



Presentation of City of Oslo's Work on Reduction of CO2 Emissions and on Avoiding Modern Slavery

Cumbre #MayorsCare sobre

Esclavitud moderna y cambio climático: el compromiso de las ciudades

Aula nueva del Sínodo, 21 de julio del 2015

Stian Berger Røsland – Alcalde de Oslo

Your Eminence,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

Let me start by thanking the Holy Father and the Academy for inviting us here today. I think we all come with different perspectives and personal histories. For me, it is a special opportunity to visit the city of Rome where my grandmother was born and to be invited to speak inside the Vatican. It is a unique experience for the first Catholic governing Mayor of Oslo since the Reformation.

Successful solutions to challenges like modern slavery and climate change start with our own cities and require that we cooperate with our own citizens and peers. This is not easy, and as the fastest growing capital city in Europe, Oslo must grow while addressing these challenges. In order to achieve this, Oslo has adopted principles for growth and those are responsibility, accountability and sustainability.

Responsibility is our first principle for growth. Many travel to Oslo from all over the world in search of a better life. 40% of our first graders now are of non-Norwegian descent and cities are better for it. We enjoy a low unemployment rate in the city of around 3.5%, and we have a solid welfare state. Like many countries, Norway depends upon labour immigration for economic development. Invariably, with this growth comes the risk of exploitation.

It is our responsibility, also, as cities, to protect the vulnerable from exploitation. To tackle one of the most severe forms of modern slavery we in 2009 made the purchase of sexual services illegal in Norway. It is not a criminal offense to be a prostitute, but it is illegal to be a customer. And listening to Karla this morning I found myself even more certain that it is the right practice to ban the buying of other persons. Evaluation of the law shows that the ban has contributed to a lower demand and purchase of sexual services in the city, as well as in Norway.

Our second principle of growth is accountability. Following our principles of growth, we conduct procurement with an emphasis on social responsibility and accountability. A good place to start is enforcing labour rights. And I would like to share some practical measures we have taken in our city within the city government in doing this. Firstly, we have established an arena within the city administration for exchange and experience of information on economic criminality called "the legal team". With this, we can make sure that, for example, the education department can share bad and good experiences with contractors with other parts of the city administration. Bad contractors will then be blacklisted. Secondly, we have a follow-up framework to check wages and working conditions to make sure that our workers on site are really getting the pay and the free time as specified in the contract with the city. Thirdly, we are establishing a framework for electronically standardizing how we keep track of crews on building sites working for the city.

We also need to fight corruption and organized crime. Due to an alarming development of economic criminality, especially in the building sector, we have just concluded several changes in the municipality's standard contracts. Two of the most important of these are firstly a maximum of two subcontractors in the underlying supply chain of the main contractor. By doing this, we can be sure that we actually know who they are doing the work for us, avoiding and limiting subcontracting and pulverization of responsibility and accountability. Second, reserving the right for the municipality to carry out necessary controls at our choosing and at our time. Ensuring clear and accountable standards, processes and follow-ups not only prevents social dumping, but also supports our fight against corruption.

Our third principle is sustainability. In addition to developing our city in a responsible and accountable way, we need to enable that cities develop sustainably. Oslo's goal is to cut emissions of greenhouse gases by half by 2030 and reach neutrality by 2050. Accounting for 60% of Oslo's climate gas emissions today, transportation

is the main source of climate gas emissions. To achieve our ambitions, we need to rethink how we look at housing and transport. Cities of the future must be densely built, where the need for transport is reduced, and by building sustainable housing around already existing transport hubs. Making it easier to walk and cycle instead of using cars we will reduce pollution and fewer cars on roads making more room for bike paths and parks. We also have a comprehensive strategy for implementing zero-emission vehicles and per capita Oslo now has the highest number of electric vehicles in the world, making us the electric vehicle capital of the world. Cities should also lead by example. Last year, the municipality of Oslo cut our own emissions by 22%, and because of this, I find it easier now to ask for similar cuts by our local businesses and also our local inhabitants. Leading by example makes leading much easier.

To sum up, our city principles for growth are much like the principles of a marathon runner: we are not aiming for a short flashy sprint; we are working for responsible, accountable and sustainable growth, because these are commitments needed for a long-term and successful relationship between people and our city. We know that we succeed better if we work together. This is why it is so important that we have solid and lasting foundations in place based on strong principles.

Thank you very much for your attention.