

# The World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders in Bogota will analyze the future of cities

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**✘ The principal task faced by millions of mayors and locally elected leaders worldwide is to implement concrete actions to improve the quality of life of residents living in the areas they govern, which is also linked to the sustainable development of cities and territories. The challenges associated with hosting the majority of the world's population are obvious, and could lead to a misleading perception that increasing urbanization is the root of many problems. This hides another - maybe even more important - reality, as urbanization understood as a territorial agenda based on solidarity could be the source of solutions and the largest laboratory for the renewal of governance at all levels.**

For decades [United Cities and Local Governments \(UCLG\)](#), as a representative of local and regional governments, has led the global debate on the future of cities. In the context of this debate, UCLG is holding its [World Summit](#) in Bogota on 12-15 October immediately before the Habitat III Conference, which will approve the urban agenda for the coming years, and is as a clear "local counterweight" thereto.

The Bogota Summit will represent the potential of local leadership with respect to the global development agendas; a leadership shared by mayors and civil society organizations. The co-creation of cities, changing the social contract with the Right to the City at the centre of local management, innovative local financing methods, the relationship between the daily life of cities and the global development goals, as well as crisis management from an urban context and the gender equality agenda, will be some of the many topics to be discussed in the framework of the experiences of the city of Bogota, which will showcase its main programmes. The learning agenda and the exchange of experiences will be other major axes of the meeting.

## We listen to cities and territories

One of the major priorities of UCLG since its creation has been to achieve the recognition of a specific status for local government organizations in international processes. The thousands of local representatives expected to attend the event in Bogota will demand what they have already been demanding from the peripheries of the UN negotiations: a seat at the table of consultation and decision making on the future of the urban agenda.

The success of the Habitat III Conference will depend on the recognition of the role of local and regional governments; recognition that must take into account in the definition and implementation of the agenda in cities and territories. Only in this way can the lessons learnt from local experiences be adequately reflected. UCLG has compiled many of these experiences, which are reflected in the organization's triennial report, GOLD IV, to be launched in Bogota.

Networks of municipalities and regions from across the world have gathered in a mechanism named the [Global Taskforce](#), a mechanism which convenes the World Assembly of Local and Regional Leaders as the united voice of this constituency. Through this inclusive Assembly, mayors will highlight their priorities, claim their place and engage in dialogue with states, independently of the decisions taken by the UN at the Conference, and always with a collaborative spirit. The Assembly will be held in two sessions, in Bogota on 14 October and on 16 October in Quito.

## The success of Habitat III will depend on local recognition

Aware of the outcome of the Third Preparatory Committee of the Conference in Surabaya and the state of the new draft, we have reasons to expect that Habitat III will leave us an important legacy, which will open the door for structural dialogue among all spheres of government. Given the changing realities of our societies, the only way to guarantee resilience and inclusion is to make sure that all actors are at the decision-making table.

For this reason, we celebrate that the World Assembly of Local and Regional Leaders is recognized in the [draft](#). Until the Conference, UCLG, its members and partners will continue advocating to ensure the territorial, local, metropolitan and rural agenda occupies a prominent place in the United Nations system, as well as to allow mayors the possibility of speaking through their own organizations.

In a globalized world, global decisions affect local ones. Because of this, international agendas must take into account sub-national contexts. The [World Summit](#) in Bogota will listen to local voices. However, Habitat III will also have to listen to citizens, activists, businesses and elected representatives from all over the world, as they are also co-creating their cities aiming for a better quality of life. They understand the city as a common space, with the closest level of government to citizens as the facilitator of this democratic process.

Local and regional governments can play a strategic role in developing the territorial agenda to constitute solid foundations for fair, peaceful, inclusive and resilient future societies. States must show that they are open to listen and to provide us with the competencies and resources needed to define and co-create the societies of the future, together with the people.

Josep Roig  
Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments - UCLG

Source: Seres Urbanos via [Planeta Futuro](#)

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### Enlaces

[1] <https://www.uclg.org/en>

[2] <https://www.bogota2016.uclg.org/en/>

[3] <http://www.gtf2016.org/>

[4] [http://media.wix.com/ugd/bfe783\\_d94fd6bf007a4be3821cd622a079ae55.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/bfe783_d94fd6bf007a4be3821cd622a079ae55.pdf)

[5] <http://blogs.elpais.com/seres-urbanos/2016/08/cumbre-l%C3%ADderes-bogot%C3%A1.html#more>