

DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF INTERMEDIARY CITIES AS TERRITORIES OF TALENT:

“the future of employment, digital transformation and healthy eating”

Tandil 2023

We, representatives of the following local governments and city networks, within the framework of the UCLG Regional Forum of Intermediary Cities of Latin America, meeting in Tandil on May 29 and 30, 2023:

Ayacucho, Cañada Rosquín, El Trébol, Esteban Echeverría, General Alvear, Villa Carlos Paz, Villa Elisa, Tandil (Argentina); Santana de Parnaíba (Brasil); Quevedo (Ecuador); Independencia, San José de los Molinos, Santo Domingo de Anda, Pueblo Nuevo (Perú); San José, Montevideo (Uruguay); Chefchaouen (Marruecos); Quelimane (Mozambique); Braga (Portugal); Grenoble (Francia); Mercociudades; Federación Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipaities and Municipal Associations (FLACMA); ICLEI Southern Cone – Local Governments for Sustainability; and the Vice-Presidency of UCLG Latin America.

and with the online and special participation of Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General; José Ribeiro, Mayor of Valongo (Portugal); Belinda Gottardi, Mayor of Castel Maggiore (Italy); Carlos Martínez, Mayor of Soria (Spain); and Jorge Perez Jaramillo (UCLG expert).

We recognize that:

Urban growth on a global scale consolidated cities as engines of the world economy, demanding a significant amount of natural and food resources and at the same time demanding certain levels of professionalization. Particularly for intermediary cities, due to their role as intermediaries between urban and rural space, the attraction of investment and talent have become one of the necessary sources for development.

We live in a humanized continent, in which the networks of Intermediary Cities show us how to organize ourselves to better understand ourselves and our territories. Intermediary cities have positioned ourselves on the international scene as places of life systems, where the care of natural resources in respect of the natural environment is becoming increasingly important on the global agenda and new food practices.

- **Intermediary cities and the UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity**

In line with the Pact for the Future of Humanity adopted by the elected representatives and local leaders at the UCLG World Summit in Daejeon in 2022, local governments have a key role to play in the transition from a productive society to a creative, supportive and sustainable one, putting people and the planet at the

center of the scene. Therefore, it is vitally important that the advances of the 4th industrial-technological revolution are at the service of local communities.

The Pact affirms that the promotion of sustainable and inclusive food systems managed by all spheres of government is essential to ensure equal access to healthy food and guarantee decent employment and fair remuneration, based on a respect for the principles of subsidiarity to guarantee that no one and no place is left behind.

The Pact recognizes the potential of intermediary cities as promoters of resilience and sustainability on a global scale, especially in the need for innovative forms of linkage in social, labor, institutional and technological terms.

- **The legacy of Intermediary Cities**

Intermediary Cities have developed a legacy through consultative and participatory processes within the framework of the UCLG forum, integrating the Pact for the Future as an instrument that enhances the resilience of territories through several key agendas.

The first World Forum, held in Chefchaouen, where intermediary cities demonstrated their role in the implementation of the SDGs and global agendas. It's here where local governments claimed their 'Right to implement the Global Agendas', and to be global actors.

The second World Forum came to consolidate the resilience forces of intermediary cities, after the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, based on the strength of the values of solidarity, responsibility, transparency, cooperation and service to the citizen to contribute to an equitable and resilient recovery. A recovery based on the social, economic, environmental, cultural and human capitals of resilience, components of the 'life systems'. A commitment to continue contributing to global agendas by providing the rich experiences of their territories as innovation laboratories for solutions to the climate crisis and the pandemic with economies based on care and solidarity. **The two world forums highlighted the possibilities and potential of "proximity and closeness governance": thanks to this, intermediary cities have shown great resilience in the face of change. In this new era, faced with new constant challenges, intermediary cities have shaped new schemes of proximity and interaction between citizens and local government**, which account progress against the challenge of democratization and the participation of civil society in decision-making.

- **Food systems and the rural-urban symbiosis**

Intermediary cities are those urban-rural spaces where everything comes together: **the urban world and the rural world are constantly connected.**

These territories place special emphasis on the care of non-renewable resources, such as land and water, which coexist with dominant extractive production models.

Intermediary cities are an urban-rural system that produce food for urban areas from a perspective based on sustainability, creating identity ties with the territory and generating a possible path towards food sovereignty.

