

**May2020**

**A CALL TO  
RETHINK OUR  
METROPOLITAN  
SPACES**

Over the last decades we have witnessed the continuous **expansion of urban agglomerations**. Cities, in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century, are home to 60% of the world's population. They are important centres of innovation, employment and economic development. Their impact is felt **beyond their own boundaries**.

The **resilience of metropolitan spaces and their inhabitants** is often put to test by natural or man-made threats and hazards, such as climate change.

These days, the **COVID-19 pandemic** confronts us more than ever to challenges, contradictions and vulnerabilities in our urban communities. It tends to exacerbate pre-existing tensions and **inequalities**, in particular in relation to **women**. The lock down also sheds a new light on issues and problems in relation to public space, mobility, density, local businesses, adequate housing and key infrastructure.

Yet, the pandemic also offers us an opportunity which we should not miss to **rethink our cities** and to do things differently. **This crisis can be a window of opportunity**.

The members of Metropolis already seize the occasion and adapt their governing structures, services, policies and infrastructure to the needs and demands of their citizens in this evolving environment.

Let us be bold and take this unique moment to move ahead with novel solutions that will transform our cities and metropolitan areas – now and for future generations. We cannot afford to simply go back to old models. It is a moment to:

- **Redesign public space**, to make it more convivial, accessible and functional
- Develop new and **climate-friendly mobility patterns**
- Facilitate the transition to more **inclusive and sustainable economic models**
- Appreciate **innovative technologies** to allow more decentralized patterns of work and leisure
- Implement **nature-based solutions** and care for biodiversity
- **Reduce our carbon footprint**
- **Enhance healthcare services**
- **Mainstream gender issues** and better **protect citizens' rights**

To achieve the above, we do not have to go at it alone. This is a time where we can build on each other's good ideas and practices and, as members of Metropolis, **strengthen the collaboration amongst cities**. We also need to secure the collaboration of other levels of government as well as international organizations.

Above all, we need to benefit from the involvement of our citizens. For more than ever, in these challenging times, we are committed to ensure the wellbeing of our people, **especially the most vulnerable**, and to leave no-one behind.

**Let us join our forces to build metropolitan communities that are green, inclusive, prosperous, resilient and, safe.** The world's major cities and our association, Metropolis, stand ready to work with all stakeholders in this endeavour.



**Michael Müller**

Governing Mayor of Berlin  
Metropolis President



**Ada Colau**

President of Barcelona - Metropolitan Area  
Metropolis Copresident



**Christian Di Candia**

Mayor of Montevideo  
Metropolis Copresident



**David Makhura**

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