

Item 1

✓ For information

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENCY 2019-2022

Summary and recommendations

This document highlights the major achievements of the World Organization from 2019 to 2022

It is not an exhaustive document, but features the milestones of the World Organization over the three past years.

The published reports for 2020 and 2021 are available on the web site and a detailed report for 2022 is part of the package of the World Council documents and available for any member on demand.

This item aims at providing the opportunity to the UCLG leadership to present the “state of the union” of our World Organization and movement that identifies the priorities for the coming years, the legacy of the Presidency and its mandate, and provides a sense of the work that remains to be done to consolidate some of the policies and actions put in place and to renew our priorities.

The Report of the Presidency will be divided into two parts: a brief summary of the key milestones of the Presidency over its term, and a full Presidency Report that summarizes the three years, available directly on UCLGMeets.

The General Assembly is invited to:

1. **Take note** of the report from the President.

State of the Union

1. In the lead-up to the World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders, our movement presented itself stronger than ever, embracing its origins to deliver its transformative vision for people, for the planet and for multilateralism. Safeguarding local democracy, building peace through mutual cooperation, and remaining loyal to the values and principles of decentralization, subsidiarity, gender equality, self-government and accountability.
2. Our World Congress in Daejeon is the moment to renew our leadership appointed in Durban. The time span since our Durban Congress has been atypical, marked by the pandemic and a moment of overlapping crises that have had an impact on the priorities of our movement, and to understand that governing with care and empathy needs to be at the core of what we do.



3. In 2020, the world stopped, and the way we all relate to each other radically changed, perhaps forever. The COVID-19 pandemic acted as a magnifying glass that highlighted who and what we were leaving behind and exacerbated the impact of the universal challenges we face.
4. We witness unprecedented levels of inequality to such an extent that peace and democracy are no longer granted. We are confronted with an environmental crisis that is reaching a point of no return. We live in a time of worsening divides where war has made its way into our lives with unforeseen impacts for day to day lives all over the world.
5. Throughout the duration of this leadership, our joint work has adapted the current context. With the universal development agendas as a framework for transformation, and through the Power of We, cities and regions ready to deliver a world that cares, our movement has endeavoured to overcome the pandemic that separated us physically, with the aim of developing a **Pact for the Future**: a strategy that goes beyond the decade of action, and speaks to the international processes that are looking at the post-2030 world.
6. In 2020, after a commitment in Tangier to join UN75, our focus was on galvanising our movement to respond to the call of the United Nations. With the pandemic transforming our habits, we met virtually and were able to build new partnerships, enhance existing ones, and bring together local and regional governments from all over the world into a knowledge platform. We were able to understand that, in spite of the distance, none of us are alone, and our shared efforts can shape the world around us, which was the guiding force between our Decalogue for the COVID-19 era.
7. The pandemic raged on, but 2021 saw a step forward in our commitment to place care at the centre of all actions. Our movement took leaps to present itself as a **Feminist Municipal Movement**, a statement to how we understand politics need to be practiced, and this movement was presented as such in the Generation Equality Forums and in CSW65. With the mandate to adopt a Pact for the Future as a means to deliver our Decalogue, we evolved our learning platform to ensure it was able to bring together partners in a process that would feed the Pact, and began taking strides to evolve our statutory gatherings for a hybrid world.
8. 2022 was the year in which we met again physically, but also a year where our capacity for diplomacy and unity has been put to the test. 2022 marked the review of the New Urban Agenda and saw UCLG facilitating our constituency through the Global Taskforce in the UN Assembly Hall. This year has also been the year of the UCLG Municipal Peace Talks putting the transformative city diplomacy at the centre of the agenda while carrying on our work around, research and learning.

We Act for People, for Planet, and for Governments

9. With the adoption of the mandate to deliver a Pact for the Future, our World Organization is transforming how it presents itself to the World. The three axes that structure the Pact -People, Planet, and Government- will guide our work in the coming years, and have become part of our work plan and of how we tell our story.
10. During the mandate of the Presidency, UCLG has understood that these axes need to permeate our work areas, and that "The Power of We" is our strength to deliver and respond to the current challenges we face. We care, and thus we Advocate, We Research, We Learn, We Listen, and We Meet to renew the social contract, to pave the way for a new social contract with care at the centre: by developing a feminist way of

doing politics, a new relationship with the planet, and a way of governing ourselves with municipalism and local democracy at the centre of decision-making.

