

SPEECH Elisenda ALAMANY, Vice president, Barcelona Metropolitan Area

WELCOME AND THANKS

- Thanks to **Jan HAMMING**, Mayor of Zaanstad and **Femke HALSEMA**, Chair of MRA-Board and Mayor of Amsterdam, for hosting EMA 2024
- Acknowledgement to all European Metropolitan Authorities mayors, presidents and representatives attending today
- Especial thank you to the Members of the European Parliament and the European Commission who are also joining us, and with whom we wish to continue working closely together to achieve our common goals.
- Finally, a big Thank you to the team from the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region for the great job organising this event.

EMA from the beginning until now

- The European Metropolitan Authorities (EMA) Forum was established in 2015 by the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, and since then it has become a platform for political dialogue among metropolitan areas and cities, European institutions and national governments.
- EMA currently brings together 58 metropolises from 21 European countries, representing 122 million inhabitants.
- We are pleased to collaborate with European Institutions and different networks (Metropolis, Metrex, MedCities, EuroCities), and with international agencies such as UN-Habitat and the OECD.

METROPOLITAN DIMENSION

- The different metropolises present here today have different territorial, social, and economic realities, as well as different institutional frameworks and powers.
- However, what brings us together is the Metropolitan dimension, that pushes us to think and act beyond the limits of our municipalities, and achieve a cohesive metropolis
- It is important to highlight that many of the challenges cities face can be better addressed at the metropolitan scale (Examples from AMB: Urban planning, Transport, Public Space, Housing, water and waste management...).

RECOGNITION

- As stated in the political declaration that we will all sign later today, we still lack the institutional recognition we deserve and are underfunded by other levels of administration.
- Today, we have here representatives from the European institutions and, even though we know that they are already aware and convinced about the importance of the metropolitan dimension, we ask them for their support in this new political mandate to finally incorporate metropolitan areas in the design and implementation of European strategies, policies and funding.
- EMA is an excellent platform to gather efforts and find common opportunities. At the Barcelona Metropolitan Area we believe in the potential of EMA and we will keep supporting our network.
- Finally, as I mentioned yesterday evening, it will be a pleasure to host you next year in Barcelona to celebrate EMA's tenth anniversary.