INTRODUCTION: "WISE CITIES" IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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"If mayors ruled the world" politics would be more pragmatic, solution-oriented and less polarised, the late Benjamin Barber argued in his famous book of the same title (Barber, 2013). Some of his assumptions were daring. Cities are hardly without issues such as lack of accountability or inequality, they depend on national decision-making in crucial policy areas such as migration, trade, and financing, and they have natural capacity limitations when it comes to foreign policy. Yet the days when international relations were the exclusive remit of high politics are over. Municipal and metropolitan actors play an increasing role, whether it is climate change mitigation, Track II diplomacy, educational initiatives, or the accommodation and integration of refugees and migrants.

Cities are home to over half the world's population, consume a majority of its resources and cause a large share of its waste. Cities are both a challenge for global sustainability and crucial for its solution. Their settlement density and networks of creativity provide the space and the ideas for improved resource management (Glaeser, 2011). Above all they epitomise the needs and aspirations of their citizens. They are spaces of longing and belonging with promises of social equitability, individual freedom, and political participation.

Over a dozen think tanks from around the world launched the Wise Cities research and action platform in 2016.[1] It builds on existing concepts of city planning and management such as "sustainable city", "green city", "eco-city", "ubiquitous city" and "smart city", but adds non-technocratic angles that are inspired by citizenship, such as socioeconomic development, political participation and cultural diversity (Coll, 2016).

Cities on the southern and northern shores of the Mediterranean are among the oldest in the world and can draw on rich traditions of architecture, urban development and municipal administration. Yet, there are fundamental differences between these cities. Mega-cities like Istanbul and Cairo grapple with different challenges than medium-sized cities along the Côte d'Azur that have higher per capita incomes and better infrastructure. Cities in the north of the Mediterranean also

[1]. For further information see http://www.wisecities.barcelona/. Partners in the think tank network are: Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB, coordinator), Agencia de Cooperación e Inversión de Medellín y el Área Metropolitana (ACI), Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (CESPI), EU-Asia Global Business Research Center, Ecologic Institute Berlin, Gateway House (Indian Council on Global Relations), Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV), Gulf Research Center, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, IASS Potsdam, Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Istanbul Policy Center (IPC), Lagos Business School (LBS), OCP Policy Center and Yonsei University. Collaborators include the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, Barcelona City Council, Milan City Council, UNDP ART and UCLG - United Cities.

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have stronger traditions of municipal self-governance and autonomy (Le Galès, 2002). In some cities of the southern Mediterranean mayors are more akin to appointed civil servants with limited fiscal space and decision-making power, while in many cities of the northern Mediterranean they are elected politicians with the freedom, funds and mandate to formulate municipal initiatives of their own.

Some of these differences are embodied in architectural designs and urban morphologies. The medieval oriental city stresses privacy in ethnically segmented living areas with splendid courtyards, but sober and windowless facades. Meanwhile the public realm (e.g. mosque, souk) is controlled by autocratic rule. In contrast, the divide between public and private is not as clear-cut in cities in the north, which have more public spaces (e.g. forum, agora, town hall) as an expression of their traditions of constitutional government and municipal autonomy (see Wirth, 2000/2001, and the chapter by Anton Escher and Marie Karner in this volume). In the 19th century colonial cities with right-angled street grid patterns were added to the urban geography in the southern Mediterranean, housing new centres of administration, commerce and education (Lees, 2015). The post-war decades would see the sprawling expansion of suburbs and dormitory cities on both shores of the Mediterranean. This expansion has been often informal (not only in the south of the Mediterranean), sometimes followed by later legalization and connection with electricity grids and other public utilities.

In recent decades modern Dubai-style urbanisation has developed in the Gulf with vast car-centred traffic arteries, signature buildings, corporatised value chains and gated communities in bespoke real estate developments, inspiring copycat projects of luxury real estate in Mediterranean cities such as Beirut, Cairo and Tangier. The resource inefficiency of such agglomerations, limited public spaces that are commercialised and securitised, the spatial manifestations of social segregation and discontent and the neglect and non-integration of architectural heritage has led to soul-searching about the adequacy of such urbanisation models and their underlying motivations (Kanna, 2011; Al-Nakib, 2016; Menoret, 2014). Cities struggle to integrate their architectural heritage in sustainable adaptation processes, oscillating between preservation romanticism and bulldozer runaway modernisation. They are also facing the challenge of interacting more equitably and sustainably with their hinterlands, from where they receive migrant populations and on which they rely for the provision of vital services (see Max Ajl's chapter in this volume).

