



# Megacities

**Commission 4**  
Report

**2011**

**metropolis ●**



## Commission 4 Megacities

**Presidency:** Mexico City

**Chair:** Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon, Head of Government, Mexico City Federal District

**Coordinator:** Felipe Leal, Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Mexico City Federal District

**Participant cities:** Abidjan, Antananarivo, Bamako, Barcelona, Brazzaville, Bogotá, Brazzaville, Brussels, Cairo, Caracas, Colonia, Daegu, Dakar, Durban, Ecatepec, Gauteng Province, Guadalajara, Guangzhou, Guarulhos, Istanbul, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Kolkata, Madrid, Manila, Moscow, Nanterre, Paris (Ile-de-France), Rabat, Rio de Janeiro, Rosario, Santiago de Chile, São Paulo, Seoul, Teheran, Vancouver

**Other institutions:** UCLG (Commission on “Strategic Urban Planning” and “Peripheral Cities”, The International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities (IAC), Program of City Studies (Autonomous University of Mexico)

**Acknowledgements:** Alain Le Saux, Antonio Aniesa, Arturo Ortiz Struck, Berndt Streitberger, Clara Salazar, Daniel Escotto, Derek Corrigan, Fabiola Cedillo, Fernando Santomauro, Gabriel Barros, Horean Kim, Msizy Myeza, Patrick Jarry, Peter Krieger, Sadi Melo Moya, Sara Hoeflich, Sergio Barrios, Soobs Moonsamy

**Author:** Public Space Authority – Mexico City Government

# Megacities Table of Contents

---

<b>01.</b> ▾	INTRODUCTION	4
<b>02.</b> ▾	GOALS OF COMMISSION 4: MEGACITIES	6
<b>03.</b> ▾	ACTIVITIES OF COMMISSION 4: MEGACITIES	7
<b>04.</b> ▾	DECLARATION OF COMMISSION 4: MEGACITIES	16
▾	ANNEXES	I

---

 [Back to main menu](#)

## 01.

## INTRODUCTION

The term “Megacity” is used to describe cities with a population of more than ten million inhabitants. Megacities are normally made up of different political bodies and generally include central and periphery areas.

Although information sources differ as to the population of Megacities, mainly due to the urban area spreading out over territories that are divided by different political bodies and to the fact that defining the borders of Megacities is not always easy, there are at least 29 Megacities in the world.

City	Population	City	Population
Tokyo	35 million	Rio de Janeiro	13 million
Mumbai	22.8 million	Lagos	12 million
Delhi	22 million	Istanbul	12 million
New York	21 million	Yakarta	12 million
São Paulo	21 million	Guangzhou	12 million
Calcutta	21 million	Moscow	11 million
Mexico City	20.1 million	Chicago	10 million
Shanghai	19 million	Lima	10 million
Cairo	16 million	Bogota	10 million
Karachi	16 million	Paris	10 million
Beijing	15 million	Teheran	10 million
Manila	15 million	Seoul	10 million
Los Angeles	14 million	London	9 million
Dacca	13,6 million	Kinshasa	9 million
Buenos Aires	13 million		



According to information provided by *Urban Age City Data*<sup>1</sup>, 220 million people currently live in Megacities and, according to estimates, by 2025 that figure will rise to 447 million.

Megacities, like any other urban setting, can be understood as an expression of the society that lives in them. With regard to their historical modes of production, contemporary dynamism has created a need for spaces that respond to different economic and social flows. Megacities are generally strong actors of the global economy: they concentrate corporate areas specialized in services, an industrial production with a tendency of moving away from urban centers and settling in strategic locations for the mobilization of products, and, in addition, Megacities are great consumption centers. They have large new urban extensions made up mostly of informal settlements or slums and, in some cases, such as in Mexico City, by large spreads of social housing produced by State bodies.

One of the features of Megacities is that they are polycentric, which means they do not have a single center, but rather that the same urban extension includes different areas capable of attracting economic, social, and political activity. Megacities are structured around different centers.

There are great differences between Megacities in developed countries and Megacities in developing countries. On the one hand, in developed countries there are conurbations controlled by the extension of infrastructures on territories that are gradually added in an orderly fashion, whereas in Megacities of the developing world, conurbations occur in the form of informal settlements, with no planning or infrastructure. In fact, in these settings, urban planning is normally subsequent to the consolidation of an urban area and consists mainly of equipping the new neighborhood with infrastructures. In these cases, urban management addresses the most pressing needs rather than the most important needs, governments sometimes being more preoccupied with finding problems to specific, immediate, and emerging problems (floods, waste, water supply, etc.) than to solving the urban viability of an area in the medium or long term.

The great cities of the world are comprised of heterogeneous societies, from varying origins, allowing, from an optimistic point of view, a broad range of tolerance, but also increasing the risk of relationships based on social discrimination.

Megacities are a recent phenomenon. In the face of this new context, the presidency of Commission 4 on Megacities, together with Metropolis, as a result of the exchanges of ideas regarding the need to incorporate different issues that allow a sustainability-oriented development of the Megacities, defined three fundamental issues for the future of these large cities: New Urbanism, Urban Management and the Periphery.

