

World Economic Forum to Lead G20 Smart Cities Alliance on Technology Governance

- World Economic Forum, in collaboration with the G20 presidency, will lead a new global effort to establish universal norms and guidelines for implementation of smart city technology
- Global Smart Cities Alliance will advance how technology is used in public places and promote core principles including transparency, privacy and security
- Japan's presidency of the G20, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, marks the first-time smart city technologies and global technology governance have been elevated to the main agenda

San Francisco, USA, 27 June 2019 – The World Economic Forum, the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation, has been selected to act as the secretariat for a new G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance.

The alliance unites municipal, regional and national governments, private-sector partners and cities' residents around a shared set of core guiding principles for the implementation of smart city technologies. Currently, there is no global framework or set of rules in place for how sensor data collected in public spaces, such as by traffic cameras, is used. The effort aims to foster greater openness and trust as well as create standards for how this data is collected and used. This marks the first time that smart city technologies and global technology governance have been elevated to the main agenda.

The Forum will coordinate with members from the G20, Urban 20 and Business 20 communities to develop new global governance guidelines for the responsible use of data and digital technologies in urban environments. The [Internet of Things, Robotics and Smart Cities](#) team in the Forum's [Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution Network](#) will take the lead and ensure accountability throughout the alliance's members.

"This is a commitment from the largest economies in the world to work together and set the norms and values for smart cities," said **Børge Brende**, President of the World Economic Forum. "We will coordinate efforts so that we can all work in alignment to move this important work forward. It is important we maximize the benefit and minimize the risk of smart city technology so all of society can benefit, not the few."

"The advancement of smart cities and communities is critical to realize Japan's vision for Society 5.0. It is also essential to address the world's most pressing challenges, including climate change and inclusive economic growth," said **Koichi Akaiishi**, Director General for Science, Technology and Innovation for the Cabinet Office of the Government of Japan. "The Government of Japan is proud to have championed this cause as part of our G20 presidency and was pleased to see the Business 20, Urban 20 and G20 Digital Ministers all pledge their support for the creation of a global smart cities coalition. To advance this work, we are pleased to welcome the World Economic Forum Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution as the global secretariat for this important initiative."

"In 2020, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be hosting the G20 and we are honored to continue this great work initiated by the Government of Japan, said Dr. **Esam Alwagait**, CEO of Saudi Arabia's National Digital Transformation Unit (NDU). "The Arab world has one of the highest urbanization rates with just over 58% residing in urban areas in 2017. Saudi Arabia, for example, is experiencing rapid urbanization and this growth is expected to increase up to 97.6% by the year 2030. Additionally, the total population in the GCC is anticipated to double by 2050, which will pose numerous challenges on urban infrastructure. Therefore, we are committed to working with G20 country-members and the World Economic Forum to develop a more sustainable model for urbanization that leverages smart city technologies to maximize public benefit and reduce negative externalities."

Public-private cooperation is crucial to achieving global change. Efforts to form the Global Smart Cities Alliance have been supported by four partners of the World Economic Forum: Eisai, Hitachi, NEC and Salesforce.

Additional Quotes

"Open and Agile Smart Cities is thrilled to be part of this global effort led by the World Economic Forum to support cities and communities with a global framework," said **Martin Brynskov**, Chair of Open and Agile Smart Cities, an international smart cities network. "Openness and interoperability are key to scaling up digital smart city solutions that help tackle the challenges that cities are facing in the 21st century – on the cities' terms and conditions."

"This alliance builds on the work already done by many cities around the globe – such as the Cities Coalition for Digital Rights – to empower citizens through digital technologies. A human-centric digital society shall reflect the openness, diversity and inclusion that are at the core of our societies and value systems," said **Ada Colau**, Mayor of Barcelona. "Cities must spearhead efforts to put technology and data at the service of the citizens in order to tackle big social and environmental challenges, such as feminism, affordable housing, climate change and the energy transition. We are committed to being part of this global endeavour to build a digital society that puts citizens first and preserves their fundamental rights."

"In today's interconnected world, global collaboration is no longer merely an option, it is a necessity, said **Bill de Blasio**, Mayor of New York City. "New York City is proud to have championed a model for smart cities that puts our most vulnerable residents first. We also recognize that now more than ever urban issues have global implications. As mayors, we have a unique responsibility to lead by example and demonstrate a sustainable path towards a more inclusive and equitable future."

"As the world continues to urbanise, it is indispensable to successfully manage urban growth," said **Ichiro Hara**, Secretary General of the B20 Tokyo Summit, and Managing Director of Japan Business Federation, Keidanren. "The Business 20 have called to support the implementation of Society 5.0 by fostering cooperation among smart cities. We applaud the G20 for heeding our call for a smart cities alliance and look forward for a common guiding principles to be developed through this critical initiative."

"The Cities for All Network is excited to partner with the World Economic Forum and the G20 to help realize our shared vision for a more inclusive urban future," said **Victor Pineda**, President of World Enabled and Co-Founder of Smart Cities for All. "The last industrial revolution left out a lot of people. As we move into the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we cannot risk repeating past mistakes. We need to work together to co-design robust policy frameworks to ensure that all members of society can contribute to and benefit from technological advancements."

"Local governments and city leadership need to be at the core of decision-making when developing smart cities, said **Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). "It is the guarantee to ensure the human dimension and the protection of the commons. United Cities and Local Governments is delighted to contribute in every way possible to that process and to transform the conversation around digital rights."

"In pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals and in line with the New Urban Agenda, UN-Habitat affirms the importance of coordinating efforts around protections and standards in deploying smart digital infrastructure to ensure that such smart technologies benefit all, particularly the vulnerable, including people with disabilities," said **Maimunah Mohd Sharif**, Executive Director of UN Habitat. "We welcome this important new alliance led by the World Economic Forum, G20, mayors, national governments, multilateral organizations, and civil society groups."

About the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution Network

The Network helped Rwanda write the world's first agile drone regulation and is scaling this up throughout Africa and Asia. It also developed actionable governance toolkits for corporate executives on blockchain, co-designed the first-ever Industrial IoT (IIoT) Safety and Security Protocol and created a personal data policy framework with the UAE.

Based in San Francisco, the World Economic Forum Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution brings together governments, leading companies, civil society and experts from around the world to co-design and pilot innovative approaches to the policy and governance of new technologies. More than 100 governments, companies, civil society, international organizations and experts are working together to design and pilot innovative approaches to the policy and governance of technology. Teams are creating human-centred and agile policies to be piloted by policy-makers and legislators around the world, shaping the future of emerging technology in ways that maximize the benefits and minimize the risks.

Notes to editors

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