

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION  
THE GLOBAL CITIES AGENDA AND LESSONS FROM MILAN:  
A CONVERSATION WITH MAYOR GIUSEPPE SALA

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**Welcome and moderator:**

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**Keynote Remarks:**

THE HONORABLE GIUSEPPE SALA, Mayor, Milan, Italy

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GOOTMAN: Good afternoon everyone. Thank you all for coming. We are really excited to have today Mayor Giuseppe Sala from Milan, to share with us his experience and thoughts about Milan's evolution and future as a global city.

I want to acknowledge our colleagues from the Italian Embassy, Paul Otowski, and all the excellent staff at the embassy, and with the city, who help to make this event possible.

This is part of our ongoing work about how cities act and need to transform themselves in the globalized environment. We launched our Global Cities work in 2011, and it is designed to strengthen the international economic connections and competitiveness of city regions in response to a whole range of challenges that are being faced. That involves globalization, but also urbanization, rapid technological changes and demographic shifts.

So, over those years we have been working with research, pilot projects, and a peer-network exchange, with approximately 45 city regions in 20 states in the United States, and 10 countries overseas, around solving these issues, finding codifying solutions to these objectives.

The core lesson from all of this work, is that being a global city is not about London, and Paris, and Tokyo, and New York, every city in this changed environment needs to be a global city in its thinking and globally fluent about the way it interacts with the rest of the world.

So, Milan is a perfect example of a mid-sized city that, after 26 centuries of significance has still had to transform itself to reinvent itself and ensure that it is projecting its relevance and distinctive asset into this increasingly complicated globalized economy, to attract mobile talent, to develop businesses and to secure capital.

Milan is a perfect example for peers like Montreal and Minneapolis and Melbourne, which are dealing with these challenges. And we've seen Milan, over the past several years, address these questions and emerge as a post-industrial city, a renaissance -

- to use and Italian term -- and post-industrial city and renaissance that has successfully transitioned into this new environment.

Mayor Sala has been involved in all of these efforts in the evolution of Milan. He came from the private sector roles, the CEO of Pirelli Tire, and general director of Telecom Italia. He then transitioned into a civic role leading perhaps the most catalytic recent event for Milan in the World Expo 2015, which inspired so much of the new kinds of collaboration, confidence and competitiveness activities that have driven Milan's evolution today.

And then he was elected Mayor in 2016. So he is here to share a little bit about his vision for Milan's future, as a connected metropolitan and global city. Then we'll sit down have a little conversation, welcome your questions, and we all hope that we visit Milan soon. So, Mayor Sala? (Applause)

MAYOR SALA: Good afternoon everyone. Thank you, Marek. You could be a perfect marketing manager for Milan.

You told them many, many things about Milan, and just to give the dimension of the city, the population is around 1.4 million inhabitants, and the metropolitan area around 3 million.

But actually we are producing 10 percent of the Italian GDP. We are receiving -- we are getting 30 percent of all the investment from abroad, and 50 percent of all the investment in the real market in Italy.

So now, this global visit is to present my city, and to present to you how it has evolved, and transformed itself in a post-industrial era, and the vision that prepared it into further advancement.

I will try to signify the trajectory of a city that has overcome important challenges from an economic and social point of view, and that is currently -- experiences of Golden Age.

I will also talk about the Milano 2030 Plan, and the next steps that the city

intends to take to consolidate its transportation into a contemporary international city.

But let me first set the stage with some consideration about cities. As you well know, in an increasingly urbanized world, cities play a major role and have the potential to take the great challenges of our time, from poverty and inequality to climate change, and the environmental degradation.

Cities are and always have been the place where change is generated, for better or for worse. They naturally host contradictory phenomena, wealth and poverty, integration and exclusion, cooperation and competition, innovation and conservation.

And cities play a key role as to the economic drivers, as they are at a meeting point for different cultures, and as such, a place of creativity and innovation in every field, from technology to culture.

Cities are the engine of progress when they create suitable condition for the attraction and the (inaudible) of talents and skills, and that is the role of Milan in Italy now, which in turn stimulate innovation and economic, civil and cultural development.

Yet cities also present critical issues, and I would like to go deep in that. Like unemployment, discrimination and poverty in cities, inequalities and economic contradiction are often amplified and exacerbated.

