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Global Leaders to Discuss Future of the City at Inaugural New Cities Summit

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Landmark Summit to bring together key global players from public, private, research, urban planning and creative communities

GENEVA, April 19, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- The New Cities Summit, to be held on May 14 -16, 2012 in Paris, will unite global thought leaders, mayors and city managers, leading CEOs and representatives of civil society to discuss one of the most important topics of our time: the future of cities in the 21st century.

(Logo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20120419/NY90935LOGO)

The global shift from rural to urban living is one of the most dramatic and important demographic phenomena in human history. By 2050, more than 7 billion people will live in cities worldwide. In countries like China, which is rapidly approaching a billion city dwellers, and other parts of the world urbanization requires a profound physical, social and economic transformation. Globally, this new world of cities will have a massive impact on our economies, on government, on societies and on us as individuals in both the developed and the emerging world. This mega trend is likely to impact each one of us in ways that we know will be profound, but are not yet fully understood.

The theme of the 2012 New Cities Summit, **Thinking Ahead, Building Together**, reflects the New Cities Foundation's belief that understanding and contributing to our urban future requires new partnerships built on bold, audacious thinking and analysis.

High-level plenaries featuring some of the world's greatest urban thinkers will focus on the vision of tomorrow's urban world, and detailed workshops deal with topics including mobility, the creative and connected city, the annotated city, the just city, water, building greener districts and infrastructure financing for the urban boom. Regional sessions will explore Urban China, Latin America and India as well as Greater Paris. "Navigating the Meta City" a highly-interactive session led by frog, a leading design and innovation firm, offers a glimpse into a future city in which various layers of software constitute a powerful computing platform for hybrid digital-physical environments.

Confirmed speakers and participants include leaders from industry, the public sector, research, and design, among which:

- Al Rasheed, Managing Director and CEO, King Abdullah Economic City
- Oleg Alexeev, Vice President of the Skolkovo Foundation
- Vivek Badrinath, CEO, Orange Business Services
- Robert Beugre Mambe, Governor of Abidjan
- Diane Brady, Senior Editor and Content Chief, Bloomberg Businessweek
- Ricky Burdett, Director, LSE Cities
- Xie Chengxiang, Deputy Mayor, Huangshi, People's Republic of China
- Jay Carson, CEO, C40 Cities
- Jean-Charles Decaux, co-CEO, JCDecaux
- Robin Chase, CEO of Buzzcar, Founder of Zipcar
- Bertrand Delanoe, Mayor of Paris, France
- Paul Delaoutre, CEO, Department Stores Division, BHV, Galeries Lafayette
- Li Dongming, Manager of the Urban Fund at China Development Bank Capital
- Di-Ann Eisnor, Vice President, Waze
- Wim Elfrink, Executive Vice President, Cisco
- Pablo Farias, Vice President, Ford Foundation
- Clara Gaymard, President, GE France
- Ajit Gulabchand, Chairman of the Hindustan Construction Group
- Edwin Heathcote, Architect and Design Critic, Financial Times
- Ron Huldai, Mayor of Tel Aviv, Israel
- Annat Jain, Managing Partner, Acropolis Capital Group
- Parag Khanna, Senior Research Fellow, New America Foundation
- Manjeet Kripalani, Executive Director, Gateway House
- Seifallah Lasram, Mayor of Tunis, Tunisia
- Nathalie Leboucher, Vice-President, Smart Cities, France Telecom - Orange

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- Wolfgang Mueller-Pietralla, Head of Future Affairs Volkswagen Group Research, Volkswagen
- Pamela Puchalski, Advisor, Global Cities Initiative, The Brookings Institution
- Jean Pistre, Architect
- Zhang Qin, Deputy Director, Department of Urbanism, Minister of Housing, People's Republic of China
- Carlo Ratti, Director, SENSEable City Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Kasim Reed, Mayor of Atlanta, United States of America
- John Rice, Vice Chairman, GE
- Gregor Robertson, Mayor of Vancouver, Canada
- Khalifa Sall, Mayor of Dakar, Senegal
- Saskia Sassen, Professor, Columbia University
- Christian Sautter, Deputy Mayor for Innovation, Paris, France
- Hans Vestberg, President and CEO, Ericsson
- Vhils, Artist
- Geoffrey West, Professor Emeritus and past President, Santa Fe Institute
- Anthony Williams, former Mayor of Washington, DC, United States of America

In its inaugural year, the Summit is attracting top-level media groups, including CNN, Bloomberg Businessweek, and the Financial Times. The Summit's partners also include key innovators in the urban world, such as urban and street artists from the Magda Danysz Gallery in Paris and Shanghai, social innovators from Ashoka, great new technological innovators and start-ups including Waze and Autolib' who will give demos of their urban innovations at the Summit. The Summit will also examine the New Cities Foundation's own cutting-edge projects in the areas of healthcare and mobility.

"We are only at the early stages of understanding the impact of global urbanization," says John Rossant, Chairman of the New Cities Foundation. "This is a phenomenon of unprecedented scale that will affect all of our lives. The New Cities Summit is essential as it is the sole venue which brings together great urban thinkers and builders from a range of disciplines which focuses the global conversation on the city. From the big picture vision to the hands on solutions, we want this Summit to be a watershed event."

To find out more about the Summit, please visit www.newcitiessummit2012.org.

About the New Cities Foundation: The New Cities Foundation is a global platform for innovation and exchange on the future of urbanization. The NCF is guided by the principle that the unprecedented rate of urban growth that defines the 21st century represents a unique set of challenges as well as a chance to build more sustainable, vibrant, innovative and equitable communities in the developed and the emerging world.

The NCF brings together members of local governments, corporations, research institutions, NGOs, entrepreneurs and creative industries to address the future of cities around the world. The NCF manages a number of task forces with its members, testing new models, technologies and processes on key urban topics such as healthcare and mobility. The New Cities Summit is the centerpiece of the New Cities Foundation's work. The first Summit will gather hundreds of public, private, academic and non-profit sector leaders. This invitation-only event will mix thought-provoking panels featuring some of the most recognized global urban leaders with innovation demos and interactive thematic workshops. The Summit will focus particularly on innovation and the role of technology in transforming our urban future.

NCF is a Swiss non-profit based in Geneva with offices in Paris, New York and Rio de Janeiro whose members include GE, Cisco, Ericsson, Orange, GDF Suez, Citynove - Groupe Galeries Lafayette, the Ford Foundation, King Abdullah Economic City, frog, Metropolis, NYU, the SENSEable City lab at MIT, CITRIS, Carnegie Mellon University, HEC Paris, the Urban China Initiative, the Climate Group and others. Visit us at www.newcitiesfoundation.org

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