<sup>1</sup> *The DNA of cities*, Urban Age, London School of Economics and the Alfred Herrhausen Society.

## 02.

## GOALS OF COMMISSION 4: MEGACITIES

The main goal of Commission 4 on Megacities is to create a platform for sharing knowledge derived from the experiences of different cities in the world. In addition, the purpose is to define the different problems faced by Megacities, mainly on the basis of the differences between the cities in developed countries and those in developing ones.

A further goal is to provide the necessary insight for local governments to consider an urban development agenda aimed at achieving sustainability, generating optimal quality of life conditions, extending the right to the city, reducing disaster risks, and reinforcing the concept of citizenship.

New Urbanism consists of finding a strategy of urban development applicable to large urban settings, through which sustainable urban practices can be generated aimed at strengthening citizen participation and the right to the city. On the other hand, the need for Urban Management arises from the pressing need to find political operation tools that make large cities viable in the short, medium, and long terms.

Lastly, it is impossible to talk of Megacities without talking of the periphery. The purpose of putting this issue to debate is to give visibility to those inhabitants who for some reason cannot exercise their rights in full, generating urban manifestations that fail to address fundamental issues such as sustainability and the right to the city.

Another of the main goals of Commission 4 is to search for solutions to the concerns, proposals, and content of each participating city, with a view to preparing the **Declaration of Commission 4 on Megacities**.



## 03.

## ACTIVITIES OF COMMISSION 4: MEGACITIES

In October 2008, within the framework of the 9th World Congress of Metropolis held in Sydney, the Government of Mexico City assumed the presidency of Commission 4 on Megacities.

The first meeting of Commission 4<sup>2</sup>, took place on May 21, 2009 in Moscow, within the framework of the Metropolis Board of Directors Meeting. This meeting established the need to pay attention to the common conditions of cities with more than 10 million inhabitants, through knowledge and experience sharing. Felipe Leal, the current Secretary of Urban Planning and Housing of the Federal District, on behalf of the Head of Government of Mexico City, Marcelo Ebrard, proposed a number of fundamental issues for Megacities: Disaster Risk Reduction, Public Space, Social Equity, and Energy Savings.



The second meeting<sup>3</sup>, took place in Mexico City on November 17, 2010 and was led by the Head of Government of the Federal District, Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon. The main message put forward by the president of the Commission regarded the importance of increasing social cohesion in cities by means of recovering the public space.

In this meeting three round-tables were held, mainly addressing the issues New Urbanism, Urban Management and Periphery. The basic session program was as follows:



- 1st Round table:** New urbanism and Suggestions on How to Manage Megacities from the Strategic Planning Viewpoint.
- 2nd Round table:** Urban Management in Megacities.
- 3rd Round table:** Megacities from the Viewpoint of the Periphery.
- Case study:** The Experience of Mexico City.
- Conclusions:**

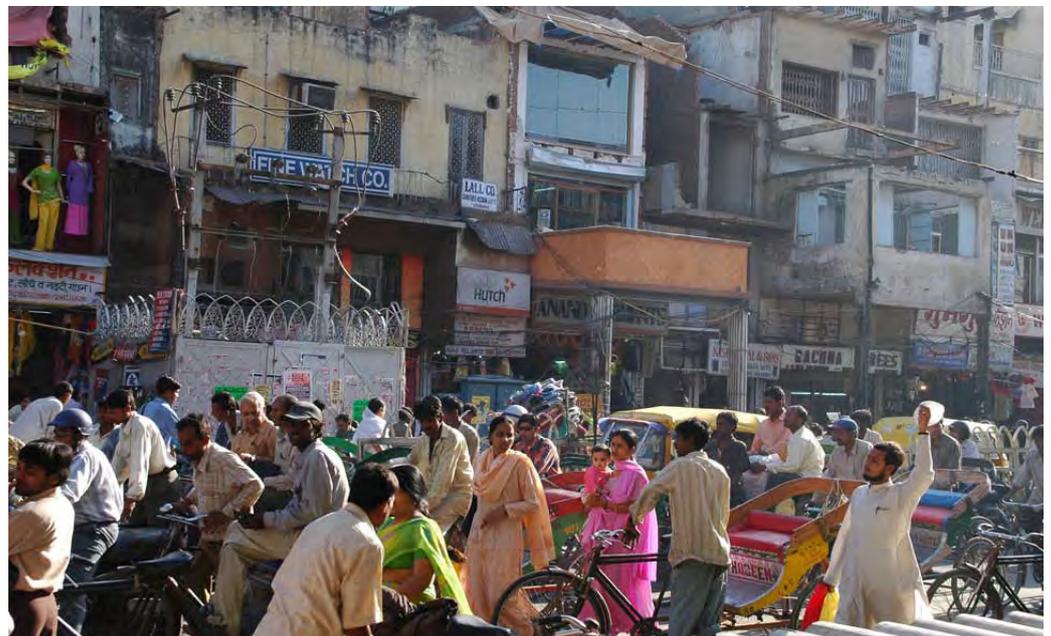
<sup>2</sup> See Annex 1: Program of 1st Commission 4 Meeting.

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 2: Program of 2nd Commission 4 Meeting.

