The importance of the contribution of intermediate cities to Africa’s development on the agenda 2030

WELCOME MESSAGE
FROM GOVERNOR OF KISUMU
Prof. Anyang’ Nyong’o

The Africities Summit which is held every three years will for the very first time this year be held in an intermediary city – in this case, Kisumu City. This is the 9th summit after being held in such cities as Abidjan, Johannesburg, Dakar, twice in Marrakech and once in Nairobi.

Kisumu people take exceptional pride in hosting this continental and international conference. On behalf of the people of Kisumu, I as the governor welcome you all to this beautiful lakeside city.

Having said that, I would like to give a brief history of Kisumu. Kisumu got its name from being a barter trade centre, hence the name which is derived from the Luo word “sumo”. It has a major cosmopolitan congruence having been influenced by the Asian and white settlers during the 19th century when they came to Kenya to build the lunatic express - Uganda railway.

WELCOME MESSAGE
FROM CABINET SECRETARY
Eugene Wamalwa

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 9th Africities Summit being held in the beautiful lakeside city of Kisumu.

Intermediary cities like Kisumu will be the epicenter of the continent’s future urbanisation and it is only apt that this city is the stage to discuss future urbanisation challenges for Africa. Originally meant to be held in 2021, the 9th Summit was postponed after consultations with the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa after which it was agreed that the event be moved to this year owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the leadership of H.E. The President, Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta we set the ball rolling by constituting various committees tasked with the responsibility of steering preparatory efforts for the Summit.

These Committees include the Committee of Cabinet Secretaries of identified line ministries which I chair which also includes the chair of the COG and the Kisumu Governor, the Committee of line Principal Secretaries co-chaired by the Head of the Public Service and the Kisumu Governor, and a Multi-Agency technical Committee composed of technical officers from both levels of government and other stakeholders.

Resources have been mobilised to ensure that the city’s infrastructure and other facilities are able to host an international conference at the highest level. We are very happy that we have been able to achieve this.

Kisumu also remains one of the port cities poised to play an important role in realising the full benefits of a blue economy and as a historical city associated with trade, it is centrally placed to play a major role in trade and commerce within the larger Eastern Africa region.

The last few years have also seen Kisumu work towards unlocking its potential as a business tourism destination for the future. With the rapid development of its tourism and hospitality infrastructure and more than 18 hotels of 3 star and rating and an expanded bed capacity, the city is well prepared to host the growing number of visitors expected in years to come.

The Summit provides Kenya with a golden opportunity to showcase to the world what the country has to offer and comes at a time when Kenya has started reaping the benefits of devolution which can provide a good case study of how power and resources can be decentralised in our continent for the benefit of all going forward.

I take this opportunity to welcome all of you to the city and hope that after the Summit, you will find time to tour and enjoy various parts of our beautiful country.

WELCOME MESSAGE
SECRETARY GENERAL OF UCLG AFRICA
Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi

Bienvenue au Sommet et au Salon Africités à Kisumu!

Nous espérons que vous allez vivre une expérience unique de plongée dans l’Afrique des villes et territoires.

C’est en effet la première fois que le Sommet Africités est organisé dans une ville intermédiaire en Afrique, à un moment précis où la triple crise sanitaire, écologique et géopolitique impose à tous de repenser les certitudes sur lesquels étaient fondés nos modèles de développement.

Nous devons innover pour être au niveau des défis d’aujourd’hui et de demain.

Kisumu est le point de départ de ce renouveau de la réflexion sur la transformation structurelle de l’Afrique pour être à même de réaliser l’Agenda 2030 des objectifs de développement durable, et l’Agenda 2063 de l’Afrique que Nous Voulons.
The importance of the contribution of intermediate cities to Africa’s development agenda

It was under the high patronage of His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, that the work of the 9th Summit of African Cities, Regions and Municipalities and their partners was launched in Kisumu (Kenya), a symbol of the dynamics of intermediary cities that United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa), the organizers of the AfriCities summit. The President of the Commission of the African Union, His Excellency Moussa Faki, the High Representative of the African Union (AU) for Infrastructure, His Excellency Raïla Odinga, MaimunahMohd Sharif, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the President of UCLG Africa, Mrs. Christine Mba Ndutume and the Secretary General of UCLG Africa, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi. Several officials from Kenya including the Honourable Professor Peter Anyang’ Nyong’o, Governor of Kisumu, and the Honourable Eugene Wamalwa, Acting Cabinet Secretary of Devolution. The Special Envoy of the President of Kenya for Climate Change, His Excellency John Kerry, and the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Her Excellency Amina Mohamed, participated in the opening ceremony by videoconference.

It was a real wake-up call that the delegates of this 9th edition of the AfriCities Summit have launched to the whole continent on the importance of «the contribution of African intermediary cities to the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the African Union Agenda 2063».

