

**MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI
CITY OF LOS ANGELES**

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**VIDEO RELEASE: LOS ANGELES AND CITIES AROUND THE GLOBE LAUNCH
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUITY**

*Los Angeles, London, Barcelona, Freetown, Mexico City, and Tokyo create first-of-its-kind
organization to combat gender inequality at the local level*

Eds:

Archived live video in English can be found [here](#).

Archived live video in Spanish can be found [here](#).

LOS ANGELES — Mayor Eric Garcetti today launched '[CHANGE](#)', the City Hub And Network for Gender Equity, a groundbreaking international coalition of cities committed to advancing gender equity in local governments and policies. Mayor Garcetti will serve as the network's first chair, and Los Angeles will be one of its founding members, alongside London, Barcelona, Freetown, Mexico City, and Tokyo.

"This pandemic has changed how we live, learn, work, socialize, and govern, but what has not changed is our unwavering belief that every person deserves a fair shot and a level playing field, regardless of their gender or gender identity," said Mayor Garcetti. "In Los Angeles, gender equity is a prism for everything we do, and CHANGE is bringing that same perspective to cities across the globe — uniting a collection of trailblazing mayors around steps and tools to dismantle inequality and forge a more inclusive and sustainable future for all."

CHANGE will assemble cities throughout the world committed to promoting gender equity initiatives, exchanging best practices in tackling sexism, misogyny, and gender-based injustice, and using the [gender equity toolkit](#) developed in Los Angeles to build their own models for progress and action.

Marginalized genders worldwide continue to face discrimination, including unequal pay and opportunities, physical and sexual violence, a disproportionate share of unpaid labor, and low levels of political representation.

The [World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report \(2020\)](#) concluded that, based on current trends, the economic gender gap will not close for another 257 years. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a disproportionate impact on women's health, safety, employment, and economic independence. A [2020 study](#) by McKinsey & Company found that women's jobs are 1.8 times more vulnerable to this crisis than men's jobs. Similarly, women make up 39 percent of global employment but account for 54 percent of overall job losses.

In 2015, Mayor Garcetti issued an [executive directive on gender equity](#), which called on every City Department to help Los Angeles fulfill its responsibilities under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) [ordinance](#). As one of the first cities to adopt CEDAW, L.A. has served as a model for its implementation by creating the Gender Equity Coalition — which includes a Gender Equity Liaison from every City Department — and directing the leadership of each Department to prepare a Gender Equity Action Plan, complete with quarterly plan progress reports, to measure and address disparities in the workforce.

Today, women hold more than 50 percent of the positions on more than 40 boards and commissions in Los Angeles, and there are no all-male commissions for the first time in the city's history.

Support from the Founding Mayors of CHANGE

"Cities must be the place where this transformation is accelerated," said Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau. "We must fight against the inequality and injustice that women still suffer and end the invisibility of care work – a burden which is mostly borne by women and which is essential for life."

"We would not have come as far as we have with Transform Freetown as an agenda without the tremendous contribution of women from around our city," said Mayor of Freetown, Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr. "From the all-women teams of sweepers who used to clean our 68 major streets to the women groups who contributed towards the city's response to COVID-19, we have seen how far we can go if women are empowered. As the first elected female Mayor of Freetown, I am using my office to show girls and women in my city, my country and the world that we can and should be agents of change. That is why being part of the founding of the first-ever network of cities promoting gender-equality is so important to me."

"London simply wouldn't be the city it is without the contribution of courageous women throughout its history," said Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. "I am a proud feminist and while I know that progress has been made towards gender equality, it is clear that too many women still face barriers to success and are now facing increasing challenges from the impact of Covid-19.

I want our capital to be a place where everyone can fulfil their potential and be hopeful for their future – regardless of gender. This is why we have helped to establish this world-first group to tackle gender inequality, and why I continue to urge all Londoners and allies in other global cities to work with us in making it a thing of the past – not just in the UK but around the world."

“From my perspective, there are, at least, six lines of action to address the inequality that translates into violence: 1) Changing the law to promote a life free of violence against women and classifying physical and sexual violence against women as serious crimes in the Penal Code; 2) Access and justice for women, starting with gender-based and human rights-based training for police officers and prosecutors; 3) Conditions to eliminate violence in public transportation and public spaces; 4) Creating a protection system that assists women in violence situations; 5) Implementing programs to promote the financial autonomy of women; 6) Education, culture and other actions to empower girls and women when making decisions, as well as raising boys and men with masculinities away from machismo, said Chief of Government of Mexico City, Dr Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo. “This is the education, access to justice and rights framework that we are working on in the Mexico City Government. We are fully committed to do all that is in our hands to eradicate violence and promote equality. Of course, the floor is open to add other lines of action. Women’s struggle for equality cannot be isolated from the struggle for a fairer society and for the greater social and human rights. Changing the narrative for the construction of democracy and justice for all, men and women, needs a change of paradigm and I am sure this is taking place as we speak. The active participation of both, men and women, is most important for this to happen.”

“Since taking office as Tokyo’s first female governor in 2016, I have focused on women’s empowerment, said Governor of Tokyo, Yuriko Koike. “As leaders, we work to resolve issues faced by our own city. At the same time, we also seek to collaborate with other cities. I believe such collaborations not only contribute to advancing our cities, but also to resolving global challenges. Now, we are engaged in a tough battle against COVID-19. This pandemic is also having a major impact on gender equality in Tokyo and the rest of Japan. In this environment, for Tokyo to continue developing into a city full of vitality, it is crucial to ensure opportunities so that each and every person, regardless of gender, can fully demonstrate their individual qualities and abilities. Tokyo is preparing to host the Tokyo 2020 Games next year. Olympic Agenda 2020 also places great emphasis on the vital importance of promoting gender equality. I look forward to working closely with all member cities to realize the principles of CHANGE.”

For more information on CHANGE and to stay updated, please visit citieschange.org.

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