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ICLEI South Asia E-News

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Deputy Secretary  
General, ICLEI and  
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*Greetings!*

It is my pleasure and honour to share with you all that the 2nd Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific Forum on Urban Resilience and Adaptation, held in conjunction with the 16th International Convention on Melaka Twin Cities, from 2 to 4 March, has been a success in many ways.

The forum was attended by more than 500 participants, including Ambassadors, High Commissioners, city Mayors, councillors, members from civil society, business groups, among others.

Besides, the congress in Malaysia succeeded in achieving its primary goal of recreating a space for local governments, institutions and communities to come together and discuss climate resilience in urban areas across the region. Our eminent panelists and speakers from Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world provided an insight into the most critical issues around urban resilience and made the discussions holistic and region-specific.

I must acknowledge that the forum could not have been a success without support from the Government of Malaysia and the State Government of Melaka. My sincere thanks to YAB Datuk Seri Utama Hj. Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia; YAB Datuk Seri Utama Dr. Ahmad Zahid bin Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia; YAB Datuk Seri Ir. Hj. Idris bin Hj. Haron, Chief Minister of Melaka, and all the other ministers and representatives of the government for supporting RCAP. I also thank everyone who participated in the forum.

This newsletter is a glimpse into the key developments and outcomes of Resilient Cities Asia Pacific 2016. We shall soon share with you a detailed report on the outcomes of the congress.

Enjoy reading!



### RCAP 2016 reinforces development as 'peoples' process'



More than 500 participants from 98 cities in 31 countries, including eight Ambassadors and High Commissioners, 48 mayors and elected representatives, and 100 city representatives attended the 2nd Asia-Pacific Forum on Urban Resilience and Adaptation, held in Melaka, Malaysia from 2 to 4 March, 2016. Three days of sharing, deliberating, learning, and networking ended in style with the reading of Melaka Call for Action and adoption of Citizens' Pledge where people of the heritage city

acknowledged their responsibility to contribute towards making it resilient and sustainable.

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### **Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia endorses inclusive resilience**

At the High Level Segment on the closing day of the conference, YAB Datuk Seri Utama Dr. Ahmad Zahid bin Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, said, “Cities must be inclusive and offer adequate opportunities for low-income households to improve their livelihoods.” This, he said, would ensure that inequality and poverty, which are the two issues often associated with urbanisation, were effectively managed. The Deputy Prime Minister insisted that the effort to build resilient cities must start from the people.

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### **High-Level Segment reasserts role of cities in achieving sustainability**



The High-Level Segment at the final day of RCAP 2016 highlighted the global trend towards cities as epicentres of change and the opportunities offered by global agreements for mainstreaming resilience in cities. Dignitaries, including Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Chief Minister of Melaka, Secretary General of ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability and Chief of UN Habitat Bangkok reiterated that now is the time for cities to lead the agenda of sustainability.

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### **‘Translating global gains into local realities’**

The congress should look to define how local governments can act within the framework of the new international agreements – Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Conference of Parties Paris Agreement on climate change – to address significant challenges to resilience-building, said Gino Van Begin, Secretary General at ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability. The experts at the forum unanimously agreed that these agreements were also opportunities.

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### **Delegates adopt Melaka Call at RCAP 2016**



On the closing day, delegates at Resilient Cities Asia Pacific 2016 adopted the Melaka Call for Action, an output of the congress and a joint statement that was adopted by the participants. The Call appeals to national governments to enhance their support for local and subnational governments and commits the delegates to ten action points.

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### Bridging the gap on resilience finance

RCAP 2016 focused on financing for resilience, with key lessons including the importance of mainstreaming resilience into planning processes and the need for local governments to produce more concrete business plans. With the magnitude of infrastructure investments required in most Asian cities being an accepted obstacle to balanced urban development, the discussions made it evident that now is the time for financing institutions to adapt to make finance more accessible.

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### Decoding Sustainable Development Goals for local governments



Goal 11- Sustainable Cities and Communities, also known as the “Urban SDG”, aims to catalyse change so that cities and human settlements are “inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. The congress concluded that though local governments have existing projects that fit with the UN Sustainable Goals, especially Goal 11, the challenge is to optimize the work that is already being conducted. This has to be done by engaging partners and integrating the targets under SDGs.

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### Informal settlements: Let people be the solution

City specific problems of informal settlements drew significant attention at RCAP 2016, with an emphasis on the need to acknowledge informal livelihoods and the fact that challenges faced by the settlements affect entire cities. From the discussions that involved cases from India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Philippines and Sri Lanka, the importance of coexistence in planning resilience and ensuring transfer of knowledge came as a key message.

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### Melaka’s pledge for resilience



RCAP 2016 ended in style with a “Resilience Walk” to Independence Memorial where the Citizens’ Pledge, based on Melaka Call for Action and read by the Chief Minister of Melaka, was adopted. The Pledge symbolized that resilience cannot remain a concept to be deliberated by academicians, practitioners or politicians. It has to translate into a movement that percolates to every individual and motivates each one to get into action, to achieve cumulative impact that is transformational.

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### From the speakers

**"We need to culturalize the green agenda in all aspects of our lives and in our nation's life"**  
*YAB Datuk Seri Utama Dr. Ahmad Zahid bin Hamidi , Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia*

**"Urban resilience is a collective responsibility"***Datuk Seri Ir. Hj. Idris bin Hj. Haron, Chief Minister, Melaka State Government***"Community is immunity"***Mariko Sato, Chief, UN Habitat Bangkok***"Melaka, the first green city state in Malaysia, has pledged to take all possible steps to reduced greenhouse gas emissions".***YBhg. Datuk Zainal bin Hussin, Mayor of Melaka Historic City Council***"We have clear goals for green growth – these include strategies for climate mitigation and adaptation"***YB Datuk Ar. Hj. Ismail bin Hj. Othman, Melaka State Executive Councillor for Local Government, Housing and Environment***"Melaka has already initiated numerous initiatives to become a green technology city-state by the year 2020"***YB Datuk Wira Hj. Md Yunus bin Husin, Melaka State Executive Councillor for Education, Higher Education, Science and Technology, Green Technology and Innovation***"The new outcomes of 2015 have fostered a global policy framework on resilience that has never been more favourable for local and subnational action"***Gino Van Begin, Secretary General, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability***"After years of efforts by ICLEI and like-minded organisations, we are now at a point where cities will lead significant action towards sustainability"***Emani Kumar, Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability***"Let people be the solution"***Mayang Nayoan, member at Arkom Jogja***"We are transforming institutions through gender responsive and participatory budgeting"***Dato' Maimunah Mohd Sharif, President, Seberang Perai Municipal Council and Southeast Asia Representative, ICLEI Global Executive Committee***"A healthy city is good for business"***Thomas Tang, Director, Sustainability Asia, AECOM***In pictures: Resilient Cities Asia Pacific 2016****ICLEI South Asia Secretariat**

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ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is the world's leading association of more than 1000 metropolises, cities, urban regions and towns representing over 660 million people in 86 countries. ICLEI promotes local action for global sustainability and supports cities to become sustainable, resilient, resource-efficient, biodiverse, low-carbon; to build a smart infrastructure; and to develop an inclusive, green urban economy with the ultimate aim of achieving healthy and happy communities. ICLEI promotes local action for global sustainability and supports cities to become sustainable, resilient, resource-efficient, biodiverse, low-

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