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The President of Kenya launched a line of thought on the contribution of African intermediary cities to the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 and the African Union’s Agenda 2063. According to His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, African central, and local governments must work with civil society organizations, academics, development partners, and the private sector to accelerate the integration of peoples and African unity. As an example of a Head of State committed to decentralization, President Kenyatta emphasized the importance of rural areas that need to be provided with infrastructure. He did not fail to invite local governments and the actors present to come out of the summit with a concrete roadmap on how African intermediate cities can contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the African Union’s Agenda 2063. The Head of State of the host country ended his opening speech by proposing 12 points of reflection to the delegates. These include the following:

• how to raise the level of existing services and expand the delivery of basic social services in intermediary cities;
• how to accelerate the reduction of extreme poverty in Africa;
• how to organize the transfer of resources from our central governments to intermediary cities to improve basic social services and facilities for development...

“Let us empower the people to take charge of themselves.”

In his opening remarks, UCLG Africa Secretary General Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi thanked the President of Kenya for his commitment to decentralization in Kenya, making it one of the top four countries in Africa. For Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, intermediary cities form part of the country’s hinterland, and the quality of services delivered in these territories determines the balanced development of Africa. That is why UCLG Africa is initiating a process of reflection to ensure that adequate infrastructure is built in intermediary cities to serve their hinterland. For the Secretary General of UCLG Africa, the campaigns must also exist in our States with basic social services available to enable the populations to take charge for a balanced development of our territories. He concluded his remarks by appealing to the Heads of State and ministers for our countries to set up these basic services, which Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi called «empowering the people to take charge of themselves».

Call for discussions and interactions to explore innovative opportunities to reduce vulnerabilities and increase the resilience of our growing urban populations.

In a short message ahead of the opening speech of the Head of State of Kenya, the Honourable Eugene Wamalwa, The Acting Cabinet Secretary of Devolution, said that this summit truly aims to advance decentralization on the continent. "The discussions at this Summit will provide the link for Africa to chart its approach and trajectory towards sustainable human development based on our realities while taking stock of the knowledge and experiences gained around the world. It is important for all of us to start raising the issues and finding solutions on how we will finance our infrastructure developments in our cities, municipalities, villages, and shopping centers as an essential factor to ensure that our urbanization meets the basic principles of development, «said the Honourable Minister.

He urged participants to «discuss and interact to explore innovative opportunities to reduce vulnerabilities and increase the resilience of our growing urban populations.»

He said, «We must work towards the economic empowerment of our communities through transformative and sustainable socio-economic programs. We must therefore look at all the opportunities available to us to improve our environment and the management of natural resources and to improve market access, trade, and financial services.»

The Africities Summits are key elements of African governance. It is the most important meeting of elected officials across the continent; a democratic approach to building African unity. Governance that starts from the grassroots to renew the national scale and build the continental scale. Africities’ approach is to start from the living conditions of the populations and struggle to improve them. The action of local governments fits with the everyday life of the people.

The Africities Summit 2022 is structured around:

- the breakdown of the theme of intermediary cities.
- the policies and strategies to be implemented to improve the contribution of intermediate cities to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.
- the definition of coalitions with the different categories of local stakeholders whose partnership with intermediate cities is necessary to the contribution of the latter to the structural transformation of the African continent.
- the sessions proposed by Kenyan national and local authorities; and
- sessions that include the UCLG Africa program.

Seven priority themes are the subject of dedicated Days: the sets are developed on priority themes:

• Urban Planning Day
• Climate Day.
• Diaspora and Afro-descendants Day
• Women’s Day
• Youth Day.
• Digital Day; and
• Culture Day.
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Addresses help us find people and places, and they help people and things find us. An address is necessary to secure official documents, do things like open a bank account. You can order products online, and they show up at your doorstep. In an emergency, you give your address to an ambulance or fire truck, and they quickly get to you.

There are many places in Africa without traditional addressing systems and some areas with no addresses or road names at all.

Plus Codes are a free and open source addressing system to provide addresses for everyone. Plus Codes are like street addresses for people or places that don’t have one.

Attend this session to hear from Google & their partners in Kenya (Kisumu and Vihiga Counties), The Gambia and South Africa about how Plus Codes are being used as an official addressing solution. You will also learn more about how Plus Codes can help ensure that everyone, everywhere can exist on a digital map, with digital addresses, no matter where they live.

maps.google.com/pluscodes
UNDP champions the pivotal role that local and regional governments play in the rising urban future of Africa, and subsequently, in achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and African Union Agenda 2063.

Building on its longstanding partnership with local and regional governments across Africa, UNDP now presents its Renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework for Africa 2022-25. It outlines actions proposed to support local governments towards people-centered governance innovation, with a focus on participatory governance systems and local economic development for transformative change at the local level.

COME VISIT US AT THE AFRICITIES EXHIBITION AND JOIN US FOR AN INTERACTIVE SESSION ON UNDP’S OFFER TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON 17 MAY 14.30-18.00.
Gabon exhibition booth: Secretary General UCLG Africa (second from left) and the President of UCLG Africa, Mrs Christine Mba Ndutume
H.E., The President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta

H.E., Kisumu Governor Peter Anyang’ Nyong’o

Kenya Former Prime Minister, Raila Odinga

Cabinet Secretary, Honourable Eugene Wamalwa

Secretary General UCLG Africa

H.E. The former President of Seychelles Dany Faure, Raila Odinga & Secretary General UCLG Africa

Session: Diaspora Day