The governance of global cities is therefore key, taking the example of the environmental sustainability cities can have a considerable impact by introducing innovative measures in their own trajectory and in doing so, by influencing national governance and global processes.

The potential of a global city does not cancel out the difficulties that they faced and continue to face if the contradiction are not corrected or at least mitigated by politics they risk paving the way to turmoil and crisis even more severe than the ones we experienced lately.

First, the demographic crisis in all its aspects, from an aging population, and that is our reality because we are -- our population is increasing, but precisely in two

segments, the old people because they decide -- they cannot decide, they stay in Milan, their family, their life is in Milan, and the young generation for a very different point of view because they decide to come to Milan, so they choose Milan.

Especially in the most developed countries to the population of some region, to the massive influx of immigrants. And then I will come back to immigration.

Second, the decline of the industrial model, in recent years cities were profoundly hit by the post-industrial crisis, and some were not able to adapt and transform as well as others.

Milan itself suffered for a long period of stagnation. Altogether these aspects led to the exacerbation of inequalities between -- first of all between center and peripheries, and in terms of income, opportunities and access to basic services.

And finally, and notably, with respect to the deterioration of the environment in the absence of decisive and far-sighted governance, while cities represent only 3 percent of the planet's surface, they are responsible for two-thirds of energy consumption and 75 percent of carbon emissions. And such percentages were continuing to worsen as in the next decades 95 percent of the urban expansion is expected to take place in developing countries.

Now, let me elaborate on what I believe is the starting point of the success of the contemporary Milan, which is being a city that works well, providing the services the citizen needs in a convenient and fitting manner.

Whether we talk about public transportation, waste management, schooling or cleanness; for example, Milan is a city that achieves high standards and provides satisfactory services. This paves the way for a meaningful engagement of citizens that are motivated to make their contribution, and now the value of Milan is based on the Milanese, on the people, because they have seen where we are going, why we are taking some decisions.

And so to follow the rules to be part of the common good, so first of all,

recognizing what we are, let me say the general good functioning of the city and the commitment of its citizens, make it possible to envisage an ambition, yet realistic vision for the future.

It makes it possible to work for the improvement and development of the city according to its specific needs and on the basis of its strength.

And let me talk about Milan 2030. The city of tomorrow can only originate from the city of today from its social demographic characteristic, from its past failures and successes, from the legacy of those who came before us, and collectively steered the city on its development path.

Milan has chosen innovation and change as the keywords for the development of an attractive, inclusive and green city, able to finance the potential generated by its social, economic, cultural, ethnic and generational diversity.

The Milan 2030 Plan is visionary yet very concrete, fully grounded on the spirit and potential of a city that is -- as Marek reminded you -- 26-century old, and current on its approach, of both ambition and solidarity. That is the sort of mantra for me, from the people in Milan, growth and solidarity.

Solidarity, you cannot be solid -- give a real action on solidarity if you don't -- if you don't create opportunities. At the same time the people in Milan are not satisfied, they're only seeing the results and target on record, if they perceive that we are losing our soul. Apparently it is very simple, but at the same time, it is the reality.

Now, Milan 2030 is focused on creating new green areas. Among the largest in Europe, practically from the overall of seven former railway yards that will be converted into parks, for 66 percent of the extension, and into housing with mandatory operation of affordable housing.

In other words, we are seeing that there is a young generation that will not come to Milan. Why? Very simple, because it's an easy city, it is not a big city, the services are working here, but we have a problem, houses.

So, starting from that, and starting from the consideration that there are differences, there are different speeds between center and peripheries, we are getting this opportunity to work on those former railway stations, telling the owner of the spaces, yes, you can do whatever you want, but you must leave 65 percent green, and if you build residential flats, you must leave 30 percent to moderate price.

And that is to connect the opportunities with the real situations of the city. It also means urban regeneration that specifically addresses fractured districts and neglected areas, and we are paying attention to mend those missing links between natural good and to foster social cohesion.

Our neighborhood specific plan acts on the living constitutional citizens by increasing the sustainability of spaces and numbers of structure and improving the livability while reducing the environmental footprint.