## Round table 1: New Urbanism and Suggestions on How to Manage Megacities from the Strategic Planning Viewpoint

A round table organized by the UCLG Urban Strategic Planning Commission, reiterating the importance of urban planning in Megacities and the need to assess the different experiences of the cities in order to turn them into policy and recommendations to local governments regarding urban development issues. The aim of this round table was also to point out that the great challenges for Megacities are not only related with their scale, but with the cooperation between actors of the different political bodies comprising a region city (mega-region).

Participants in the round table shared their vision of the cities of Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, and Europe, focusing on the characteristics corresponding to each region.



The initial discussion focused on regulatory framework issues, taking as reference the “Policy Paper on Urban Strategic Planning: Local Leaders Preparing for the Future of Cities”, which indicates some regulatory principles for the development of cities.

In this session, an important question was asked: “What tools can be used to develop a Strategic Urban Plan?” The document shows that many cities have applied a Strategic Urban Plan with differing degrees of sophistication. That is why it is necessary to take into account different experiences in order to know the necessary ingredients and thus achieve the success of the Strategic Urban Plan, and it is essential to create the right balance in cities at the macro and micro levels. To achieve success it is also necessary to consider principles such as political commitment, leadership with social support and, to avoid failure, take into account the risks of social exclusion, uncertainty, economic crisis and climate change. There is also the need to ensure that Strategic Urban Planning is possible, in particular for national and local governments.

Another basic question was asked: “What does Strategic Urban Planning have to do with Megacities?” The debate suggested that Strategic Urban Planning can be applied to all cities and it should be a process whereby the priorities for action can be defined and where strategic planning can be an urban management tool that leads to the practice of a New Urbanism, capable of connecting people with their neighborhood and

city. It is also true that Strategic Urban Planning should be a leadership tool that aims to generate cooperation and collaboration for urban management, even beyond the jurisdictions corresponding to a city's local government.

The case of Johannesburg is a good example in this sense. In Johannesburg they have an internal five-year development plan whose main feature is citizen participation. There is the need to be proactive in the development of the city and to achieve economic growth in order to achieve equity and to overcome social inequalities. To make this possible, it is essential to govern with social participation.

Johannesburg has built new infrastructure, but what they expect from it is social transformation. The main challenge for the city is inequality, so the Strategic Urban Plan to be developed must be geared toward social urban planning, with a specific development for the region.

The city of Cologne is another fine example, considering that European cities over 200 years old have a specific concept of diversity and concentration, based on different historical layers. Cologne is a compact city, a city of knowledge, science and culture, which facilitates social development. Cologne takes part in and is at the heart of an association of 53 regional cities with 3.5 million inhabitants. It is through collaboration among all the cities that a long-term Strategic Urban Plan was generated, recognizing the local needs, opportunities, and the strategic location of the Rhine River. Thus the Rhine Project was created. The Strategic Urban Plan has made it possible to transform the type of employment, turning some former industrial areas into business and residential areas. And it is only possible to carry out these transformations through long-term urban plans.



In the city of Vancouver, which is comprised of 21 cities, including an aboriginal community, Strategic Urban Planning is developed through collaboration among all the cities in the region. The Strategic Urban Plan should allow the establishment of healthy human settlements, using public services efficiently. Each decision of the city must be approved unanimously by the representatives of the 21 cities and the Strategic Urban Plan must be a process of collaboration and persuasion in order to produce social consensus, which involves a great effort.

Collaboration at all government levels is essential for the city to maintain a region with lasting value through the implementation of a constantly reviewed Master Plan so that Vancouver can continue to be one of the cities that is most desirable to live in.

In the city of Rosario there are two consecutive strategic plans, the first called the Strategic Plan of Rosario 1998-2008, which consisted of developing three priority axes: the first related with urban decentralization, with the goal of developing 6 new central hubs that affect the whole of the urban dimension of the city. The second axis consisted of turning around the historical urban process, where the city developed with its back to the River Parana and turn it toward the river bank, with a successful project of urban regeneration. The third development axis is developing the city of Rosario as a communication node for Mercosur, integrating port, railway, and airport infrastructure, which has had direct repercussions on urban development. The last axis was recognized at the Shanghai Expo 2010 as a good practice for cities. The plan was very successful since it achieved urban management involving different sectors able to cooperate, with their sights set on the future of the city.

The second plan, called Rosario-Metropolitano 2008-2018, also has three main axes, derived from the specific conditions of Rosario today and defined by the lack of autonomy and the scarcity of resources for development. This first of these axes refers to building and strengthening the leadership of the municipality and specifically the leadership of the Mayor. The second axis is based on public-private cooperation for urban development. Current projects include tourism, technology, and SME competitiveness, and take the form of trade fairs, events, and congresses. The last axis is defined by citizen participation. The contribution of Rosario consists of showing the need to create public policies capable of looking ahead to the future of cities.

## Round table 2: Urban Management in Megacities

Organized by the Department of Urban Development and Housing at the Government of Mexico City, this round table aimed to study and discuss the management of the city's public interests in the face of private interests. It is the guiding principle for development and today is very diverse, depending on the different regions. To achieve balanced public management, it is necessary to have a set of instruments and mechanisms designed to have a reference framework within which negotiations among the different urban actors can play a role in the regulation of the occupancy and use of the land in urban environments.



