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**CHICAGO MAYOR EMANUEL, PARIS MAYOR HIDALGO  
HOST URBAN WATERWAYS FORUM**

*Mayors from around the world gather in Chicago to discuss ways development projects around waterways can generate economic, environmental & social benefits for cities*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo today convened 17 mayors spanning five continents, 11 countries and who represent 44 million people for an Urban Waterways Forum in Chicago. The event, co-hosted by World Business Chicago and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, is designed to foster an international conversation about the future of urban waterways.

“Throughout our history Chicago’s waterways have connected us to each other, to opportunity and to the world,” said Mayor Emanuel. “It is an honor to host leaders from around the world in Chicago to help shape the futures of rivers, lakes, and oceanfronts in ways that protect our environment, grow our economy, and improve our quality of life.”

As mayors of major cities worldwide consider how to drive economic opportunity, create new public spaces and find more environmentally sustainable uses for aging infrastructure, they are increasingly turning to the development of urban waterways. To harness the power of that movement, a number of government officials have gathered in Chicago from five continents:

**Asia:** Lahore Mayor Mubashar Javed, Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav and Shenyang Vice Mayor Huang Kai

**Africa:** Cape Town Mayor Patricia de Lille

**Europe:** Gothenburg Lord Mayor Lena Malm, Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala and Paris Mayor Hidalgo

**North America:** Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh, Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, Chicago Mayor Emanuel, Dallas Mayor Michael S. Rawlings, Detroit Mayor Michael Duggan, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland, Mexico City Mayor Miguel Mancera, Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre and New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu

**South America:** Buenos Aires General Director of International Relations and Cooperation  
Francisco Resnicoff

“I am delighted to join Mayor Emanuel, and leaders from such a diverse group of cities to share ideas on how to transform the waterways of our cities into sustainable and socially inclusive communities,” said Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris & Chair of C40. “The urgency of the climate crisis makes this more important than ever.”

Urban waterways – whether on rivers, lakes, seas or oceans – have always been natural centers of gravity. Over time, transportation and manufacturing have evolved and the old industrial waterways that turned into unused land are again ripe for new design, development and purpose.

The forum featured two discussions. The first focused on environmental protection, and was moderated by Mark Watts, the Executive Director of C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. This discussion concentrated on projects around the world utilizing waterways to push environmental efforts critical to cities in the 21st century. Jeanne Gang, Founding Principal of Studio Gang and Anders Bringdal, Founder & CEO of SeaBubbles, also participated in this discussion. The second focused on economic opportunity and was moderated by Bruce Katz, the inaugural centennial scholar at the Brookings Institution. This session discussed innovative ways cities are approaching economic development with an eye on nontraditional uses of their waterways and how issues of social equity play into these efforts.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is producing a report in collaboration with the City of Chicago, the Mairie de Paris and World Business Chicago that will summarize today’s discussions and outline the findings of the Forum to build on existing research around urban waterway development. The report will be released later in the spring.

The Forum was held at River Point Office Tower, a new 52-story office building at 444 W. Lake St., located at the confluence of the Chicago River’s north, south and main branches.

In addition to the discussion sessions at River Point, mayors will participate in other events. First, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs will host a public program during a lunch at the University of Chicago’s Gleacher Center to be moderated by Ivo Daalder, President of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Later today, mayors will also visit two important Chicago incubators strategically located on the Chicago River: MATTER and 1871. At 1871, mayors will join a roundtable discussion with 10 tech leaders moderated by Howard Tullman, the CEO of 1871. The focus of the roundtable will be immigration challenges facing the tech industry. Additionally, Current, the city’s water tech innovation accelerator, and UI Labs will host a Symposium to profile innovative technologies and initiatives that address pressing water needs, enhance quality of life and support economic development.

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### **About World Business Chicago**

World Business Chicago is a public-private, non-profit partnership that drives inclusive economic growth and job creation, supports business, and promotes Chicago as a leading global city.

**About the Chicago Council on Global Affairs**

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is an independent, nonpartisan membership organization that provides insight – and influences the public discourse – on critical global issues. We convene leading global voices, conduct independent research, and engage the public to explore ideas that will shape our global future. The Council is committed to bringing clarity and offering solutions to issues that transcend borders and transform how people, business, and governments engage the world.