For example, and pay attention to this. Citizen of Milan are very bonded, particularly well on sharing mobility, share cars, bicycle, motorcycles and scooters, for which Milan ranks high on the global case. Yes, for sure we build some new metro lines, and now we are having a -- we are building the fifth metro line in Milan, and consider that in 2022, in 14 minutes you could reach the center of the city from the city airport.

So, landing in Linate you can reach exactly the center in 14 minutes, but the -- all this, so the attitude of the young generation, our effort on the part of transportation has contributed to go to -- from 73 cars per 100 inhabitants to 51 in 25 years, so we went down from 73 to 51, and we are working -- having a target of 40 in, let me say, a dozen years.

Our very clear goal, and the one we had put at the center of Milan's urban development polities is to realize a city that regenerates and utilizes its spaces, favoring urban renewal and the conversion of abandoned, declined or underused areas.

And again, it is not sufficient to see -- to tell, I want to build a new place there, a new building there, but you have to connect with public transportation and green, so in some way the 2030 plan works on three main axes, urban development, mobility system

and green, and two of them are not enough. So the point is to find the right equilibrium on that.

Architectural innovation plays a fundamental role. For sure from the point of view, we are in good condition, because you know Milan is a city of design, many architects, and so on, but again, it is fundamental that the people trust that all urban choices of the last new era, years, derive from this vision, from the new (inaudible) parks replacing the old rail yard to the renewal of the squares along the trolley-bus line.

The vision is unanimous, and above all, shared. We are not in favor of referendum, you know, that in some European country, like Switzerland, the Swiss makes a referendum in a single month, but we are in favor of the public debate. So, before to implement the 2030 Plan, we dedicate some amounts to the public debate.

Because if we do so, then it is easier for me to tell the people, we have a time to discuss, and a time to decide, and a time to implement, but we cannot come back, when we decide, we decide, but it is fundamental to include them in a public debate.

So all this is possible without distorting the city's physiognomy and identity, and from this point of view, let me say that in Italy, the example of Milan is quite implementing it.

As I mentioned cities are the places where diversity generate innovation and push for change, to improve this role, it is fundamental to fight against the inequalities, and restrain the limit -- and limit the energies catalyzed by citizens.

If we think about fight against gender inequality, homophobia, or racial discrimination, it is evident that it is the open-minded atmosphere of cities that favor inclusion and the participation of the citizens, but that has to be the reality, it cannot be only a public or a political declaration. So again, from this point of view now we are working any single day to give a solid demonstration that we are open.

You cannot or you -- you cannot imagine, or you can imagine the difficulty for a mayor from the Democratic side, from the left side, with the immigration issue.



Sometimes I say, it is easier to be a politician from the right because -- now in Europe, because it is very easy to tell: we want to close the frontier, we don't want them, we want to live in a secure place. It is very easy.

For me, it is more complicated, and the only way I have is to convince my citizens that being open and international we have many advantages. We attract investment, we increase tourism, we attract university students from abroad, and even you consider immigration, a price to be paid, you pay the price because in general vision, there is not the land of opportunity for our city, for the city, like Milan.

So, we are sort of a unique city now in Italy, but we are working on that, and let me go to the end, underlining that, I was telling you that this brings me to the important of a specific -- city-specific narrative.

Global cities compete with each other to attract ideas and innovation, investment, the most promising talent, it is clear, I am competing with London, with Paris, with Berlin, to attract university students, and competing with the other cities on the real estate market.

The real estate company, they are not splitting the investment between Italy, France or Germany, they are splitting the investment with Milan, Paris or Berlin. So, it is from this point of view to tell the story, to be able to tell the story it is narrative, it is important.

And we believe that frank, truthful and shared narrative around the values and specifically of the city, nurture participation and engagement at all levels, from individuals to complex institutions.

At the time where negative storyline often dominate the political discourse and contribute to create distance and fracture within our communities, I feel to tell the story, telling the story of what works, what needs to improve, and how everyone can bring about such improvement is extremely valuable. It makes people feel that they can be part of history, that their contribution is more.

In conclusion, Milan is city with 26 centuries of history, some of it practically

glorious, let's think for instance about the remarkable invention, of Leonardo da Vinci, a champion of his time who chose Milan as his home for over 20 years, and in that period 20 years was a very, very long period.

Has the best environment for his talents to bloom, and his ideas to be nurtured, and this year we celebrate 500 years from Leonardo's death. And I invite you to visit Milan and explore the many legacies of the genius.