In Megacities there are two significant aspects regarding urban management. On the one hand, the conditions of institutionalism have been overtaken by the demands of social dynamics. On the other hand, it is through urban management that governments attempt to achieve a balance between macroeconomics, the possibilities of public expenditure and social development.

The Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV) was created because there are many cities which lack the budget to carry out their projects. This fund is a political instrument of solidarity between cities and its goal is to create a world bank of cities.



The FMDV is a catalyst for regions, cities, central governments, and donors such as the World Bank. The aim is to set up a development project based on a participatory and inclusive project in each city.

The fund is associated with Metropolis, UCLG, and their members (cities and regions), as well as with social organizations. It offers technical assistance and financial engineering. Resources are distributed to the cities by means of a private corporation, the Cities Financial Corporation, considering the different commissions charged for the flow of resources and finding the funding and the ways of reducing the cost of the commissions.

In Mexico City, urban growth consists of reproducing the informal city, a consequence of having in the country a society with 39.8 million people living in poverty. According to research conducted by the Colegio de México, there are approximately 600,000 informal properties in the Federal District and 7 million in the periphery living on state-owned land.

The challenge for urban management in informal settlements is not to create a city of owners, but to understand that safety and the right to the city cannot be reduced to private property. The popular habitat is produced under logic of need. Management actions should be geared to giving value to the use of informal housing more than an exchange value. Redensification and mixed uses contribute to consolidating these settings.

The second manifestation of expansion of the territory responds to the production of social housing in large housing developments produced by government institutions in the property industry. This type of housing does not solve the housing problem which, in addition to involving distance from infrastructure and equipment, does not facilitate access to work places. According to the National Housing Council of Mexico, 15% of the housing funded by mortgage financial corporations is abandoned, whereas in the case of social housing organizations, 25% has been vacated. The reasons for this abandonment rate are the lack of accessibility to work places and the great distance from urban centers.

Cities offering the most jobs are not the most populated. The lack of correspondence between housing and employment is a dimension of autonomy within the problematic sphere of settlement, given that it responds to effective goals of housing demand, but does not tackle the roots of the problem.

The challenge is for the population with possibilities of obtaining a loan to be able to purchase housing that is acceptable and well-located, rather than allow financial and urban-development schemes in these large housing developments that do not serve their purpose.

The latest manifestation of settlements in periphery areas is the new residential neighborhoods and corporate-services areas in places where the original population had few resources. Increased land prices negatively impact the domestic economy of the original population, and also raise their taxes. The challenge is to develop instruments to retain equity.

Another effect of these developments is the rise in inequality and the increase in social and spatial discrimination. Popular neighborhoods are stigmatized as dangerous areas and gated (imprisoned) communities are created in better-off areas.

The center/periphery problem leads us to rethink the fact that daily mobility can be valued positively. Mobility works as a social cohesion tool. In the case of Latin American cities, it is necessary to plan compact cities and generate land-use regulations that allow the distribution of employment across the territory of the cities.

It is necessary for the State to wrest control of urban development from large property developers and market logic, which have dominated urban production in recent years, and to instrument a new urban-management model that takes into account the contemporary dynamics of cities, in the knowledge that the regulations are anachronistic and do not consider the new needs of the city. It is also necessary to create a map of actors and interests to enable management among different political institutions and bodies. It is important to take into account the essential aspects for a city, such as strategic planning, and not focus only on what is urgent and which at times attracts the most attention and leads to the most action by the authorities.



The guidelines being adopted in the Federal District to make the city more viable are based on new policies geared to achieving a more compact city with social and spatial integration, a city of mixed uses. It is acknowledged that the regulations in force do not correspond to reality and it is stated that it is necessary to promote vertical building, a higher degree of density, and urban recycling. The idea is to facilitate mobility. These strategies have the purpose of extending the right to the city.

Specifically, public-transport policies are being implemented, geared to promoting alternative forms of mobility. Mexico City is promoting mixed land use, with a view to strengthening habitability and obtaining a better quality of life for the city. The axis of all the actions is to recover and invent public space.

In terms of public transport, the largest flows of population are concentrated in the east and west of the city, from the periphery to the work centers. There is also a floating population of 4 million inhabitants in the Federal District. The city is committed to a broad, comprehensive solution, by means of Modal Transfer Centers (CETRAM).

Attention is also being paid to alternative transport infrastructure, which is being incorporated into the city and which consists of a public cycling system that promotes trips on foot and cycling lanes. There is also the need to have a dense and mixed use of land, such as in Avenida Reforma, where, following the works to recover the public space in what is one of the most important avenues in the city, the results of the transformation have been favorable for the practice of new urbanism.

