



## **DECLARATION**

### **4<sup>TH</sup> LIBERAL MAYORS SUMMIT - MADRID, 9 NOVEMBER 2018**

#### **STOPPING AUTHORITARIAN POPULISTS -**

#### **REINFORCING THE PILLARS OF URBAN DEMOCRACY**

We liberal mayors, meeting at our 4th Summit, during the ALDE Party Congress in Madrid, Spain on 9 November 2018, call on all liberal mayors around the world to help protect democracy from the rising trend of authoritarian, illiberal, anti-pluralist leaders. With a majority of the world's population now living in urban areas, city mayors have the power and the responsibility to strengthen the pillars of local democracy, and thus prevent authoritarian leaders from establishing vital roots in towns and cities.

We therefore call on all mayors around the world who are committed to democracy to:

- Agree with other political parties that certain aspects of local democracy are non-negotiable and will be jointly defended if ever attacked. Announce these agreements to the local population and media.
- Convert established democratic customs into unbreakable rules and laws, in case future leaders are tempted to ignore them.
- Strengthen independent institutions to protect them from political interference.
- Build trust in the city government, for example by increasing public accountability and have a zero-tolerance policy on corruption.
- Promote and facilitate civic education, to turn misinformed voters into educated ones.

- Promote and facilitate greater public understanding of how local media gather information and cross-check facts, and establish mechanisms to reinforce their financial and political independence.
- Support the development of e-solutions for an open and transparent governance
- Protect local systems from cyber-attacks.
- Set an example of consensus and compromise, and refuse to use insults and vitriol in public discourse.
- Build economic progress that focuses on actual prosperity experienced by citizens, and plan for the changes that automation is bringing to the economy.
- Be an unapologetic defender and promoter of democracy.

*This declaration was signed by the 24 participants at the 4<sup>th</sup> Liberal Mayors Summit:*

*Bart Somers – Mechelen, Belgium – ALDE CoR President*

*Herman Mashaba – Johannesburg, South-Africa*

*Begoña Villacis – Candidate for Mayor of Madrid, Spain*

*Rui Moreira – Porto, Portugal*

*François Decoster – Saint-Omer, France – ALDE CoR Vice-President*

*Darina Kováčová – Jirkov, Czech Republic*

*Keith House – Eastleigh Council, UK*

*Laurent Hénart – Nancy, France*

*Dario Hrebak – Bejlovar, Croatia*

*Hanna Kosonen – Savonlinna City Board, Finland*

*Francesco Vanderjeugd – Staden, Belgium*

*Mart Võrklaev – Rae, Estonia*

*Vincent Chauvet – Autun, France*

*Nehriban Ahmedova – Venets, Bulgaria*

*Pieter Gysbrechts – Putte, Belgium*

*Rait Pihelgas – Järva, Estonia*

*Rumen Pehlivanov – Rudozem, Bulgaria*

*Pawel Czuliński – Twardogora, Poland*

*Marko Torm – Rakvere, Estonia*

*Beytula Salo – Samuil, Bulgaria*

*Constantin Bilea – Oarja, Romania*

*Adrian-Paul Forcos – Târgu Trotus, Romania*

*Urmas Sukles – Haapsalu, Estonia*

*Hasan Azis – Kardjali, Bulgaria*