Housing and urban networks are at the heart of the urban fabric. Real estate is a means to protect and legalise the monetary flows that are created by the urban economy and the flow of rents (location rent, sinecure and monopoly rents) that are used by elites to foster political alliances in limited access systems (Lorraine, 2017). Cities in the southern Mediterranean have a large share of informal housing and struggle with the poor quality of urban services, such as electricity, water and waste disposal. Violence tends to be more prevalent than in rural settings. In limited access systems, the formal institutions serve people unequally and second-rank institutions play a crucial role in the development of large projects. Self-organised informal neighbourhood initiatives (e.g. for housing, waste disposal or cleaning) form a third pivot of urban governance in these cities.

It is a matter of debate whether the current urbanisation drive in developing countries and emerging markets can be interpreted as a positive developmental process or not. Doug Saunders argues that the Global South will become largely urbanised over the 21st century, undergoing processes that are similar to the urbanisation history of the West in the 19th century. Now as then rural migrants are drawn by the economic pull factors of the "arrival city" on whose outskirts they settle. They gradually acquire urban equity and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with their rural origins by providing investments (e.g. second homes, tourism, agriculture) and helping newly arriving relatives to start out on their own (Saunders, 2010). In contrast, Mike Davies sees such sprawling agglomerations as symptoms of a "planet of slums": dumping grounds for the permanently redundant of the post-industrial age, without a real development perspective. Rather than pull factors he sees push factors as major causes of Third World urbanisation, such as violent conflict and the deterioration of state power in the rural peripheries in the wake of structural adjustment (Davis, 2006). Both arguments reverberate in some chapters in this volume. While Farida Naceur and Fatiha Belmessous' chapters examine the role of family networks in the administration of informal housing areas and the integration of new arrivals from the countryside in the city of Batna in Algeria, Julia Bello-Schünemann discusses the detachment of urbanisation in Sub-Saharan Africa from traditional development aspects such as industrialisation and improved service provision.

For all their differences, Mediterranean cities share some of today's most common urban challenges, such as environmental degradation, gentrification and growing inequality, climate change, provision of services, mass urbanisation, migration and the fourth industrial revolution, just to name a few. Against this backdrop, the Kuwait Chair at Sciences Po, in cooperation with CIDOB, the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, organised the conference "'Wise Cities' in the Mediterranean? Challenges of Environmental and Social Sustainability" in March 2018. With the generous support of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS) the policy-oriented conference brought together academics, city planners, policymakers and representatives of NGOs and international organisations. The discussion centred on alternative pathways for urbanisation, better engagement of citizens, and the localisation process of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moving beyond the large metropolises, the discussion also examined the specific challenges of smaller towns and "second cities" that are not necessarily capitals of their respective countries, but have their distinct economic and cultural dynamics (e.g. Alexandria and Barcelona). Views from neighbouring regions such as the Gulf and Sub-Saharan Africa also formed part of the conference. The contributions to this volume reflect the diverse backgrounds, experiences and expertise of the conference participants. They are meant as a starting point for a necessary debate on the social and environmental sustainability of urban growth in the Mediterranean and beyond.

Conceptual issues

Josep M. Coll of EADA Business School and CIDOB in Barcelona starts out by making the theoretical case for "Wise Cities". Technocratic paradigms like the "Smart Cities" concept have their merit, he argues, but they need to be complemented by a socioeconomic and environmental component.

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"The right to the city" of all its inhabitants can be compromised by social exclusion, lack of political participation and environmental pollution. The fourth industrial revolution with its new quality of automatisation and despatialisation offers opportunities, but also entails threats to the social fabric of the city if its potentials are not realised within new social policies. These will require pre-distributive, not just redistributive measures. Coll takes a closer look at three examples of how initiatives can make cities more liveable, equitable and "wiser", such as basic income provisions, the maker movement and child-friendly urban initiatives.