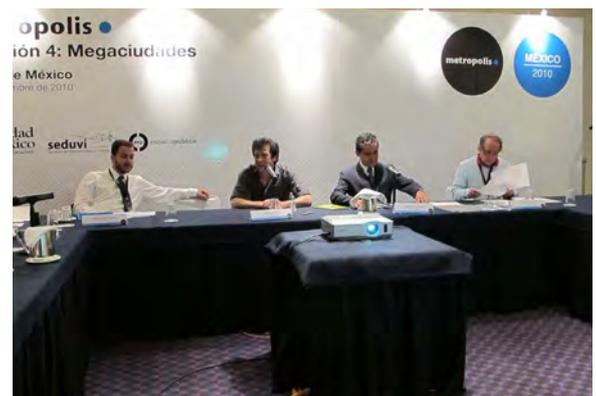
### Round Table 3: Megacities from the Viewpoint of the Periphery

Organized by the UCLG Commission on Urban Peripheries, this round table presented an overview of the demographic and population settlement phenomena in Megacities, which have greatly surpassed planning scenarios and generated an alternative “new order”, where the cities have adapted to the flexibility of social behavior, normally operating on the basis of patterns that are not necessarily related with legal and regulatory processes of city development.

This new order constitutes the periphery of the cities. Generally speaking, periphery areas are located around the urban centers and geographically it is simple to understand them this way. However, there is also the possibility of broadening the view of the phenomenon of periphery areas, and to refer to them as a combination of activities and behaviors which share attributes of formality and informality and whose development is often outside of legal regulations that govern a territory. This condition allows a lack of definition of the legal relationships between individuals and states.

In 2002, several peripheral cities present at the Forum of Local Authorities For Social Inclusion held in Porto Alegre assembled to discuss the idea that very little importance is given to the experiences of popular peripheral cities, and therefore to territories that have both significant social inclusion problems and, on the other hand, innovative experiences.

The network of periphery cities aims to find common ground between the center and the periphery. In 2010, the 2nd Forum of Local



Authorities of Peripheral Cities was held in Getafe (Madrid) and 130 peripheral cities took part. The purpose of the event was to generate a statement as to what peripheral cities are, a document that has been established as a reference point for discussion with the Metropolis network.

The city of Guarulhos is the second-largest municipality of the metropolitan region of Sao Paulo and it has achieved significant progress from the point of view of infrastructure and equipment. Social participation experiences have also been generated, allowing people to engage in government decisions.

Guarulhos has the mobility problems of any large city, as well as disordered growth that has been very difficult to contain. There are very few resources; which is why a new urban management is being put forward, supported by a major program of citizen participation, with a structure by which popular participation, which has come to be understood as a culture in Guarulhos, can be put into practice.

Peripheries, as a part of Megacities, require an approach that takes social diversity into account. This diversity is defined by the cohabitation of divergences in a common space, which explains the wealth of cities. It is important to consider diversity in order to ensure heterogeneous rather than homogeneous societies. The city of Nanterre is an example of how the metropolis is experienced from the different urban areas in Paris. Peripheries are places of transit, the neighborhoods in the periphery feel like islands, and the challenges to be faced are mobility, health, decentralization, and the right to housing and employment. It is important to respond to the economic evolution of the world. To be able to transform cities, it is necessary to create spaces for social participation. It is necessary to promote cooperation between different actors in the search to extend the right to the city and the right to the center.

The case of Chile's Association of Municipalities of Ciudad Sur is an example based on a framework of relations between Santiago de Chile and 8 communes in the south of the city. The Mayor of El Bosque has gradually built strategies of collaboration with the other communes to have a broader space of negotiation with the central government of the city. The Association of Municipalities of Ciudad Sur was created to formalize this collaboration.

Extending the center, in any case, is related with extending the right to the city, fully exercising citizenship, and extending (and especially clarifying) the legal relationship between state and society.

### Case Study: Mexico City: Its Regional and Metropolitan Scope

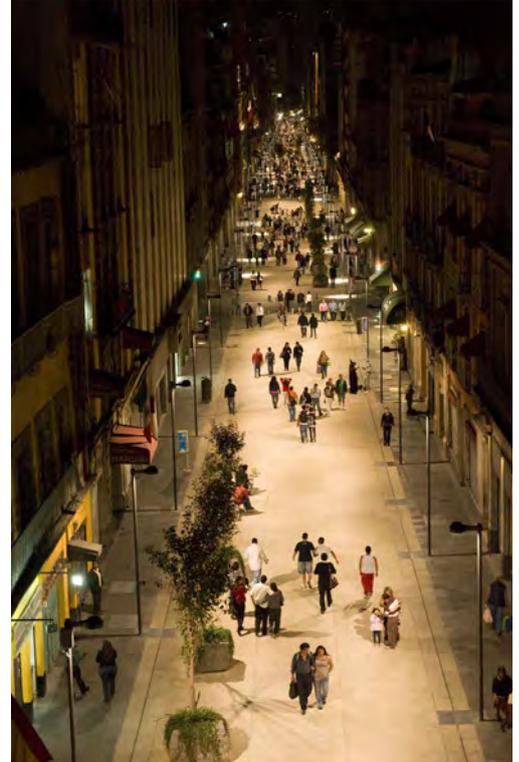
The Metropolitan Area of Mexico City comprises a Federal District divided into 16 political delegations, a population of almost 8.9 million and 42 municipalities belonging to the State of Mexico, with a population of over 10 million inhabitants. There are significant differences between the Federal District and the State of Mexico in terms of development policies and they have autonomous urban planning derived from different regulations and laws. The same occurs between municipalities, which maintain planning autonomy and there are generally no inter-municipal collaboration programs. The central area of the city concentrates industrial and services-sector employment, whereas the new housing developments are being built on the periphery. This adds to the problem, as the center concentrates employment, while housing sprawls relentlessly outward.

