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Global Parliament of Mayors: Can Cities Change the World?

Proposal for a new model of global problem solving, co-authored by three of the world's leaders on cities and the future, coincides with international Global Parliament of Mayors Project Planning Session

TORONTO - In a newly released research report, Professor Benjamin Barber, political theorist and author of *If Mayors Ruled the World: Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities*, Richard Florida, Director of the *Martin Prosperity Institute* at the University of Toronto and Don Tapscott, best-selling author and Executive Director of the *Global Solution Networks* program, advocate for the emerging role of mayors as primary players in addressing global problems and propose a global network of cities.

"Nation-states work together through multi-lateral agreements and global institutions in an effort to solve global problems. But states have limitations, and their cooperative efforts in our new era of interdependence and globalization are increasingly insufficient and even ineffective and outmoded," say the three prominent researchers. A Global Parliament of Mayors represents a new type of governance network – one with enormous potential.

"Our proposed parliament would operate as a global urban network with a vibrant online community that collaborates on key issues 365 days a year," they say. "Multi-stakeholder governance has come of age and is now fully independent from control by any government, or governmental organizations like the UN."

Barber, Florida and Tapscott's collaboration, "A 'Global Parliament of Mayors' Governance Network," addresses the challenge of world governance and describes the new role of cities. The substantial two-part report is a product of the multi-million dollar research program **Global Solution Networks** (GSN), investigating new multi-stakeholder models of global governance. The report is publically available on the [GSN website](http://gsnetworks.org).

The proposal for a global parliament of mayors originated in Barber's book *If Mayors Ruled the World*. This new research is a timely call to action for mayors, governments and cities. On September 19 in Amsterdam, the **Global Parliament of Mayors Project** (GPM) will take a major step forward from theory into practice through a Planning Session hosted by the G4 Mayors of the Netherlands and an Interdisciplinary Workshop hosted by Leiden University.

This is the third in a series of GPM planning sessions sponsored by CivWorld and expected to lead to a Pilot Parliament. Participants will include mayors from around the world, intercity association representatives, political advisors and urban specialists plus invited observers.

Global Solution Networks, led by Don Tapscott and the Martin Prosperity Institute, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, is *creating a definitive resource of expert insights, cases and field tools* for leaders of multi-stakeholder networks for global problem solving. Sponsors from government, business and civil society include The Rockefeller Foundation, Accenture, Google, MasterCard, HP, Ontario, LGI, Qualcomm, RBC, SAP and Seagate.

The **Martin Prosperity Institute** at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management is directed by Richard Florida. MPI is a world-leader in urbanism, investigating the role of location, place and city/region in global economic prosperity. At *The Atlantic*, where Florida is a senior editor, he co-founded and serves as Editor-at-Large for *Atlantic Cities*, the world's leading media site devoted to cities and urban affairs.

CivWorld, directed by Professor Barber and based at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York's Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, works to raise awareness of the brute realities of interdependence in a world still governed by sovereign and independent states. CivWorld is funded by grants from Bloomberg Philanthropies, Nomis Foundation and The Levitt Foundation.

Global Parliament of Mayors Project: For more information about the GPM Planning Session September 19 and Interdisciplinary Workshop September 22 in The Hague, please contact Dana Kroll droll@gc.cuny.edu

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