11. Since 2019, **We advocate** for a world in which local and regional governments, and the communities that they represent, are a **part of the decision-making table** to bring about transformation. In regards to the future of **government** we were able to build partnerships with the World Health Organization and advocate for the right to healthy cities and territories, to join the UN Secretary-General's call for UN75, and to engage in the review of the New Urban Agenda in Quito+5 with the full strength of our constituency. Our constituency at the HLPF has maintained its structural spaces with the Local and Regional Government's Forum and Day, and local and regional governments remain an integral element of the advocacy towards the G-20, with the U20 initiative growing throughout these last years, presenting our calls to the leadership of the G20 countries. We have also strongly advocated and carried out activities for a world in which local and regional governments have access to finance.
12. Our movement has also strengthened its involvement in the human rights agenda, showcasing its focus on people with the birth of the **Feminist Municipal Movement**, the **Lampedusa Charter** and **the signature of a ground-breaking collaboration agreement with the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights** while working hand in hand with the UN Special Envoy on Disabilities to ensure universal access to services is part of the municipal agenda around the world.
13. UCLG has reinstated its commitment to equity, human rights and equal participation by developing advocacy and a community of practice on Inclusive and Accessible Cities and Territories; and under the premise of "access for all", we have promoted equal access to technology throughout the Network to ensure that the future is accessible to all.
14. When it comes to transforming our relationship with our planet, UCLG has worked to redefine how we interact with our planet, transforming our patterns of production and consumption, and ensuring a true ecological transformation. We have engaged with the three cycles of the COP, as well as with the COP on biodiversity, gathered within the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Major Group. Our movement has continued to be engaged around the World Water Forum, and showcased our and our strategy on intermediary cities and regions also has the wellbeing of our planet in mind. It will be critical to go from emergency to livability, and continue work through the institutional partnership with key partners in this area.
15. **We care** means bringing people to the centre of our efforts. It is the core of our values as a movement, following the calls of the Durban Political Declaration. Through solidarity, people-centred planning, and a feminist way of doing politics, the value of care has permeated our statutory gatherings, as our leadership met to take decisions to provide for our communities. Our statutory gatherings during these three years have had our communities at the core, as is proven by the development of the UCLG Decalogue for the COVID-19 era, the Rome Charter, the development and involvement of our Policy Councils in the policymaking of our organization.
16. Our work areas have worked within the framework of the upcoming Pact for the Future. **We research** to develop pathways for an equitable and sustainable future. Our 6th Global Report on Local Democracy and Decentralization, which will be presented in the World Congress, is focusing on the "pathways to urban and territorial inequalities". With participation of different parts of the network as well as academia, and civil society organizations, we are researching as one for a more egalitarian world that cares. Our research has also been the spearhead of our advocacy towards the United Nations, with our report *Local and Regional Governments towards the*

Localization of the SDGs being presented in 2020, 2021, and 2022 focusing on the state of localization, and bringing to light the involvement of local and regional governments in subnational reporting through VLRs and VSRs. Our engagement with the London School of Economics-Cities has allowed us to build institutional capacities for more effective urban and territorial responses to complex and global emergencies.

17. **We learn** by developing tools, activities, and modules to learn together and re-embrace localization, with the on-line Platform #LearningwithUCLG at the centre, developing over 50 learning courses, four modules on SDG localization and three modules on the localization of the Sendai Framework, and counting on more than 500 people registered. and developing the #LiveLearningExperiences, a platform of shared knowledge aiming at fostering connection of local practices to the global agendas. The training of trainers and peer learning among members are also indispensable parts of the work in this area.
18. **We listen to**, and build strengthened partnerships with the international community. Through our #CitiesAreListening Experiences and our Town Hall process, we ensure that the transformation of the global agendas is a process of co-creation alongside partners from the private sector and the internationally organized civil society, and follow our mandate that came out of Durban.
19. This work around care has been also mainstreamed in how we communicate, with our teams' new platforms that will allow enhanced communication among members and renewed visibility towards partners. The development of UCLGMeets.org and working on the backstage of the UCLG as Platform of Platforms have been critical. The experience of our #LiveLearningExperience and our #CitiesAreListening Experiences platforms have shaped the narrative of UCLG and have led to the renewed storytelling around the #PowerOfWe.