In the context of the global economy, Mexico City has undergone significant transformations. On the one hand, areas were specially built for corporate services, which achieved enough critical mass to position Mexico City as one of the most important

regional actors in the global economy. On the other hand, recent years have seen industry migrating to 'belt roads' to work in the international assembly sector, leaving large industrial areas abandoned in the city center. This transformation is seen as a great opportunity for urban regeneration in these areas.

The most significant transformations in terms of the market economy can be seen in two types of urban developments. On the one hand, informal settlements, and, on the other, the large housing developments produced by developers under the regulations promoted by the federal government.

The former explains the way in which the city's economy is incapable of incorporating all the citizens into the formal economy. It also explains the methods used by different groups to develop informal settlements, where there is always a combination of formal and informal actors making this type of settlement viable. Subsequently came the housing developments produced and promoted by the state, which are generating gated communities, removed from the urban centers, with no public spaces and with very low architectural and building quality, and with abusive financial services. These developments are built on very cheap land that does not form part of any development plan and where the main goal is to produce credit. There is a need to generate a metropolitan strategic plan that takes into account the different areas that comprise Mexico City.



Lastly, Megacities need to strengthen citizenship, clarifying the relationship between the State and individuals. Mexico City is located within a large basin and it is essential to be able to orient the Strategic Plan toward our natural environment.

### Case Study: Risk Reduction, Energy Savings, Social Equity and Public Space in Mexico City

All conglomerations generate risks: the higher the concentration of people in a given place, the greater the need to reduce risks. Mexico City has faced different catastrophes and contingencies, both as a result of natural phenomena and out-of-control urban conditions.

There are three main contingencies Mexico City has faced. The first was the 1985 earthquake measuring 7.9 degrees on the Richter scale, where the loss of human lives and the collapse of buildings were innumerable. The second was the environmental crisis caused by air pollution in the city during the 1990s. The third was the health contingency that began in Mexico City as a result of the AH1N1 (swine flu) virus which led the city government to take drastic decisions with economic repercussions, but which were decisive for the epidemic not to spread. These contingencies gave the city the necessary experience to form a culture of prevention, a Civil Protection corps in each institution, both public and private, as well as the production of a high-risk atlas for the city.

Mexico City has chosen to tackle its major metropolitan problems directly through development policies geared to generating a compact city as a guideline. This has also had a direct impact in terms of transport, the environment, and public space policies, social equity, and new policies that have been incorporated to promote public space.

As regards energy savings, the transformation of Mexico City's public-transport habits has been a very solid basis on which to build. New infrastructures are being developed for the Metrobús (BRT) system, for public cycling lanes, as well as electric taxis, all geared to reducing energy expenditure.

The social programs implemented by the local government cover the majority of the most vulnerable sectors of the city, including students, single mothers, and elderly citizens, to create a more equitable social base with a higher level of welfare. The goal is to guarantee citizen rights, and their access to education and health. The program that covers these actions is called 'Red Ángel'.

Attention to and recovery of public spaces have been incorporated into the political program of the City Government through the creation of the Public Space Authority, a body dependent on the Department of Urban Development and Housing and which, through the concept of 'urban acupuncture', gradually re-stitches the city and the most representative public spaces through specific projects. In Mexico City this strategy is being implemented in the central area, with works such as the recovery of the Monument to the Revolution and the plaza de la República, the plaza de Garibaldi and the pedestrianization of calle Francisco I Madero, the main axis of the historic center and approximately one kilometer in length. The recovery of areas under bridges of the great road infrastructures of the city, the promotion of gardens on the roofs of the city center, also known as 'green roofs', and the project to add greenery to the Viaducto Miguel Alemán -the access road to the airport- are some of the projects of the Federal District Public Space Authority.



## 04.

## DECLARATION OF COMMISSION 4 ON MEGACITIES

The future of Megacities involves common problems regarding decision-making, quality of life, the way to establish models of urban management, and the inability to provide equal rights to all citizens. Having carried out its work, Commission 4 established the following declarations to help give large cities clear roadmaps, improve their decision-making mechanisms, establish urban management mechanisms, and lastly, extend the right to the city.

All the declarations are established under the general issues discussed during the meeting held in Mexico City on November 17, 2010. These issues are: New Urbanism, Urban Management and the Periphery

### Declaration:

#### 1. New Urbanism

Cities with more than ten million inhabitants should aim their development efforts toward a better quality of life for all their citizens. To achieve this it is essential to generate cities with the following basic characteristics applicable to Megacities.