Anton Escher and Marie Karner of the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz give a historical overview of Mediterranean urban development and the evolving approaches to heritage preservation since the 1970s. By analysing the repurposing of historic medinas in Tunis, Fez, Marrakech and Byblos they argue against "romanticised ideas" of preservation of traditional quarters that risk creating historically accurate but sterile open-air museums. Instead, they plead for a "living heritage approach" that enables communities to maintain their original connection with the respective architectural sites in changing economic circumstances. This can include physical modification via conversion, touristification and adaptive reuse. Escher and Karner argue that "Instead of counteracting inevitable processes of gentrification, festivalisation, commodification, Disneyfication and digitalisation, authorities should acknowledge and control them as new dimensions of future-oriented planning".

Borja M. Iglesias, founder and CEO of the Network for Strengthening the Informal City (NSIC) and a consultant to the intercity network United Cities Local Governments (UCLG), uses geospatial data to highlight the key role of intermediary cities in developing Wise Cities agendas in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). He differentiates three different kinds of urban systems: (1) coastal and inland regional corridors, such as the Gulf coast from Al Fujairah upwards to Kuwait, (2) metropolitan clusters such as Istanbul and Cairo, and (3) enclave economies that are integrated in international networks, such as Didim in Turkey, but also Mekelle in Ethiopia, which he includes in his analysis because urban systems in the Horn of Africa and Ethiopia play an increasing role in the maritime trade flows in the Gulf of Aden towards the Mediterranean. Intermediary cities have accounted for much of the urban growth in the wider region, especially the Turkish corridor of Çanakkale-Izmir-Antalya-Gaziantep, the port cities in the Red Sea that connect with the Mediterranean Basin through the Suez Canal, the Gulf coastal corridor, the enclave economies in the Gulf of Aden basin (which have opened landlocked rural economies such as Ethiopia to the sea) and the Maghreb coastal corridor between Sfax in Tunisia and Tétouan in Morocco. In contrast, population numbers in northern Mediterranean cities mostly trend sideways, but do not register demographic decline like cities in eastern Europe because of migration dynamics. Iglesias argues for improved rural-urban linkages and an upgrading of intermediary cities in urban planning agendas compared to overcrowded metropolitan areas.

Wolfgang Schuster, chairman of the Deutsche Telekom Foundation and the European Foundation for Education, and former mayor of Stuttgart, analyses the importance of education in employment generation and the integration of new migrants into the city. After outlining major contemporary challenges facing cities such as globalisation,

digitalisation, climate change, and demographic issues, he highlights the crucial role that cities have to play in the localisation and realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030. Integrative urban societies that cope pro-actively and innovatively with the constant change of knowledge-based economies are at the heart of Schuster's argument. He makes the case for a "dual" education system that better links theory and practice and includes vocational training. He takes an in-depth look at the EDU-LAB project in the Danube Region, which could provide some suggestions for other regions such as the Mediterranean, and concludes with a set of policy recommendations for "Wise Cities" in the Mediterranean.

Environmental sustainability

James A. Russell of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey warns of environmental risks to cities in the Mediterranean. Climate change and sea-level rise could lead to flooding, declining agricultural productivity and diminished freshwater availability as saltwater seeps into coastal aquifers. Environmental refugees will likely exacerbate already existing migration pressures that are a result of war and political instability in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya. Cities in the south and north of the Mediterranean will need to adapt existing infrastructure and build new ones to accommodate such migration flows, facilitate integration and manage security risks. Russell warns that the current UN practice of "warehousing" refugees in camps is detrimental to their integration in receiving countries. He points to examples of Smart Cities planning and participatory projects of urban design at the annual Burning Man festival in the desert of Nevada that could provide inspiration for more inclusive solutions. Ultimately, the organisation of city planners would need to move away from "principles of centralised authority, hierarchy and institutionalism" and see urban spaces "in holistic terms as complex social, physical and cultural ecosystems" that can facilitate "cultural assimilation, self-governance and relative economic independence".

