacon of security, and it should guide the transformations we need. Local and regional governments have demonstrated their capacity to act as promoters and guardians of this solidarity both nationally and internationally.

The sacrifices of our communities cannot go unnoticed

5. As we progress in addressing health challenges, currently deserved of our undivided attention, we must also focus on how to avoid a transformation from a health crisis into a global social crisis. We, the leaders of local and regional governments around the world, are looking ahead, well aware that our cities, towns, and territories will never be the same in the aftermath of this crisis.

6. This emergency challenges many of our models and puts a magnifying glass on the many shortcomings we were already aware of, such as the need to preserve public service provision and, particularly, the health care for citizens, the need to reduce the digital divide particularly for child education and to facilitate teleworking, the acknowledgment of polycentrism, the urgency to ensure adequate housing and basic services for the more vulnerable populations and to secure livelihoods.

7. This crisis has hit hardest among the most vulnerable and invisibilized populations, migrants, in particular, but also individuals who live in the peripheries and work in informal environments (particularly women), are experiencing added fragility and outbreaks of violence beyond the pandemic itself. Peace beyond the pandemic will need to be built from our communities and streets.

8. We have been fostering collective learning from the very beginning of this pandemic, and we will continue to do so, asking the thought-provoking questions that will need to guide our actions both in the immediate aftermath but also beyond the initial post-COVID-19 recovery phase. We, local and regional governments, will continue to work tirelessly, learning and supporting each other as a worldwide system of cities, local governments and regions to lead the discussion with communities on how our future will be shaped.

The SDGs, the framework for transformation

9. The sacrifices being made will reflect future generations, and thus debt and investments need to be coupled with robust plans for a sustainable future so as to respect our responsibility among generations. The Local 2030 principles and the SDGs remain, now more than ever, a valid reference to frame the transformational measures being implemented.

10. We are aware that the only way forward is via co-creation, with our communities and local actors –including the private sector- and with full collaboration between different spheres of government.

11. The pandemic has also put our democratic institutions under stress, challenging our governing systems. We are convinced that a renewed, strong multilateral governance system and a new collaborative governance culture can guide the necessary steps in such interconnected realities, and that local democracy, nourished by our diversity is critical for the future that our communities need. This is why we must present a package of measures for the aftermath.

The Decalogue for the post COVID-19 era

1. Guaranteeing Public Services

12. Development of strong systems of universal health care, supported by strong basic service provision.

13. Protection of local service provision systems that have continued to run, even in critical conjunctures.

14. **Public transportation**, all over the world, ensures key workers are able to go to their working spaces, and **is essential to guarantee the basic needs of the population**. It is critical to ensure that it is well resourced in light of the times to come.

15. **Ensuring the right to adequate housing for all**, and inclusive housing systems are key for disaster preparedness and beyond. If we are able to guarantee the right to housing to people in the midst of the pandemic, we cannot afford to go back to business-as-usual after the crisis.

16. The aftermath, the new normal, needs to tackle inequalities, by protecting **common goods** and basic needs such as housing, water, and energy, and ensuring that they are free of speculation so all citizens can have equal access to them. Science can prove to be an essential tool to ensuring basic needs to all, and it will be essential to foster the relationship between science and the common goods to leave no-one behind.

17. Ensuring access to internet for all as a basic service, as well as the adequate knowledge and tools to ensure its full use as a tool to access not only information, but other essential services such as education, in order to leave no one behind.

2. Financial Support Packages

18. Adopting financial support mechanisms that allow local and regional governments to continue to work at the frontline for the communities during the crisis and in the post-COVID-19 recovery phase.

19. Developing stimulus measures at the national level, in collaboration and coordination with all spheres of government that will ensure the consistency and sustainability of essential services as the income of local and regional government decreases.

20. An International Municipal/Territorial Relieve Fund can unlock access to funds for both the emergency and reconstruction.

21. The crisis should make us re-evaluate the capacity of local governments to borrow in order to exercise immediate public spending and reduce the social crisis. The role, and exercise of debt needs to be re-examined, so as to not hamper the growth and the well-being of the future generations in the aftermath.

3. Proximity models of global consumption and production

22. Proximity production models will need to be fostered, and should consider the informal sector, small and micro enterprises and start-ups, allowing us to harness inclusive innovation and renewed concepts of job creation bases on sustainability and quality of life.

23. The pandemic has shed a light on the consumption model of many cities with an over-reliance on tourism and unsustainable delocalized systems of production, and it will be essential to rebalance the relationship between economic growth, environment and public priorities that need to guarantee livelihoods for all.

24. Re-evaluate the relationship between technology, inclusiveness and economic growth, developing alternative technology that is accessible to all. Technology and digital rights can and must go hand in hand.

25. A territorial approach to food systems should guarantee not only security but also greater sustainability models in which many small producers and small processors, respectful of the environment, would restore life and particularly the protection of wild life biodiversity and embrace a new relation with nature fostering nature-based solutions. The development of our territories will need to have polycentrism and the rural urban continuum at its core. They should further encourage proximity and sustainable job creation connected with local development.