I believe that in the past 10 to 15 years, Milan has been able to make a quantum leap forward, remaining through to its starvation and to the distinctive elements of its DNA, in business, innovation, culture, solidarity, to tell very clear that rights has to be associated to deal with this.

So, starting from that the city has embraced the challenge. I, myself, feel a part of this virtual process, my predecessor build a solid budget for me to be able to propose to my fellow citizen the step forward in a direction of a more international, more innovative, more inclusive, and fully contemporary city.

For Milan, now it is the time to invest in internationalization, in innovation, in being a champion of environmental issues, and other prominent themes. The reason why the conversation we are having today is significant is that with no pretentiousness, in order to advance this knowledge and vision the city of Milan must nowadays look and learn from other cities across the globe.

I don't want to appear arrogant, but if I cannot learn -- I cannot learn from Rome, I cannot learn from Florence, I can learn from Los Angeles, from Denver, from Shanghai. So, that is the reason for which we spend a lot of time maintaining a relationship with the other mayors, like Eric Garcetti in Los Angeles, or Anne Hidalgo in Paris, but that is really fundamental for me.

This is part, because this is part of a new era. The diplomacy of citizens, which I'm glad you follow closely. I am available for any your observations and questions. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. GOOTMAN: Thank you very much, mayor, for those comments. You highlighted a whole series of issues that we've been dealing with your counterparts' cities for a long time. I'll start actually with the last point, which is about your global identity, and how Milan can distinguish itself effectively in this increasingly crowded global marketplace of cities, where at one point there were 60 cities that were internationally significant competing with each other for those assets that you mentioned; another 600 cities.

And increasingly we see cities articulating themselves in very generic ways. You know, you could interchange a video promotion between two cities that we've been working with, and they have happy dancing, diverse millennials on a waterfront, the differences one is, you know, labeled, one city name, and the others, another city name.

So, you identified some core DNA in your description of Milan. How do you articulate that effectively in -- how do you define Milan, more specifically, when you're talking about it to distinguish from Berlin, or Amsterdam, or Barcelona, or any of these other places that you're competing with?

MAYOR SALA: First of all, creativity is fundamental for us. We are the city of design, we are the city of fashion, and now even of food, this part of the creativity, and this works quite well, even due to the universities. We have 14 universities, and 200,000 university students out of 1.4 million inhabitants, you'll see it's a lot.

So, that is fundamental because on that you create industry, you create opportunity, you create tourism. To give an example, during the Design Week, we hosted 600,000 people in a week, and it is fundamental, because they -- are either coming for business or leisure? Who knows?

Is it fundamental? And having so many (inaudible) any months, that is not a real reason for which people decide to come to Milan, and when they come Milan, and they say that the city is working, probably they go home and they tell, Milan is working, and someone think to invest in Milan, and so on.

So, the real difference between Milan and the other cities is that everybody

thinks creativity is a good thing, yes, but we have to be real, and the sound place to be implemented.

And then, and second is the -- let me say to manage among diversity, and again I'm forced to go back to immigration issue that is not a very simple issue, but in Italy we have 9 percent of immigrants, that is not a big number, even if, looking at the political debate it appears (inaudible).

In Milan we have 20 percent, and Milan is working. Why? Because it is -- we are good in integrating, attracting talents, sometimes hosting people who -- escaping from a war. But again, this is not theory, it is working and one little thing, but very decisive is the role of women.

In term of employment, we are reducing unemployment, we are around now 7 percent, that is for you it's an enormous percentage, but Europe, let me say, it's a sort of physiologic percentage, but in the last two, three years, the employment of female had a real boom. And they're occupying a role in STEM discipline and creativity, architecture. So, again, it is also value for the image of the city, and for the opportunities of the families.

Again, we made some steps, now we see a new frontier, and new opportunities, but it is easier to tell a story of the future when you can -- when the present past can give a -- can tell everybody we make it.

MR. GOOTMAN: Right. And I think that actually, you answered as well, and going back to the history of da Vinci and creativity that Milan is known for, that has been reestablished with competency, and your point about openness.

Can you describe a little bit more solidarity, and what that really means? That seems to be a distinctive asset of Milan that has translated both to your -- the renewed vibrancy and openness of the city, but also that's distinctive from other places.

