



**CITIES SUMMIT  
OF THE AMERICAS**  
DENVER, COLORADO - 2023



**NLC** NATIONAL  
LEAGUE  
OF CITIES  
CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

## *Mayoral Declaration on Enhancing Mayoral Leadership in Addressing Hate, Extremism, and Polarization and Safeguarding Local Democracy in the Americas*

*Cities Summit of the Americas  
Denver, Colorado  
April 28, 2023*

We, the Mayors and other City Leaders gathered in Denver at the Cities Summit of the Americas, and in the context of the Democracy and Inclusion Track Session on Enhancing Mayoral Leadership in Addressing Hate, Extremism and Polarization, and Safeguarding Local Democracy in the Americas:

*Recognizing* that the historical roots of our countries are founded on diversity and multiculturalism and *condemning* the rising levels of extremism and hate, increased polarization, anti-government sentiment, and gender-based, inter-communal, and gang-related violence while *noting* that local officials are increasingly being targeted.

*Expressing* concern that misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories are contributing to these worrisome trends.

*Recognizing* that mayors and other local leaders across the Americas have a unique, but sometimes overlooked, role to play in preventing and responding to these challenges, including by working in close collaboration with civil society and the communities they serve to strengthen social cohesion and create cities of belonging.

*Appreciating that* due to their proximity to and familiarity with local communities, mayors and other local leaders are well-placed to identify the priorities of their residents and develop innovative approaches to reduce inequality and discrimination and ensure access to public services.

*Recognizing* the role mayors can play in countering dis- and misinformation, for example, by sharing and making available fact-based, contextualized information in relevant local languages about events, including elections, public protests, and violent attacks, or access to social services, which are susceptible to being manipulated to generate or exacerbate inter-communal tensions.

*Standing in solidarity* with local leaders and communities who defend, promote, and protect the rights of their communities, minorities, migrants, and others who seek shelter and refuge in times of crisis.

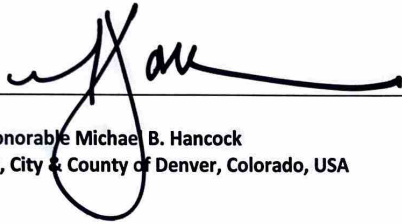
*Welcoming* the leading role that the Strong Cities Network and the National League of Cities and other relevant country-focused networks in the Western Hemisphere continue to play in facilitating the sharing of local learnings among mayors and local governments.

*Declare* our commitment to, and *call on* all mayors and other local leaders from across the Western Hemisphere, to join us in:

1. Speaking out regularly and consistently against all forms of discrimination, disinformation, intolerance, hate, violence, and extremism.
2. Sending a clear and consistent public message of being an inclusive and welcoming city, recognizing that public safety and well-being begins with inclusion at the local level, and that inclusivity is the foundation for effective prevention and response.
3. Strengthening local democratic institutions, including by facilitating the active participation of all residents, especially women, young people, isolated or marginalized communities, and new arrivals, to promote and foster social cohesion, representative governance, and resilience.
4. Investing in building trust with and between communities so there are established connections when/if hate or extremism emerges or polarization rises, recognizing that authentic, trusted relationships with communities are essential for rallying support in moments of crisis, for addressing discriminatory historical or structural legacies or injustices, and building long-term community cohesion and resilience.
5. Promoting transparency and pursuing open dialogue between city authorities, civil society and communities, to understand peoples' lived realities and aspirations, including by creating safe spaces for difficult conversations (including about racism, injustice, and hatred) among cross-sections of the local population.
6. Considering hate, extremism, and polarization, and the violence that can manifest from these threats in their multidimensional and interconnected forms, including by investing city resources in and prioritizing analysis and practice that better understands this threat landscape, building capacity to collaborate around integrated prevention policies and programs that are multi-disciplinary and evidence-based, addressing local grievances, and remaining responsive to a continuously changing and increasingly interconnected and dynamic threat environment.
7. Promoting increased cooperation with national partners to ensure that the voices of cities and their communities are reflected in national, regional, and international policy frameworks aimed at reducing the threats posed by hate, extremism, and polarization.
8. Building cooperation with the Strong Cities Network, and other relevant networks and partners, to elevate and enhance the role of mayors and the cities they lead in preventing and responding to hate, extremism, and polarization, and safeguarding local democracy.

*Express* our further commitment to share with the Strong Cities Network on an annual basis the actions we have taken to implement this declaration.