Both the Paris Agreement of 2015 and the Quito New Urban Agenda have stressed the importance of cities in climate change mitigation. In this context Eric Verdeil of Sciences Po analyses energy transitions to renewable energies and their urban governance, using Beirut, Tunis, Sfax, Amman and the UAE as case studies. On a per capita basis, many cities in the MENA region belong to the largest emitters of greenhouse gases. Yet climate policies play a subdued role in politics and policy formation. Dubai, Cairo and Amman are the only MENA cities that are part of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group network. Revenues from oil and gas exports and domestic energy subsidies play a central role in the social contract of local rentier and semi-rentier states. Energy exporters in the region are worried about low hydrocarbon prices and skyrocketing domestic demand that could compromise export capacity. The fiscal effects of high energy prices that can drain public coffers via growing energy subsidies is another concern, even more so for the net-importing countries of the region. In both cases the main focus remains production of and tariffs on traditional hydrocarbons. States are reluctant to give up control over these issues while cities have no real autonomy and hardly figure in national energy debates. The main driving

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forces for renewable energy transitions are not climate policies, but the improved economics of solar panels and their possible contribution to diversification of domestic energy consumption. Such diversification is a predominant concern, as rolling blackouts have become a common occurrence in many cities and domestic hydrocarbon subsidies weigh on public finances.

Olgu Okumus of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in Barcelona shows how regional and international cooperation in the Mediterranean can support cities' efforts in renewable energy transitions. She analyses the relevant regulatory frameworks and subsidy systems and points to necessary areas of reform. Energy tariffs in the region differ hugely and are not necessarily correlated with GDP and other development indicators. Depending on the consumption bracket they are over three times higher in Morocco and Jordan than in Egypt and Algeria for example. Okumus concurs with Verdeil that renewable energy transitions in the region are "more considered an opportunity to attract investments than a paradigm change in resource management". Future success will depend on overcoming capacity challenges, especially the limited authority of municipalities in decision-making and their lack of technical and human resources.

Social sustainability

Max Ajl of Cornell University investigates how the overcrowded city of Tunis connects with its hinterland and what lessons can be drawn from this for urban development. Cities should not be treated as territorial boxes that are somewhat isolated from their surroundings – surroundings on which they depend and from where many of their recent inhabitants are arriving. Ajl cautions against a false dichotomy that juxtaposes a "natural" exterior (the rural countryside) with the "social" interior (the city), where trade-offs between the two would occur somewhat naturally in terms of environmental damage and developmental gains. He outlines consecutive waves of rural migration to Tunis that go back to the 1930s and links them to capital-intensive agricultural modernisation and the land tenure regime. A considerable part of this migration went abroad – to the Gulf countries and Europe – as limited industrialisation in Tunisia provided only a few decent formal sector employment opportunities. Yet enough people stayed in the city, which now grapples with increased congestion and environmental impact. Rather than taking rural migration flows as given, Ajl suggests making the countryside more attractive and decentralising urban settlements. To this end he suggests policy steps such as land reform, the creation of a larger internal market via industrial policies, changing terms of trade in favour of agricultural producers and providing small farmers with preferential loans.

The FAO estimates that food supplies need to increase by 70% by 2050 to meet increased demand from population growth and dietary change in emerging markets towards more meat and dairy products. Much of this demand will be in cities, resulting in considerable pressures on extended, often global supply chains. Cities do not have the large areas necessary for the cultivation of cereals, but high-value crops like fruit, vegetables and leafy greens can be efficiently cultivated in an urban

environment and with low food miles at that, as Joel L. Cuello of the University of Arizona points out. Urban farming can take the form of community gardens on vacant lots, rooftop greenhouses or hydroponic vertical farming in bespoke structures. Ample solar radiation in hot regions like the Mediterranean offers an efficient and environmentally friendly opportunity to satisfy the energy needs of such farming. Cuello presents a project on vertical farming that he has conducted that utilises prefabricated modular structures, such as recycled shipping containers. He argues that urban farming systems can contribute sustainably to food supplies in cities and help to foster a neighbourhood esprit de corps in participating urban communities.

Farida Naceur of the University of Batna in Algeria and Fatiha Belmessous of CNRS Rives and ENTPE Lyon analyse how Batna has changed over the decades as a result of rural migration flows. Rather than taking informality as a cipher for underdevelopment and backwardness, they stress local agency and ingenious contributions to improved living conditions. Established as a colonial town for the control of the hinterland, Batna witnessed successive migration flows after Algerian independence in 1962. Initially, the government did not pay much attention to housing, as lots had been left vacant by European pieds noirs who had fled the country. By the 1980s informal settlements and slums had expanded. Public housing programmes did not keep pace with this growth and were allotted to clients of the government instead of the people who needed them most. New arrivals dwelled in informal settlements, segmented according to their tribal affiliations and kinship ties. Such settlements have become a permanent feature in Batna. The civil war in the 1990s and rural insecurity added to migration pressures in the city. Relying on semi-structured interviews with dwellers of informal settlements and community leaders, Naceur and Belmessous show how local initiatives are deeply imbued with a moral economy of mutual solidarity (touiza) and play an important role in finding jobs and shelter, building homes, fighting evictions and getting access to electricity.