MAYOR SALA: I want to be a very practical man. As you said, I used to be a manager in the private sector, so now I'm completely a politician, but I don't want to forget my past activities.

First of all, in term of expenses, in term of investment, we invest most of our budget in (inaudible). And that is true. Not only housing, it's a problem, we own 70,000 apartments, that means 150,000 people -- and again, out of 1.4 million, it means that 12 percent of the people live in our houses.

So, that is the result of course of many years of activities. My predecessor made a difference. It is not simple, but again, adding this success, this momentum, the point is to reinvest, to reinvest everything in welfare and in the -- in trying to avoid this risk of two speed cities, the center that is one billion vibrant, and the peripheries that can be abandoned. So, honestly, we are investing a lot of money.

And then of course diversity, again, when we say we are open to the LGBT community, we are open to everybody, we are open to the refugees, again, has to be not only an idea, but it means to work on the specific issues.

In this period you know that the government in Italy is on the right, and the very clear right, and at the end of the day, I'm probably the last mayor, the last mayor in Italy.

So they are working to cancel the rights of the refugees, if they don't have the permission to stay in Italy. Where is the problem that the time between the landing in Italy, the landing with the boats in Sicily, and the final decision to allow that, or to give the permission takes up to two years.

In the meantime, according to our government, they don't have the rights, the common rights. If you go to the hospital you cannot enter, or you can pay, you cannot pay. So, in Milan we said, okay, you -- we make do -- we did it, we did it, so we pay for them. It is not simple but, again, you cannot open or close the door depending the specific situation. You open the door, or you close the door. So, we decide to open the door.

MR. GOOTMAN: So, coming from the private sector before your move to the government, a lot of the transitions that we see in terms of competitiveness, relates to the role of the private sector in collaboration with the public sector. How do you view that in

Milan, and the role of business, anchor to place, what contributions they might make, how you collaborate or do not collaborate with the private sector in the region?

MAYOR SALA: For me the most important thing is that they believe that in term of bureaucracy or red tapes we were better than the other cities, so we reduce our time, we are reliable, if we are committed.

Let me give you a very, very little example. A couple of weeks after my election, I received that the Apple management, and they came to me telling me they want to build the best store in Europe and Milan.

Good news. So, why not? And because we had a problem because the store is located in a little square that is 80 meters from the Duomo, and we need to close the square for one-and-a-half years. The first time I told, it is a disaster, it is impossible. Then I opened a political discussion, and I told the people, yes, I know it's a problem. It's a problem because our square will be given then for a long period.

But at the end of the day we will have an enormous, magnificent store. And trust me, after them, others, international company will come to Milan to -- with the intention to take the challenge. And so we maintain the time, the timing, and Apple opened. Then we had the -- the main square, close to the Duomo, that was abandoned by the banks, because the banks need spaces so they decided to go to the peripheries or -- not peripheries, the same in the middle, the middle center, where the new urbanization took place.

So, we were running the risk to have those buildings abandoned, but after the Apple example, Howard Schultz from Starbucks called me, and he told me, my dream is to come back to Milan because I learn the magic of coffee in Milan. Could you help me? And again, that -- and it's not all gold for sure, but again, in the same square after a short time, Starbucks came.

And now Uniqlo, the Japanese companies came. So, for me it is fundamental to tell the private partners, we are committed. I tell you I can't, or if I tell you I can, then I will be with you.

Of course the word that's for 2015 was fundamental from this point of view. I used to be the manager for that, and probably the reason for which I'm here, is that after the Expo the Democrats asked me to run for them.

But again, that was an example, because, you know, with these big events, normally the people at the beginning, they don't trust they see -- probably they see a risk -- any sort of risk, but the product company, understanding the opportunity for sure they're seeing me, and a part of them -- the system, they accepted the challenges.

And that was fundamental, because it was massive, it was a bet, we won the bet, and after that we jumped from 5 million tourists per year, to 9 million tourists. And now we are stable, or still increasing. So, again, at the end you are to take challenge, but you cannot take challenge alone, it is better to have partners.

