

Side event to the United Nations Fourth Forum of Mayors' meeting

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# HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF MAYORS AND HEADS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Organized by  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)  
and Global Cities Hub



FORUM OF  
MAYORS  
2024

## PROGRAMME

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Tuesday, 1 October 2024

13:15 - 14:45 CET

Room XXIII, Building E, Palais Des Nations



UNECE



GLOBAL  
CITIES HUB  
— GENEVA



UNHCR  
The UN Refugee Agency



UN trade &  
development



World Health  
Organization

In January 2023, the UNECE member states established the **Forum of Mayors** as a subsidiary body of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing, and Land Management. This Forum was created to support urban development and local **SDG implementation**. The Forum of Mayors is a unique UN body that allows mayors to participate in the United Nations in their own capacity, enabling them to share their city strategic plans, actions, and joint initiatives to address regional and global challenges.

This year's focus of the Forum on the outcomes of the **Summit of the Future** presents a distinct opportunity to **strengthen the connection between global governance** and the people of the world, helping to restore trust in a more inclusive and effective UN multilateral system.

The event is organized to give mayors and deputy mayors the opportunity **to directly interact with distinguished leaders of international organizations**. They will discuss how to address today's most pressing global challenges with local impacts. Inclusive and effective multilateralism requires a whole-of-government approach, where different levels complement and strengthen each other to find adequate solutions. The Pact for the Future, as the outcome of the UN Summit of the Future, is intended to reflect this consideration.

This special high-level meeting between heads of International Organizations (UN High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR, UN Economic Commission for Europe - UNECE, UN Trade and Development - UNCTAD, and World Health Organization - WHO) and mayors participating in the Forum will focus on the topics of integration of refugees, sustainable urbanization, trade and development in urban contexts, as well as urban health and pandemic preparedness, which are all highly relevant both in multilateral discussions as well as at the local level

The open exchange will enable mayors to receive **first-hand information about the work of these international organizations with local governments and communities**, as well as to share their perspectives on these crucial issues. It will also provide them with the opportunity to ask the most **relevant questions directly from a local angle**. Follow-up on key issues can be conducted through UN field offices in the concerned countries and cities, while the Global Cities Hub is ready to assist with this process.

The Global Cities Hub is working actively on the engagement of local and regional governments in multilateral processes, and it is convinced that such a meeting will be a highlight of the mayors' visit to Geneva and **a great opportunity for international organizations to directly engage with subnational governments**.





Ms. **Tatiana Molcean**

Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

**UNECE** is one of the five UN Regional Economic Commissions. It facilitates greater economic integration and cooperation among its member states, promoting sustainable development and economic prosperity. Its work focuses on thematic areas such as energy, transport, forest management, housing and land management, trade and the environment. UNECE hosts the Forum of Mayors and is thus deeply involved in the localization of SDGs through policy dialogue, the exchange of best practices, and the development of recommendations addressed to member States.



Mr. **Filippo Grandi**

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

**UNHCR**, the UN Refugee Agency, protects people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution. Headquartered in Geneva, it works in over 130 countries protecting refugees, stateless people and internally displaced persons (IDPs), by responding with life-saving support, safeguarding fundamental human rights and helping them build a better future. This includes in cities which host ~60% of the world's refugees and ~80% of the world's IDPs. UNHCR is engaged worldwide with local authorities, city networks and others to carry out its mandate in the field.



Ms. **Rebeca Grynspan**

Secretary General, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

**UNCTAD** is exploring how vulnerabilities, such as climate change, sea-level rise, and natural disasters can affect trade and development prospects. It promotes sustainable urban development strategies tailored to the unique needs of coastal cities, including sustainable ocean or blue economy considerations, green and resilient infrastructure, and fostering inclusive growth. UN Trade and Development offers, upon request, policy recommendations to governments – and sometimes to local and regional authorities – to address the challenges faced by coastal cities effectively.



Ms. **Li Ailan**

Assistant Director General, World Health Organization (WHO)

**WHO** works with 194 member States to achieve better health for everyone, everywhere. Headquartered in Geneva, it has a large presence in the field with 50 country offices and 6 regional offices. WHO runs global health prevention and promotion campaigns, produces global standards in a broad array of health-related areas, such as the triple health burden faced by cities: infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, pneumonia, dengue and diarrhea; noncommunicable diseases like heart disease, stroke, asthma, cancer, diabetes and depression; and violence and injuries, including road traffic injuries.

### Moderated by:

The Global Cities Hub (Sami Kanaan / Anh Thu Duong)