

## Speech

by the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller,  
for the opening of the 2018 Metropolis Annual Meeting  
on 26 August 2018 in Gauteng, South Africa

Redezeit: 7 Minuten

Mit Pult und Mikro

Premier David Makhura, Co-President of Metropolis,  
Fellow mayors and representatives of Metropolises,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the Metropolis Annual Meeting in Gauteng!

My sincere thanks go to our hosts. They are welcoming representatives from cities on five continents.

This year, Nelson Mandela would have turned 100. I very much respect this great man. He once said, what counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will give our lives significance.

That is what Metropolis is all about. Our big cities are changing at a rapid pace. We can see that right here in Johannesburg, where we held a very successful meeting five years ago.

Change also means improvement. Many governments, also in Africa, are doing a lot to promote democracy and fight corruption.

I am looking forward to a very diverse conference program.

Our annual meeting is showing once again how active our city network is. We meet. We exchange ideas and experience, and we make decisions together. We develop strategies for the future of our cities, and we put these into action.

Our cities are very vibrant, as is our cooperation for the benefit of our cities and their residents.

For me, as the acting president of Metropolis, this is a very special annual meeting. I associate my responsibilities with very specific goals and demands.

One of these goals is expressed in the theme of our meeting: “Inclusive Metropolitan Cities and City Regions.” Urban policies no longer apply to just the inner city. Around the world, cities are growing at a rapid pace. Today, cities represent half of the world’s population. That means that urban policies and urban development have a profound impact on global developments. The mayors are the voice of the majority of humanity. The challenges faced all over the world are especially pressing in cities. Energy efficiency and climate protection are just two examples. Two thirds of the energy used worldwide is consumed in cities. Here, more than anywhere else, climate protection needs to be paramount.

Or take the conference focus, “inclusion.” Big cities are safe havens for the growing number of refugees. And they are places of longing for immigrants. We must ensure that the people of our cities can live together peacefully. And we must ensure that migrants have the same opportunities as everyone else. They should be able to participate in the progress we make and become productive members of society.

- That includes housing. Everyone should have the right to decent housing. That is the number one social issue.
- That includes education. A good education means opportunities for all.
- That also includes things like transportation and health care for our rapidly growing cities.

Our diversity is our strong point. We talk to each other and learn from each other. We show global policymakers how to deal with key challenges of the future. That’s why our voice must be heard.

Metropolis is the strong voice of cities worldwide. Our network works to uphold everyone's rights, and especially the rights of women. One important point here is "gender equality." We are counting on the work done by Metropolis Women.

These are all important themes of our conference. We will send a clear message of strength and unity. The election of a new president is part of that. Also, we want to have more political debates at our meetings.

In conclusion, I would like to encourage you to do whatever you can to make Metropolis an even better city network. Our strength lies in our cooperation. We shape the fate of more than half of the world's population. This fact gives us great responsibility. The Metropolis city network can and must live up to this responsibility.

With that in mind, welcome to the 2018 Metropolis Annual Meeting!