Azza Sirry works at the Housing and Building National Research Centre (HBRC) in Cairo and is an associate of the inter-city association Metropolis, which promotes urban economic development. She directs our attention to Alexandria and its peculiar situation as a "second city". Asserting influence and maintaining access to funds and projects can be difficult in the shadow of a dominant capital like Cairo. Sirry outlines the history of the city from the 19th century and highlights some of its architectural features, such as the linear grid of a few streets that run in parallel to the seashore and the Corniche with its signature buildings from the colonial era. They now face the threat of demolition to make way for Dubai-style projects of luxury real estate and hotels that have led to the privatisation of large areas of the beach. Like in Batna there has been an expansion of informal settlements on the outskirts of the city since the 1970s. Sirry discusses the major challenges for Alexandria, such as growing inequality, pollution and congestion and introduces plans for its future, such as the Strategic Urban Plan for Alexandria City, which has 2032 as its time horizon. She argues that the city needs to find a better balance between preservation and development and that Alexandria should be given more rights of municipal self-government, as currently many of the large projects are planned and administered by central agencies out of Cairo.

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Economic issues

Waleed Hazbun of the American University of Beirut outlines the promises and pitfalls of tourism in post-industrial urban development, using Barcelona and Beirut as comparative case studies. Barcelona chose an inclusive approach to tourism development in preparation for the Olympic Games held in the city in 1992. They marked a starting point for a steep rise in tourism. The initial focus was on the generation of shared urban experiences for tourists and locals alike, rather than the creation of isolated "tourism bubbles". However, as tourist numbers rose from 1.7 million in 1990 to 7.5 million in 2013 the local population grew increasingly apprehensive of stretched infrastructure, rising rents and the occasional misbehaviour of tourists. Commercial interests loomed larger over time. Most newly created jobs in the tourism industry had low wages and economic benefits were unevenly distributed. Grassroots counter-movements and the newly elected mayor Ada Colau have sought to push back against negative side effects of tourism. In contrast, the urban redevelopment of Beirut was characterised by a top-down approach after the end of the civil war in 1991. It was led by the real estate company Solidere headed by Rafiq Hariri, who was also Lebanon's prime minister from 1992 to 1998 and from 2000 to 2004. The initial plan to make Beirut again a regional financial and business hub failed. So Solidere changed tack. The downtown area was transformed into a playground of wealthy expat Lebanese and Gulf tourists, while the native population was pushed out. Like in Barcelona there have been counter movements. The citizen platform Beirut Madinati (Beirut is My City) competed in the municipal elections and there have been initiatives for more shared urban spaces in the southern suburbs that are mainly inhabited by Shiites. Hazbun argues that tourism planners need to "empower community-oriented place-making" if they want to succeed in integrating tourism in urban development in a sustainable and equitable fashion.

Miquel Rodríguez Planas of IESE Business School of the University of Navarra presents a study of the new Cairo wastewater treatment plant as an example of a public-private partnership (PPP) in an urban context. His chapter once again draws our attention to the importance of the provision of basic services to a city, such as water, food, electricity and fuel. He describes the public agencies and private firms that have been involved in the complex contract process and how the launch and administration of the PPP managed to escape the political turbulence in Egypt at that time. Finally, he provides some guidelines on how PPPs can be implemented in countries with similar social and economic characteristics to Egypt.

Daniele Fattibene of the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) in Rome gives a critical assessment of the management of food waste in his city. He passionately argues against the neglect of urban environments by food security players. As much of the global food waste occurs in cities, urban food policy governance can play a crucial role in creating more sustainable agri-food systems. Such measures include separate collection of waste and its recycling, and farmers' markets that connect the city to its immediate hinterland and allow farmers to collect a larger share of revenues along the value chain by cutting out middlemen. Other examples comprise urban farming, green procurement and reduction of

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packaging in public programmes such as school meals, and avoidance of food waste by using digitisation to make unsold food available for charity programmes before its expiry. Fattibene cautions that successful implementation of such measures and avoidance of setbacks requires broad-based participation and education of citizens. He also suggests that "international cities networks can be important to protect these policies from sudden political changes as these alliances can help develop mechanisms which protect food policies from electoral cycles".