4. A worldwide green deal

26. It is essential to ensure that the measures that need to be taken to address climate change carry on in the post COVID-19 world. We need to ensure that measures to reinvigorate the economy do not undermine legitimate environmental concerns and that, in the aftermath, economic development and environmental degradation do not go hand-in-hand. This calls for supporting nature-based solutions to contribute to the world's natural ecosystems and heritage, developing sustainable linkages between rural and urban areas.

27. The response to COVID-19 needs to include a worldwide green deal that makes our communities more resilient to future outbreaks, and turn us into resilient territories in all levels, to ensure not just disaster preparedness, but the collective intelligence and in-depth work to ensure that we are much more collectively prepared for crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. This means returning to full economic activity through sustainable models.

28. Fostering telework at a larger scale can enable us to cut down on emissions, contribute to more sustainable mobility models, and reconcile work and personal life.

5. New citizenship and freedoms for renewed democracy

29. There is no false dichotomy between security and health, or privacy and civil liberties. Human and civil rights need to continue being the cornerstones of our societies worldwide. Strong local democracy can be the custodian of those values.

30. Governments at all levels will need to ensure that data gathering and the development of artificial intelligence is used for the common good and that rights are guaranteed with involvement of communities and at the service of democratic societies. It is technologically possible and it should be our framework once the crisis is over.

31. It is essential to ensure that the recovery is done *with* the more vulnerable populations in mind, and not *against* them, by tackling false narratives and guaranteeing a rights-based approach to the aftermath of the pandemic.

6. Generation Equality

32. The time has come to place an equality framework in urban planning, in legislation and development. Time has come to ensure full inclusion, full participation of women and girls in politics and in the social fabric of cities and regions.

33. Nearly one in five women worldwide has experienced violence in the past year. The pandemic has exacerbated this reality for many women, and it is critical to put in place gender-violence responses to protect women worldwide and ensure their access to basic services.

34. Safety nets and protocols for social and economic care must be expanded to ensure special protection to particular groups with special needs like boys and girls, the elderly and people with disabilities.

35. The pandemic has highlighted how the livelihoods of women are worsening, and how women's lives are overburdened with care responsibilities that are often invisible. It is critical to take decisive steps to empower women and girls everywhere, improve their working conditions, in particular in care-related works, and promote governance models that allow for co-creation with women's leadership in all sectors of society. This is the only way in which we will achieve a Generation Equality in which women's leadership is not an exception, but the norm.

7. Territories that care for their public providers,

36. The crisis has highlighted the importance of taking care of and protecting services, as well as people who provide them: public servants. It is up to local and regional governments to take care of those who work day-to-day to provide basic services to our communities, to value their contributions to society, to ensure decent work and to foster a model of production that is people-centred and that puts service provision, and providers, at the forefront.

37. It is further imperative to ensure the continuity of employment in the post-crisis era, acknowledge the jobs in the informal economy, which are often invisible and recognise how essential they are for the functioning of our societies. This needs to be made extensive, as well, to those jobs mostly done by women in the care sector, often underpaid or even unpaid. Their care is not only an indispensable safety net but also a critical contribution to our economies.

8. Culture as an antidote for the secondary effects

38. The cultural actors and sectors haves responded and offered critical inspiring contents that are helping us through the crisis. People have turned to culture to create meaning, to show solidarity and to boost general morale. There cannot be a better illustration of why culture needs to consolidate as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. In the aftermath, it is essential to carry out a conversation on how communities interact with, and access, culture.

39. The full cultural sector will need special attention as its financial sustainability is in jeopardy.

40. Addressing inequalities with be more important than ever, by developing programmes on heritage, creativity and diversity, available to all (that is, implementing cultural rights at a local level) as will nourishing the broad conversations on the values that bring humanity together.

9. An interurban system

41. An international system built on the force of local and regional governments that learn and define policies together to bridge the territorial divide, supported by strong associations that will allow scaling up of actions. This system will put sharing and local democracy at the core, defining solidarity and resource capacity as the backbone of humanity.

10. Next Generation Multilateralism

42. A global plan is needed. International measures that are vast, inclusive, and effective to reach all territories can only be achieved by solid international and regional governance, and will require open and transparent governments, that are strengthened, and the sharing of verified information in order to face the challenges to come.

43. The next generation of multilateralism should carry local democracy at its core, fostering co-design and co-creation of public policies based around participation and community involvement.

44. In view of future pandemics, we need a strong World Health Organization with a multistakeholder governance structure with the capacity to facilitate procurement of medical supplies, testing kits, and Personal Protective Equipment.

45. Subsidiarity and local self-government is necessary for the success of actions at all levels. Dialogue amongst all spheres of government and an effective decentralization must be carried out to ensure that the wants and needs of citizens are present within all governance mechanisms and that they reflect reality on the ground.

46. Bringing all stakeholders together is essential to carry out a holistic approach to the emergencies that we are facing, and will face, and said approaches must not adversely affect individual and collective rights, the backbones of democracies.

47. More than ever, international cooperation is proving to be essential to respond to the current pandemic, but will prove to be even more essential in the aftermath. It will be critical to guarantee exchanges of knowledge and experiences, through decentralized cooperation and the creation of strategic alliances to build back better, stronger, and more inclusive after the pandemic. Local and regional governments must be the guardians of this international solidarity.