- a. Compact City:** Concentrating activities and improving land use are the main features of compact cities, which allow urban settings to be mainly pedestrian or at least to be travelled in a short time without the need for private vehicles. Any actions carried out should enable and strengthen the new centers by improving the urban image and by boosting public transport and pedestrian and cycling infrastructures. All urban design should take accessibility criteria into account.
- b. Connected City:** Megacities should shore up urban connectivity through public transport, which should be designed as a network connecting the different centers of the city, promoting trips on foot or cycling. For this it is essential to produce quality, pleasant public spaces.
- c. Heterogeneous City:** Megacities should promote a mix of land uses to achieve more heterogeneous cities. It is important to incorporate a mix of socio-economic sectors by differentiated housing plans in order to deal with the discrimination currently affecting many cities. Another basic goal is to produce local identity links in quality spaces with neighborhood features.
- d. Sustainable City:** Urban development should be geared toward sustainable practices defined by energy efficiency, local production, and quality of life, through land-use distribution policies, production programs, schemes to incorporate sustainable technology to existing infrastructures, and by generating green public transport, among others.

The goal of “New Urbanism” is to provide people with options to adapt to a sustainable, manageable, and pleasurable lifestyle, while contributing solutions to stop global warming and climate change.

The principles of “New Urbanism” are applicable to cities of differing sizes and aim to strengthen citizen participation, to clearly define the relationship between individuals and the state, and to improve quality of life.

## 2. Urban Management

Megacities should initiate urban development processes by means of land-use planning in order to put New Urbanism programs into practice. For this, it is necessary to establish, design, and build strategic planning instruments by means of collaborative and efficient actions among the different urban actors. Strategic Urban Planning can address the needs of a metropolitan region beyond its political borders, which maintains a relationship with it or with the natural territory it is settled on, and which is the product of a social construction based on participation and collaboration between public and private institutions, governments, and society in general. One of the great challenges for urban management in Megacities and for its Strategic Urban Planning instruments is to understand that safety and the right to the city cannot be reduced to private property.

### a. Strategic Urban Planning.

- i.** Strategic Urban Planning should be the result of collaboration between different urban actors from public institutions, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and society in general. It should be aimed at generating social welfare and applying the practices of New Urbanism.
- ii.** Megacities need to establish a Strategic Urban Plan on a metropolitan scale, capable of containing the direction of land-use regulations, under the control of a government level superior to the local one, in order to make technical decisions regarding urban development and the building of infrastructure.
- iii.** To establish a Strategic Urban Plan it is necessary to establish urban priorities which must be addressed by the public institutions and by local, regional, and national governments.
- iv.** A Strategic Urban Plan should be a document produced in collaboration by local and national governments forming part of a Megacity, to help ensure that basic decisions regarding the metropolitan scale are made in a coordinated manner and through collaboration agreements between different governments and public and private institutions.
- v.** Strategic Urban Plans should clarify the specific urban development attributions that correspond to the local, regional, and national governments, as well as to the different levels of government and administration of each political body.
- vi.** Strategic Urban Plans should be flexible to the specific needs of local governments and offer them the necessary attributes to manage urban development within each body, without losing sight of the application of Strategic Urban Planning across the Megacity.
- vii.** Strategic Urban Plans should be understood as long-term urban processes, which is why it is essential for them to be flexible to new urban needs. In addition, it is possible to manage urban development efforts through a Strategic Urban Plan, dimensioning the time scale of a Megacity.
- viii.** Strategic Urban Plans should be social constructions and to implement them it is necessary to establish collaboration programs between institutions, as well as public consultation strategies that allow society to take control of urban development.

### 3. Peripheries

To talk of a Megacity involves talking of periphery areas, not only in the sense of geographic location, but mainly from the point of view of lack of right to the city of large social groups. It is essential to understand large urban settings as spaces defined by divergences and constituted by heterogeneous social groups and individuals. However, legal regulations have been overtaken by the intense settlement in cities in recent years, mainly in the form of informal settlements. It is necessary to extend the right to the city and the daily practice of citizenship by individuals with the individual and social guarantees offered by the State.

- a.** Public Space and Diversity. Megacities should adopt policies geared to strengthening and multiplying public space and recognizing public space as a place for divergence, a common place where it is possible to exercise citizen rights.
- b.** Megacities must find contemporary cultural wealth in their heterogeneous diversity. It is necessary to establish social development programs aimed at different groups of society, with a view to achieving social interactions between socioeconomically and politically differentiated sectors, in order to reinforce a culture of tolerance and to avoid social, economic, and gender discrimination.
- c.** The governments of Megacities should find the production opportunities afforded by the social sectors that live within the informal economy to establish regularization programs that make it possible to reclaim part of the benefits for the city.
- d.** It is necessary to establish public policies, social programs, and communication strategies that aim to find the common ground between the center and the periphery.

