



INTERNATIONAL
CALENDAR

UCLG ASPAC 2021 Council meeting “Kicking of the new chapter”

25 Feb. 2021
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UCLG ASPAC, as the largest section of UCLG, plays its role as representative of local governments in the Asia Pacific region. With intense preparation, and to fulfill its Secretariat role, UCLG ASPAC held its bi-annual Council Meeting on Thursday (25/02) at Plataran, Senayan, South Jakarta.

Due to social restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, members of UCLG ASPAC could not physically unite under one roof for a live ground council meeting. However, to keep its strategic role running in this unprecedented global crisis, the UCLG ASPAC Secretariat comes to a solution. Through the increasingly feasible access to technology UCLG ASPAC's secretariat integrates ground live attendances and virtual attendees together in a HYBRID council meeting.

Ms. Tri Rismaharani as current President of UCLG ASPAC, opened the Council Meeting. She was touching on improving the organisation's governance in terms of administration, financial management and the overall re-examining of policies. It is especially relevant, as the pandemic's impact is the core of societies and economics.

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has presented local governments in the Asia Pacific region with a set of challenges and tests, particularly for the region's resilience. As a result, local governments are required to re-examine policies, innovate and develop adaptive strategies in development agendas to build back better from social, economic and health crisis. Therefore, this council meeting was also held to provide insights to local governments in the Asia-Pacific region especially on driving a sustained COVID-19 recovery.

That notion was reflected through the sharing of several important agenda agenda; first being the discussion on the new UCLG ASPAC 2021-2025 Manifesto; a continuation of the previous Strategic plans. It was also developed with foresight to even further develop and improve the underlying, as well as principal purposes of the organisation.

Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi as Secretary General of UCLG ASPAC, addressed that the Manifesto's overarching idea is the promotion of equal and basic services, the importance of effective democratic local governments and good governance. In addition to that, there were consistent reminders in including the recovery of cities and local governments from COVID-19 as an equal strategic component.

This was expressed in a detailed list of six priorities, which were positively welcomed by members of UCLG ASPAC. It was also especially evident through the additional inputs conveyed by the mayor of Padang City, Henri Septa, such as suggesting the establishment of a Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction due to its alignment with the UCLG ASPAC Manifesto. The newly elected Chairman of Association of Indonesian Municipalities (APEKSI) and Mayor of Bogor City, Bima Arya Sugiarto also responded well, putting particular emphasis into the encouragement of collaboration between members regarding best practices of COVID-19 handling and its recovery, providing equal and adequate services in the spirit of maintaining the principles of good governance and democracy.

The 2021 UCLG ASPAC Council Meeting was also the occasion of electing the new President and Co-Presidents for 2020-2022 Term, which marks the end of Ms. Tri Rismaharani term as current President of UCLG ASPAC which follows her newly appointed position as Minister of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. UCLG ASPAC members have elected **Mr. Ashok Kumar Byanju Shrestha**, Chair of the Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN)/Mayor of Dhulikhel as the new President of the Organisation, and Mayor of Zhengzhou City, Mayor of Iriga City, President of Local Government New Zealand and President of All India Institute of Local Self Government as Co-Presidents representing all sub regions. While the Governor of Jakarta Province remains to be Co-President as the host of UCLG ASPAC Secretariat. As additional, the council meeting also announced the elected Sub-Regional Representatives to Council and Sub-Regional Representatives to Executive Bureau for 2020-2022 Term.

Regarding the 8th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the City of Zhengzhou delivered its commitment to host it on August-September 2021, and to make adjustments on themes and supported activities, as well as planning of the same hybrid form of event. The Council Members also accepted the proposal made by Daejeon to host the 2022 UCLG ASPAC Congress to be held in conjunction with the UCLG World Congress. Finally, the council meeting ended on more celebratory notes, such as the approval of the City of Palembang as a new UCLG ASPAC member.