

3TH UCLG CULTURE SUMMIT BUENOS AIRES 3-5 APRIL 2019

Cities lead the actions on the role of culture in sustainable development

CLOSING SPEECH

5 APRIL 2019 MR MPHO PARKS TAU PRESIDENT OF UCLG -UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS











Dear Head of Government of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, dear mayors, dear organizers of the UCLG Culture Summit,

All protocols observed

I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks to the **Head of Government of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires** for hosting this excellent 3rd Culture Summit of UCLG. This is an impressive city, a vibrant place, and you and your team have integrated everything that makes Buenos Aires a unique city into a great Culture Summit. Thank you.

Further, I would like to **thank everyone that has been involved in the Summit these days**, because events like this only work if everyone is engaged. We need diverse voices and perspectives and engaging conversations, and over the last three days we've enjoyed a lot of this.

We have come a long way! Although it is the **first time that the Culture Summit has been held back-to-back with the Executive Bureau of UCLG**, I think you will all agree with me that Culture occupies a critical central space in our World Organization.

Thanks to the Committee on Culture, its leadership but also the small team that works behind the scenes every day, culture is making our network more cohesive. It is providing an opportunity for developing cross-disciplinary dialogues and demonstrating that there is a





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different type of development possible of which culture is a critical pillar. I want to emphasise the important work that is being done by the Pilot Cities of Culture 21 Actions. They are translating ideas into realities. They are inspiring other cities in UCLG.

Every day, local governments around the world are contributing to make the global agendas land.

It is our role as World Organization to make this commitment visible, to promote an acknowledgment of the work of local and regional governments at the decision-making table, and to foster learning among cities and local governments.

These ideas have been reflected in UCLG's work for many years, since the adoption of the **Agenda 21 for culture** in 2004. More recently, the **Bogotá Commitment** adopted at the last UCLG World Congress in 2016, laid out culture as "a vital element of citizenship, integration and co-existence". It also commits us to promoting active cultural policies to guarantee the right to culture for all.





This is what we strive for: **cities where everyone can exercise their human rights and where basic services are provided for all**. Those places are not imaginable without access to culture as an inclusive and democratic equaliser.

The significant presence of civil society organisations and activists at this Summit is also part of **our vision in building plural, participatory governance**.

Many of us belong to generations that are aware of the important transformations that will be needed to ensure a sustainable model of development. Beyond the accumulated knowledge and the science that should be the backbone of our decision making, culture needs to be the cornerstone of our future models.

I am thrilled to see how the discussions of our Policy Councils have integrated the cultural perspective to some of the most pressing issues and priorities of our times. How the right to the city cannot be exercised without guaranteeing cultural rights. How intergenerational dialogues need to ensure opportunities for all and how public space is critical as a cultural space but also essential to foster creativity.

I think we are on a very good path of integration of our policy visions. I am very pleased to say that we are breaking silos. Buenos Aires has been an excellent step in this direction. The leadership of Mexico City and Lisbon have also made this possible.

Let us carry the torch to our next UCLG World Congress in eThekwini-Durban next November.



Thank you all very much. Mpho Parks Tau



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