Signed on April 28, 2023, on behalf of the endorsing mayors and city officials:



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**The Honorable Michael B. Hancock**  
Mayor, City & County of Denver, Colorado, USA

Mayor Christopher Taylor, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA  
Mayor Oscar Escobar, President of Asointermedias, Colombian Association of Intermediary Cities  
Mayor Mike Coffman, Aurora, Colorado, USA  
Mayor President Sharon Weston Broome, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA  
Mayor Mark A. Behnke, Battle Creek, Minnesota, USA  
Mayor Bernard Wagner, Belize City, Belize  
Belize City Council, Belize  
Mayor Julian Gold, Beverly Hills, California, USA  
Mayor Claudia Lopez, Bogotá, Colombia  
Mayor Guyleen Castriotta, City & County of Broomfield, Colorado, USA  
Mayor Rodríguez Larreta, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Mr Fernando Straface, Secretary General for International Relations, Buenos Aires City Government, Argentina  
Mayor Jyoti Gondek, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Mayor Faiq Mohammed, Chaguanas, Trinidad & Tobago  
Mayor Tim Kelly, Chattanooga, Tennessee, USA  
Mayor Tim Murray, Clermont, Florida, USA  
Mayor Andrew Ginther, Columbus, Ohio, USA  
Mayor Michael B. Hancock, City & County of Denver, Colorado, USA  
Mayor Melanie Townsend, Drew, Mississippi, USA  
Mayor Elaine O'Neal, Durham, North Carolina, USA  
Mayor Nicole LaChapelle, Easthampton, Massachusetts, USA  
Mayor Amarjeet Sohi, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
Mayor Lily Mei, Fremont, California, USA  
Mayor Mike Savage, Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia, Canada  
Mayor Luke Bronin, Hartford, Connecticut, USA  
Mayor Nancy Rotering, Highland Park, Illinois, USA  
Mayor Ravinder S. Bhalla, Hoboken, New Jersey, USA  
Mayor Chris Reinersman, Independence, Kentucky, USA  
Mr Esteban Benavides, International Observatory of Mayors Living Together  
Mayor Berry Vrbanovic, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada & Co-President, United Cities & Local Governments  
Mayor Indya Kincannon, Knoxville, Tennessee, USA  
Councilmember Shari Horne, Laguna Woods, California, USA  
Mayor Chris Riley, Leon Valley, Texas, USA  
Mayor Kyle Schlachter, Littleton, Colorado, USA  
Mayor Hollie Rogin, Lyons, Colorado, USA  
Mayor Rafeal Ramírez Colina, Maracaibo, Venezuela  
Mayor Jacob Frey, Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Mayor Geoffrey Thomas, Monroe, Washington, USA  
Mr Esteban Benavides, International Affairs Advisor, Montreal, Quebec, Canada  
Mayor Jon Mitchell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, USA  
Mayor Karen M. Ostrand, Ocean Breeze, Florida, USA  
Mayor David Holt, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA  
Mayor Rika Levin, Ossining, New York, USA  
Mayor Bill Snavely, Oxford, Ohio, USA  
Mayor Oscar Escobar, Palmira, Colombia  
Mayor Paula Mascarenhas, Pelotas, Brazil  
Mayor Thurman Bartie, Port Arthur, Texas, USA  
Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, Washington, USA  
Mayor Eduardo da Costa Paes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
Rio de Janeiro City Hall, Brazil  
Mayor Kim Norton, Rochester, Minnesota, USA  
Mayor Malik Evans, Rochester, New York, USA  
Mayor Samantha Rodriguez, Rohnert Park, California, USA  
Mayor Alan Webber, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA  
Mayor Gleam Davis, Santa Monica, California, USA  
Mayor Charlie Clark, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, USA  
Mayor Bruce Harrell, Seattle, Washington, USA  
Mayor George Van Dusen, Skokie, Illinois, USA  
Mayor Councilor Norman Scott JP, Spanish Town, Jamaica  
St Catherine Municipal Corporation, Jamaica  
Mayor Caroline Simmons, Stamford, Connecticut, USA  
Mayor Victoria Woodards, Tacoma, Washington, USA, & President, National League of Cities  
Mayor Shelia Martin, Tangipahoa City, Louisiana, USA  
Commissioner Brigid Shea, Travis County, Texas, USA  
Mayor Randy Hibberd, Weiser, Idaho, USA