MR. GOOTMAN: So in the transition for Milan, from heavy industrial economy into the current economy, which still has a lot of manufacturing, what do you -- what do you see as the most important enablers or investments that the city has focused on as part of, you know, the 2030 effort, to ensure that Milan is competitive in the international marketplace, given the post-industrial environment? Is there anything in particular that you think just was significant?

MAYOR SALA: No. I believe that it is fundamental not trying to -- not work on a single aspect, it would be a disaster to say, for us, tourism is everything. Even for Italy, it is better to say we work -- we want to be headquarters for finance, we want to work on tourism, we want to be -- we want to see a lot of universities being very attractive, we want to work on creativity, so we are --

When it started working in 1983, Milan was an industrial city, then after that we lost a lot of industries, like many, many cities. For a decade we lived in the dream that fiancé could solve everything, so, banks, the stock exchange, in Italy the stock exchange is in Milan, and so on, and then we understood that it was not possible.

Part of the story, but so then we opened the opportunity, so if this mixed

model, but everything has to work together. So why university? Because you guarantee the company from abroad that they can find good degrees, and so on, so the point is to put it all together.

MR. GOOTMAN: Are there particular activities that you're undertaking to promote innovation and these kinds of connections in Milan?

MAYOR SALA: Innovation is fundamental, innovation is fundamental because I mean if -- again, design is not furniture, design is innovation, design means to participate to the new tools, to the new class, to the new equipment, everything is design.

So, what is innovation? It's not simple to be defined but, again, working on some solid pillar, like university and design and creativity, it is better.

MR. GOOTMAN: I'm interested in starting to take questions from you all. So, if there are anything specific, and I'm going try and collect -- this is good -- I'm going to try to collect a few at the same time, and in order for us get through several. So, one, two and three, and then -- and then I'll go through another cycle. Go ahead. And we have a microphone over here. And please, try to make it short, and a question as opposed to a statement. Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Good afternoon. My name is Catalina, I am from Ukraine, and I work for anti-corruption organization, Transparency International, Ukraine. I am interested in anti-corruption work in Milan, how it is going on?

MR. GOOTMAN: All right. Anti-corruption. Right there.

QUESTIONER: My name is Sakura Namioka. My question is, many cities more moving at a regional development scale. So, I'd like to know, if Milan was regional type of development, how you can coordinate with the city and with the region.

MR. GOOTMAN: Terrific question. And one right there, yes, sir?

QUESTIONER: Michael Calingaert, from the Brookings formerly Council for United States and Italy. Could you say a little bit about the political context in which all this has been taking place, obviously not in a vacuum, and in particular what ways -- in what



ways is the political situation in Milan different from other cities, and help bring about the results that you've talked about?

MR. GOOTMAN: Okay. This is going to be hard to consolidate those different questions, although political context and regional development are significant, or related. I leave it to you to figure out how to answer this diversity of questions?

MAYOR SALA: To mix them.

MR. GOOTMAN: To mix and match.

MAYOR SALA: Now let me some word about the political situation in Milan, and in Italy, because it is clear that now all the debates in Italy, in Europe, I'm very aware is about the confrontation between populist and I don't know how to call the other ones; democrats, not populists.

For me, it is fundamental even to work on the differences between cities and countryside, because this is the reality. So my message can be delivered in a city, but if we're going to a small village, it is difficult today, but being open to the world, you get advantages.

What is the advantage? So, now Milan has the duty to keep the position, and every day I am asking -- I am asked to tell something about the Milan model. And I tell - I cannot tell to apply my model, but I tell, we are here now because we started 20 years ago. Why now? Milan is in a Golden Age, and Rome is a very difficult period, because there the public service does not work, public transportation, waste management, and so on.

So, it is fundamental now to tell everybody in Italy that we can do it. It is difficult? Yes, it is, but I don't know how much time we'll need to -- I mean to modify the country, because now the country is in a difficult period. But not having champion like Milan, it would be the end. So, that is the reason for which the leader, the Party who is managing it, the government, wants to take Milan, and I am reacting.

But at the same time, my citizens feel the pride to be different, to be resistant, and to not accept to lose the soul, the democratic spirit which is at the basis of our

country.

I don't want to say that fascism is coming back to our country, but there are many parties that are tolerant, that are too tolerant towards fascism. So, that is for all these reasons, and here I tried to put together anti-corruption, and we have a problem for the simple reason that being the richest city in Italy, who wants to corrupt come to Milan.