Both the peri-urban spaces and the rural towns close to the urban centers of the intermediary cities, become territories that feed and highlight various aspects

inherent to food security, **bio-healthy**, without harmful chemicals of any kind and proximity markets appear, by promoting short marketing circuits "from producer to consumer" and responsible eating.

Therefore, the care of natural resources in the territories of intermediate cities is of special relevance, as governance of biodiversity in the territories and in the spaces of the 'hinterland'.

We call to:

- **Promote a new, more symbiotic relationship between natural resources and their use in territorial competitiveness**, for territorial cohesion that fosters a prosperous future of work in the digital age.
- **Recognize the value of technology and digital transformation in food systems** and put them at the service of organic and quality food (understood as a human right and a healthier life system), whose main objective is not to increase profitability with less investment.
- **Explore and promote economies based on care**, promoting spaces for associated management and co-creation with civil society to work collaboratively with universities, technology and agri-food companies, local producers and entrepreneurial ecosystems in the construction of policies that promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth in our cities.
- **Address the growing role of artificial intelligence in our societies**, because, although it can become a facilitating tool for work and decision-making, it is necessary for local governments to emphasize the human dimension and the values of people in its use, so that the rational aim is to improve the quality of work and reduce the educational gap from a perspective of inclusion and accessibility.
- **Redouble efforts aimed at localizing the global agendas in our territories**, from the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals of United Nations to the UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, in view of the Summit on the SDGs in September 2023 and the Summit of the Future in 2024.
- Integrate a **joint and equitable governance of the commons through an agreed territorial strategy**, in which the size of the territory does not determine the importance in governance agreements. This implies that we not only talk about multilevel governance, but also about reciprocity and complementarity, placing the territory, its resources, the common goods and the human being at the heart of the system of decision parameters, for the benefit of the community, the planet and a democracy rebuilt through trust.

We commit to:

In order to fulfill our vision, our mission and our call, and in view of the organization of the 3rd World Forum of Intermediary Cities, we commit ourselves to:

- To be **the catalysts for a change in the model**, in the relationship between production, consumption and the environment, considering how personal relationships are transformed into digital relationships and that has an impact on economic, social, cultural, human and environmental exchanges.

- **Rethink, plan and prepare the territory** with all its resources, natural and human, through a joint vision with a decided and planned strategy in common. A transformative planning process that articulates people, care and production, putting technological tools at the service of Intermediary Cities, generating local policies that allow the socialization of production and development of people, and their care systems, towards a future with smart, sustainable, sustainable and resilient cities.
- Generate actions and policies to **promote an economy based on care**, promoting **economic development and the creation of decent work** that cares for the different ages of society, based on the design of **public policies that encourage the generation of talent and the attraction of investments**, as well as the diversification and innovation of local economies.
- Promote **Kilometer Zero**, through **food systems that are rebuilt on a value-added system of all actors and common goods**, based on generating ecological, consensual, inclusive and equitable value chains: healthy, affordable and sustainable proximity systems, prioritizing the production of quality food and access for small producers to new markets and proximity fairs, based on the development of policies aimed at food sovereignty and self-sufficiency such as agroecological gardens and direct purchase channels from the producer to the consumer.
- **Preserve the environment through the reduction of food waste**, betting on an ecological transition focused on short marketing circuits, the treatment and added value to waste, and the care of biodiversity.
- **Promote the education and training of children and families** based on the creation of talent in a circular way, promoting self-employment, local production and consumption and local identity. Education will be the driving force behind awareness and new values about the benefits of healthy eating and nutrition from an early age.
- Generate a **digital transition based on training and talent**, promoting equal access for citizens to information and communication technologies and training in computer tools, thus reducing the existing inequalities between the adult population and digital natives.
- Extend **digital transformation as a tool to promote transparent and equitable governance**, in sectors such as government administration, health, and education, in order to improve the quality of life, efficiency in the provision of public services, and the creation of job opportunities, using technology as an essential tool for government management.
- Continue feeding this reflection through the **Local4Action HUB Tandil**, in the form of a FabLab to bring solutions that involve the generation of talent and digital transformation to intermediary cities, in order to project a sustainable future for Latin American intermediary cities and the rest of the world.

Fab**Lab** 

WORLDWIDE LABORATORY
 OF INTERMEDIARY CITIES