Smart Cities and Territories, Pillars of the Common Agenda
Open Policy debate organized in conjunction with
Smart City Expo World Congress

17 November 2021, 12:00-13:00 CET

The world has transformed rapidly, bringing to light that our strengths and our weaknesses transcend borders and that we must transition from a society based on consumption and production to a society based on care. The transition to a society that cares calls on us to rethink the role of technology, and how it needs to become an integral tool to protect people and the planet, while also being shaped by the communities that need it.

With the COVID-19 pandemic it became clear that technology can facilitate public service provision as well as constitute as a service in and of itself while at the same time risking to deepen inequalities and the protection of human rights at the digital level such as the right to privacy and the right to information.

Ensuring that we recover in an inclusive and sustainable manner, and to move from a society based on goods and services to one based on solidarity and care, means ensuring that local public services provision covers the new essentials that guarantee livelihood and prosperity to our communities and that safeguard our planet. This means looking at smart cities and territories under a different light and focusing not on what technology can do for goods and services but on how we can ensure technology improves the lives of people. It also means guaranteeing that all actors and stakeholders are listened to and involved in decision making that involves technology.

The municipal movement is committed to achieving people-centered smart cities and territories and to protecting digital rights. It is committed to the ambitious challenges set forth in the United Nations Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda report including fostering universal social protection and fighting inequalities, applying human rights online, protecting and safeguarding data and promoting the regulation of artificial intelligence (AI).

Throughout the pandemic, local and regional governments have been at the frontline of caring for people and the planet via the delivery of local public service provision and are endeavouring to build on the lessons learned to ensure no one and no place are left behind. The movement

understands the sense of urgency, and believes in the importance of co-creating the priorities of a renewed social contract: a Pact for Future for People, Planet and Government.

This session will address the different aspects of what it means to develop smart cities and territories in the urban era, building on the need to bridge the urban-rural divide, and shaping technology as a tool to benefit our populations and enabling us to rise up to the challenges and solutions of the Common Agenda. Only by harnessing technology with the wellbeing of our communities in mind can we ensure an equitable recovery and develop the breakthrough scenario that will make our cities and territories pillars of the common agenda identified by the UN Secretary General.

Agenda

Moderator: Emilia Saiz, Secretary General of UCLG

Local and regional government voices:
- **Mohamed Boudra**, President of UCLG
- **Carola Gunnarsson**, Mayor of Sala, First Vice-President of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), Vice-President of UCLG for Europe
- **Armand Béouindé**, Mayor of Ouagadougou, President of the Association of Municipalities of Burkina Faso (AMBF), Vice-President of UCLG for Africa
- **Berry Vrbanovic**, Mayor of Kitchener, Treasurer of UCLG
- **Souad Ben Abderrahim**, Mayor of Tunis
- **Gissela Chala**, Vice Mayor of Quito