So, the way is try to find the cooperation with you, with the other, I don't know, with the lawyer, with the professor who spend his life to that, so the public administration has to be very honest and to understand that alone, again, alone you can do nothing.

So, find alliances even because, to the question, one of the worst things in Italy is that we never made reforms for the public administration, the public system. When I explained what is Italy to people from abroad, sometimes joking about it, it is a tremendous joke, I tell, I say, the first Italian Government after the Second World War, was established in 1943, when the -- apparently the war was finishing.

Now from '43 to now, 76 years, in 76 years, we had 71 governments. So, in that, for the reason that the government have a short time, and the political system tend to be very prudent with revolution in term of reforms and so on, the real reform was made with the -- for the mayor, so the mayor has five years or -- to mandate 10 years.

So, in 10 years, you can do many things. It is not simple to work with the region and other parts of the system, because in Italy we have 80,000 citizens of villages, 20 regions, 88 provinces, and 14 metropolitan cities. It's a disaster. It is impossible. It is impossible.

So now there is a debate in Italy, because the region are asking more autonomy, and I'm trying to defend the position, because the region -- but why the region -- the cities have a long, long history. The region were established in 1948, so why we decide to give the -- some new possibilities to the region?

So, it's a very interesting discussion but, again, this is the reason for which

the cities, and mainly Milan, has to maintain the position.

MR. GOOTMAN: And so the greater region around Milan, beyond the 3 million in the core metro is for (inaudible) --

MAYOR SALA: Or (inaudible) the region where Milan is.

MR. GOOTMAN: It's appropriate that Chicago is your sister city, because they have even greater fragmentation than you have, or do you find -- do you find there are issues that you do collaborate with, and can collaborate on with your counterparts in the wider area that represents workforce, or business exchange? Or is the private sector playing a role in bringing those assets together?

MAYOR SALA: No. We collaborate but by that I mean -- Now, I think to the Northern Italy, all the region, all the main region, Lombardy, Veneto and so one, in the legal hands. So, only Milan is a sort of varied point in the region, and so it is not easy for us.

At the end of the day we want to be very pragmatic for this, we are running to host the Olympic Winter Games 2026, and the proposal is Milan plus Cortina, that is city on the Dolomite. And again, when it is necessary we go, we work together.

MR. GOOTMAN: Right. It actually resembles what happened here between Washington and Baltimore that actually -- the competitive -- that they inspired more collaboration between the two. We have a few more moments, we have, I see three questions. I'll take them quickly. One, two, and three, go ahead.

MS. MAREFAT: Thank you very much. My name is Mina Marefat, and with the MIT Alumni, and was in design research. You've mentioned some indirect things, such as transportation, and green parks, but what very specific actions is Milan and you, taking towards climate change, and action or actions? I've asked this question from 100 mayors, by the way.

MR. GOOTMAN: Specific actions around climate change. There were other hands up in the back, just two more; one there, and then one back over here.

QUESTIONER: It's Infrastructure Week this week, so thank you for being

here, for we have to learn from cities like Milan. So, for every dollar that we invest in infrastructure we have \$3.7 returned back in economic growth, when we talk about resiliency and infrastructure, we talk about, you know, adaptation of technology. In what cases has Milan -- are there some cases we can learn from adapting artificial intelligence, the blockchain, IoT and so on, to make the city smarter as well?

MR. GOOTMAN: And there was one more question, or did the hand go down; right over here?

QUESTIONER: Hi. Thank you so much for such an interesting presentation. You said that you've managed in the last four years to decrease unemployment and increase women's participation in the labor force in Milan, what policies or investments have you made to increase women's participation in the workforce?

MR. GOOTMAN: All right. So we have two related climate, infrastructure, smart cities response, about specific (inaudible) for women.-

MAYOR SALA: And the last one, that is the most difficult to --

MR. GOOTMAN: Right.

MAYOR SALA: Now, in term of environment and infrastructure, we are investing first of all in public transportation, creating new metro lines, but also we are investing 2 billion in seven years to replace all the buses into electrical buses. And that for us is enormous effort, but in 2027, let me say, normal carbon -- gasoline buses will circulate in Milan.