Beyond the Mediterranean: The Gulf and Sub-Saharan Africa

Pascal Menoret of Brandeis University shows how urban sprawl and politics interact in cities in Saudi Arabia, most notably in its capital, Riyadh. State repression and the disenfranchisement of the large non-national workforce have perpetuated social rifts "between haves and have-nots, citizens and non-citizens, men and women, urbanites and rural migrants". Such rifts have their spatial expressions. Large suburbs were created in the 1960s to better control the population that often had a nomadic Bedouin background and had started to form shantytowns after moving to the city. A fragmented metropolis emerged, only connected by car-centered lanes and with few public spaces. The suburbs depoliticised and disempowered the new city dwellers, but they also became the locus of increased Islamist activism from the 1980s onwards. Menoret interprets such activism as a response to the spatial dislocation and its underlying social rifts in an environment where classic forms of participation such as political parties, independent associations and trade unions have been suppressed for decades.

Elena Maestri of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC) in Milano analyses recent efforts to preserve traditional architecture in the city of Jeddah. She situates such efforts at the crossroads between local identity-making and economic interests that are tied to the expansion of modern urban agglomerations beyond the borders of the old city. Shopping centres as the only semi-public spaces, luxury real estate developments, gated communities, and prestige projects such as the Jeddah Tower that would be the world's tallest skyscraper after completion, are characteristic of this urban design. The destruction of the walls of the old district in 1947 opened the way for the rapid urbanisation that has taken place since then. Maestri points to initiatives by local architects and intellectuals who seek to avoid the worst excesses of Mecca, where traditional architectural features have been largely razed. Preservation efforts can contribute to greater sustainability of the city if they manage to pay attention to the new patterns of behaviour and changing identities of local communities, she concludes.

Sharifa Alshalfan, a visiting fellow at the LSE Kuwait programme and consultant with the World Bank, analyses the effects of the Kuwait Masterplan in the development of the city in the oil era, which started in 1946 when the first shipment of crude oil left Kuwait. The last expansion of the city wall was torn down in 1921 to make way for sprawling urban settlements. The British firm Minporio, Spencely and Macfarlane was commissioned in 1951 to create the first masterplan, which became the blueprint for later plan expansions. It envisaged self-

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sufficient residential neighbourhoods that were separated by ring roads and detached from the business district in the city centre with a green belt. Like Menoret she is critical of the planned suburbanism. "The plan […] sanitised public life and decontextualised the city from its locality and inhabitants", Alshalfan argues. From newer plans climate change adaptation, energy-use reduction and social inclusion are missing. Home ownership programmes focused on villas, not on affordable housing and contributed to real estate speculation. The creation of shared public spaces was neglected. Instead of focusing on mere numbers and grand designs, Alshalfan calls for "incremental growth at a humanistic scale" and citizens' participation in urban planning in order to create more liveable and shared urban spaces.

Julia Bello-Schünemann of the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, who lives in Lagos, gives an outlook on urbanisation in Sub-Saharan Africa towards 2035. Urbanisation in cities such as Lagos, Luanda, Kinshasa, Johannesburg and Dar es Salam is increasing more rapidly than the already strong population growth. Burundi, Uganda and Malawi belong to the most rural countries on the continent, but even they witness breakneck urbanisation. The urbanisation dynamic in Sub-Saharan Africa is more pronounced than in New York or London during their most rapid expansion in the 1920s and 1890s, respectively, yet urbanisation does not coincide with development and industrialisation. There is a real threat of slums becoming poverty traps with environmental impacts that are difficult to manage. African cities have also developed into hotbeds of violent crime, although terrorism remains a largely rural phenomenon on the continent. Rising inequalities find their spatial manifestation in luxury real estate development and gated communities. A better development impetus of urbanisation would require more employment generation in higher productivity sectors of the economy. Inequalities would need to be tackled and more urban public spaces created. This poses major challenges for urban governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, which struggles with lack of funds, democratic procedures, legitimacy and corruption.

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