

## NEWS



## Metropolis and the Municipality of Tehran engage into a dialogue on City Diplomacy and Global City

The Municipality of Tehran has hosted the **National Conference on “Global City: The Role of Strategic Communication and City Diplomacy in Social Development”**, in Tehran, 17-18 May 2014. The Municipality of Tehran, the Chief of Center for Public and International Relations Mr. Shahram Gilabadi together with the Tehran Urban Planning and Research Center(TUPRC) and its Deputy Head of Science and Technology Department, Mr. Ali Farhadi, invited METROPOLIS to take an active role in the conference.

During the debates on May 17, METROPOLIS engaged into a dialogue on Global City and City Diplomacy with academics and experts from the University of Tehran and Media University of Tehran among other prestigious institutions and with representatives from other major cities such as Istanbul, Seoul, Tabriz and Mashhad. The debate was structured around 4 major areas and topics: Strategic Communication and Social Development, City Culture and Communication, Local Governance Urban Management and Global City and The Role of Culture and Art in Urban Diplomacy. Communication experts and urban managers engaged into thorough discussion towards designing the ideal roadmap to make Tehran a Global and World Class city and capitalize on the many assets the city offers - one of them being its enormous cultural diversity, rich culture, civilization and history. Strategic Communication was also the core matter of discussions and better social connectivity, local and direct communication, city diplomacy using social media and modern communication channels were identified as key steps to enhance Tehran presence as Global metropolis. In this regards the debate emphasized on the needs for cities to strengthen the relationships between the city 's managers and International institutions and Urban NGOs. These relationships with specific urban partners appear as good media to enhance the international presence and prestige of the this mega city of 12 millions of inhabitants and up to 15 millions of daily commuters. It also has proven to be a powerful tool for city development and to promote the metropolis better both locally and among the civil society.

The need to expand the "city to city" exchanges, the will to learn and develop strong capacity building programs for planning, management and sustainability was identified as a priority. With an urban population of 1.8 billion in Asia, and by 2025 bound to double, this challenge is immense in the region of Asia and it would require strong city leaders to support and engage with capacity building activities and programs of non-aligned global cities organizations like METROPOLIS. Tehran, in this regards, has shown its interest in interacting with other global cities and its willingness to share with the global cities about their own experience, mistakes. This meeting set the basis to a new momentum where the values of international city networking will be demonstrated. Tehran Municipality also emphasized the need to build on the many outcomes of the 4 discussion panels and implement the conclusions of the conference and the guidelines of more than 50 papers and studies compiled in a publication called "National Conference of the Global City" (shortly available [www.metropolis.org/Publications](http://www.metropolis.org/Publications)).

Tehran Municipality has been member of METROPOLIS since 1992 and participated in some of the past METROPOLIS Commissions works. This year, Tehran keeps its engagement and active role among world class cities and applied to the 5th Edition of the METROPOLIS Awards. The celebration of this edition will be held in Hyderabad in October 2014 during the METROPOLIS 11<sup>Th</sup> World Congress.

The METROPOLIS manager for International Relations represented the Secretary General during the National Conference on Global City in Tehran.