We are planting 3 million trees, again, part by the public administration, by the municipality, but also we use some other possibility. Like, for instance, if you want to build there, you have to pay a fee to the municipality to build there.

We split the payment, for instance 50 percent cash, in part in planting trees, or taking care of spaces. So, we don't want to lose any single opportunity to have green in the city. Even the famous vertical (Speaking in Italian) -- in English?

SPEAKER: The Vertical Forest.

MAYOR SALA: Do you know the Vertical Forest? That building where the balcony there are trees that is quite futurist but it works. So, we don't want to lose any single opportunity. And this makes the payout with infrastructure, and the digital innovation. I've been told that is critical to speak about 5G in the USA, with my government that is making some -- in some instance, funny things with the Chinese it is but I mean -- it's everything under control so.

But again, we are covered that -- 78 percent with 5G, and again, it's an opportunity, because we tell the people, why go to the -- to my office to get certificate, stay at home, and I'll send you the certificate.

So, we are creating an atmosphere, a feeling for which the situation can change. I've been told that here in Washington, the traffic is on the reduction, I don't know if it is true, due to the homework and due to the possibility that part of the people stay home and working at home. That is electricity for us. We don't -- our system is not, still, able to manage this opportunity, because it is an opportunity.

Female employment, in reality we don't have the real possibilities, so we are not having real action. Let me say, we are working on some symbolic action. My Vice Mayor is a female, and most of the councilors are female. We are open to all the municipal company to the female management, and we are not opening, we are forcing on that.

But apparently it's the system that, and it's understanding it from our universities, we are seeing, even in the STEM universities, the result of the female students are better, and even the number of females, women, we decide to move from the secondary schools to university is higher for the women.

So, again, it's a question of common atmosphere, and apparently it's working. The results are telling us that it's working.

MR. GOOTMAN: There is one concluding question that relates, again, to Milan as a global city. You, unlike a lot of other mayor, when you first became Mayor, you really seemed to prioritize these kinds of international engagements. You were willing to

leave this city and visit other places, and be part of the city diplomacy, city networks, and seemed to have prioritized that.

When a lot of mayors start with: I need to deal with things at home, my citizens don't tolerate my travel abroad. Could you talk about how you view the role of cities in diplomacy and the importance of being involved in these city networks?

MAYOR SALA: It is fundamental for me, not only for reason that that I told before, I told you before, I want to learn, and to learn it is better to study with the best one. But also, because sometimes when I apply in Milan, when I decide in Milan for action that are not easy to be implemented, it can become easier if I tell, if I tell my citizen, yes, but that action is under development in Paris, or in Chicago, in other cities.

Let me give you, again, an example to explain what I'm saying. Some year ago we implemented a congestion charge area in the center of Milan, so you paid to -- very simply you paid to enter.

Now, we are at the end -- you can imagine at the end, many, many discussion now after seven years we are having a decrease of 40 percent in traffic in the center. Now, we are implementing a very, very tough measure, that is a low-emission zone, that is put in all the city, with cameras and just now, it is not possible to enter into the city with the more polluting cars, the diesel are zero, one, two, three.

But then having the system, having the cameras, having the education, we can go ahead. So, we approved a plan for which, in two years, also even year four cannot enter into the city.

So, for the mayor, it's not simple to tell the electorate you cannot use the car, but if environment is the problem we cannot avoid to do that. Again, when I decide, and when I explained to the citizen what we are -- what we are ready to do, they know that Milan and the Mayor of Milan is one of the Vice Presidents of C40, that is a partnership between the main cities in the world, so they defend me in some way.

So, having this attitude the people can accept easier, because I tell, I want

to go there, because even the other cities are going there. So, it is not anything so easy, or so clear, but I totally believe that being a part of this innovation, and the trends, and trying to -- not to only to defend the city from the progress, but trying to condition, trying to modify the progress, it's an opportunity.

And apparently the City of Milan is -- I understand is in election now. I will tell you for sure in 2021 with the new election because, who knows, but for sure, for sure.

And let me conclude, inviting you to visit Milan because, honestly, it's a city under a very deep transformation, and you can see. Not a big city, but a city where you will - - you could appreciate history, past, architecture, 26 centuries of history, but also an enormous wind on the future. Thank you very much.

MR. GOOTMAN: Thank you, Mayor. (Applause)

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