A Network that is fit for purpose

20. **Over the past years, UCLG has embarked in partnerships with the European Union and with the Swedish International Development Agency to support and enhance its activities. In order to ensure the efficacy of our actions and to respond to the challenges of the years to come, UCLG undertook an external evaluation from 2020 to 2022, whose results are promising and lay out the challenges we need to overcome in the coming years.**
21. Throughout the 2019-2022 period, the activities of UCLG have been powered in large part by the first generation of the Special Partnership between UCLG and the European Union, which was renewed until 2022 after five successful years. Throughout these years, the partnership with the European Commission has allowed us to enhance our work, to strengthen our partnerships in the international sphere, and has contributed to all work areas of UCLG, as well as to our Regional Sections.
22. The agreement will further support the role of local authorities and their associations in formulating policies to promote local, regional, and global level sustainable development and formalize a set of common interests and objectives. These include to enhance the engagement between the EU and local and regional governments and their associations in decentralized cooperation, foster the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, raise awareness and build the capacities of local and regional governments and their associations as governance and development policy actors at the international level; Strengthen the capacity of associations of local authorities to coordinate the voices of all partners, create synergies, and add value as

a network, ensuring good governance and sustainable partnerships, including with the European Union.

23. The next stage of this partnership will begin in 2023, until 2027. Supported by €50 million from the European Commission's Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI – Global Europe), the five renewed partnership agreements recognize the contribution of local and regional governments to the design and implementation of policies that are required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular for making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
24. Over these four years of implementation, the agreement with SIDA allowed us us to strengthen our advocacy work through the mobilization of our Ubuntu advisors in support of policy and knowledge development, to facilitate our learning activities, knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer exchanges and decentralized cooperation and thus increase the capacity of local and regional governments to design and implement innovative policies, and to strengthen our communication efforts and the showcasing of the experience of our members in the localization of the SDGs through the Local4Action Hub initiative.
25. The external evaluation of the programme carried out by Triple Line in mid-2022 highlights the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the programme. Perfectly coherent with UCLG's overall strategy, the programme has promoted a better understanding and concrete buy-in of the SDGs at LRG level and all its intended results across its different components were achieved, with a strong focus and cross-cutting attention on gender and women advancement. The evaluation also notes its remarkable efficiency, pointing out the full adaptation of its means of implementation in the context of COVID-19.
26. The evaluation also highlights some challenges: How can we better mobilize and address the specific needs of the Least Developed Countries? How can we strengthen our monitoring and evaluation system to better account for the outcomes of our work and demonstrate the added value of our Organization? How can we better communicate and mobilize our constituency beyond the 'willing'?
27. Consolidating these achievements and meeting these challenges will be at the heart of the discussions that UCLG and SIDA engaged in at the end of 2022 with the aim of developing a new phase of this partnership.
28. Following the mandate received by the Executive Bureau in May 2020 and the selection of the consultants during the World Council in November 2020, UCLG launched the process for its external assessment, this assessment analyses the performance of the Organization and its capacity to adapt to the changing ecosystem in which it operates. As decided by the Governing Bodies, it considers UCLG's position in the global context and the structure of the network. It has been carried out by the agency "DNA Consulting".
29. After receiving two initial reports on the progress made, in May 2021 and November 2021 respectively, in which DNA Consulting shared the preliminary results of the assessment after a phase of desk-work and in-depth interviews that included the perspective of the Sections, the World Council agreed to give more time to DNA Consulting to conduct additional interviews and online sessions with specific groups of members.
30. As per the final report, it appears that UCLG's evolution since its creation has been successful. It is a unique international organization on the international stage, in terms

of diversity of membership, legitimacy, uniqueness of its focus, geographical scope and generalist approach, which makes it particularly relevant and beneficial for its members.

31. Building on these recommendations, the World Secretariat is initiating consultation processes next year to address the key recommendations, and it is expected that these processes will be aligned with the strategic priorities defined by the Pact for the Future, and for the process to be launched at the 2023 Retreat.

Failure is not an option - The Pact for the Future towards the renewal of our systems

32. The transformation -of our models, of our actions, of our partnerships- is no-longer dispensable. Failing is not an option. Against this backdrop, we are firmly committed to contribute to a sustained and profound change in our societies and systems. A change to break through as one, stronger, caring for each other and for our planet.
33. The Daejeon World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders, our World Congress, will be the space to renew our leadership and our priorities for the coming six years, with a stronger focus on peace and city diplomacy, on gender equality, on human mobility, accessibility, health, proximity... we will present ourselves with renewed consultation mechanisms and the inputs of our partners of the Town Hall Process and our regional sections.
34. Through this Pact for the Future, UCLG members and our organized constituency acknowledge the importance of this foundational moment, for a world that bridges local actions and global trends. A world that guarantees equal access to public basic services. A world that has transformed its systems, from degenerative to regenerative. A world driven by well-informed, critical and empowered communities. A feminist world that cares and thrives with girls, women, boys and men equally empowered. A world based on solidarity.
35. United Cities and Local Governments, an equality driven movement, is committed to facilitating the space for local and regional leaders to make this world a reality, responding to the call of the UN Summit for the Future.