## ANNEX 1

### 1<sup>st</sup> partnership for Commission 4 Meeting: “Megacities” Moscow (22 May 2009 )

#### Final program 1<sup>st</sup> Commission Meeting

- 09:00 - 09:15 Welcome  
**Sr. Yury Luzhkov**, Mayor of Moscow  
**Sr. Marcelo Luis Ebrard Casaubon**, Head of Government of the Federal District, Mexico DF (video)  
**Sr. Jean-Paul Huchon**, President of METROPOLIS and President of Regional Council of Ile-de-France (Paris)
- 09:15-09:45 Keynote speech 1:  
**“Megacities and the economy in the global development”**  
**Sr. Federico Mayor de Zaragoza**, President of the Peace Culture Foundation and ex-Director General of UNESCO
- 09:45-10:00 Coffee-break
- 10:00-10:10 Introduction and presentation of the Megacities Standing Commission  
**Sr. Felipe Leal**, Public Space Authority, Government of the Federal District, Mexico DF
- 10:10-10:40 Keynote speech 2:  
**“Sustainable Development and Megacities”**  
**Dr. Andrea Koch-Kraft**, Programme Manager, PT-DLR (Project Management Agency) for the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Future Megacities Programme
- 10:40-10:50 Presentation: International Assembly of Capitals and Big Cities (IAC)  
**“Big cities under crisis conditions: consolidation of efforts for stability”**  
**Sr. Michael Sokolov**, IAC Executive Vice-president
- 10:50-11:00 **“Megapolises: mobility and ecology in the 21st century”**  
**Sr. Roland Lipp**, Director of StrassenHaus Ltd. & co. KG
- 11:00-12:00 Political Round Table  
**“Megacities as an emergent phenomenon: challenges and opportunities”**  
Participant cities:  
**Sr. Sergei Borisovich Pakhomov**, Chairman of the State Debt Committee, City of Moscow  
**Sr. Sutanto Soehodo**, Deputy Governor of Jakarta  
**Sr. Milos Alcalay**, Director of International Relations, Caracas City Government  
**Sr. Arvind Hire**, Deputy Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai  
Moderador: **Sr. Amara Ouerghi**, Regional Secretary for North America, Montréal
- 12:00-12:30 Debate and conclusions

## ANNEX 2

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Metropolis Commission 4 Meeting: “Megacities” Mexico City (17 – 18 November 2010)

#### Final program

#### Wednesday, 17 November

- 09:00 - 09:30 Welcome to Mexico City and opening of Commission 4 meeting sessions  
**Felipe Leal.** Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development  
**Josep Roig.** Secretary General of Metropolis  
**Eduardo Rihan Cypel.** Regional Adviser, Region Ile-de-France (Paris)  
**Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón.** Head of Mexico City Federal District Government and Commission 4 “Megacities” president.
- 09:30 - 11:00 Round Table:  
**New Urbanism and suggestions how to handle Megacity from the perspective of strategic urban planning**  
Organized by: Commission on Urban Strategic Planning. UCLG - United Cities and Local Governments
- Participant Cities:  
**Durban** (modera). Soobs Moonsammy. Urban Planning Director  
**Colonia.** Berndt Streitberger. City Vice-Mayor  
**Rosario.** Sérgio Barrios. International Relations Manager  
**Johannesburgo.** Msizi Myeza. Urban Planning and Economy Director  
**Vancouver.** Derek Corrigan, City Mayor  
**Daegu.** Hoeran Kim. International relations.
- 11:00 - 11:15 Coffee Break
- 11:15 – 11:45 Conference:  
**Megacities as emerging phenomenon: Challenges, Opportunities**  
**Arturo Ortiz.** Mexico City Taller Territorial Director and Autoridad del Espacio Público of the Federal District Advisor.
- 12:00 – 12:30 Case of Study:  
**Risk Reduction, Energy Saving, Social Equity and Public Space, the experience of Mexico City**  
**Daniel Escotto.** Autoridad del Espacio Publico of the Federal District.
- 12:30 - 14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 - 15:30 Round Table:  
**Urban planning in megacities**  
Organized by: Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development of the Federal District .

Participants:

**Felipe Leal.** Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development of Mexico City.

**Alain Le Saux.** FMDV Director, Ile de France.

**Peter Krieger.** Investigador de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

**Clara Salazar.** Investigadora del Colegio de México

15:30 - 16:00 Break

16:00 – 17:30 Round Table:

**Megacities from the periphery point of view**

Organized by: Commission on Peripheral Cities. UCLG - United Cities and Local Governments

Moderator: **Antonio Aniesa.** coordinator of the Commission on Peripheral Cities. Presidency Nanterre

Participants:

**Patrick Jarry.** Mayor of Nanterre.

**Sadi Melo Moya.** Mayor of the Bosque Municipality and President of the Association of Municipalities of Ciudad Sur de Chile.

**Fernando Santomauro.** International Relations, Guarulhos (São Paulo).

17:30 – 18:30 Conclusions of the day and general content of the Final Declaration of the Commission 4 “Megacities” Metropolis.

Coordination: **Felipe Leal.** Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development of Mexico City.

---

© 2011 - Metropolis, World  
Association of the Major Metropolises  
First edition, March 2011

**Edition:**  
Gabriel Bello Barros,  
Secretariat General Metropolis  
Xavier Borrell,  
Secretariat General Metropolis

**Graphic design:**  
Glòria Escoruela

## Commission 4

# Megacities

---

**metropolis** ●

### **Secretariat General**

Avinyó, 15  
08002 Barcelona (Spain)  
Tel. +34 93 342 94 60  
Fax: +34 93 342 94 66  
metropolis@metropolis.org  
**www.metropolis.org**

---