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## Partnership for Healthy Cities

### Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya Announces Plan to create Smoke-free Kathmandu With Renewed Support from Global Network of Cities

*Worldwide initiative now protects over 300 million people with  
proven strategies to improve public health*

**(December 13 2019, Kathmandu, Nepal)** – Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya announced today that Kathmandu will become a smoke-free city as part of the Partnership for Healthy Cities, a prestigious global network of 70 cities committed to saving lives by preventing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)—such as cancer or diabetes—and injuries. The Partnership for Healthy Cities is growing from 54 to 70 cities, with a total population of over 300 million people around the globe.

“Improving public health requires bold action,” said Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya, who is renewing his commitment to the Partnership for Healthy Cities after building awareness about the harms of smoking in 2017 and 2018. “We’re proud to be part of this prominent group of cities working to ensure longer, fuller lives for their residents. Through the Partnership for Healthy Cities, our efforts in this area have even greater impact. We are implementing a global blueprint for effective urban health.”

“Congratulations, Kathmandu. The road to a healthier world runs through cities. Most of the world now lives in urban areas, and cities can rapidly implement meaningful policies,” said Dr. Kelly Henning, who leads the public health program at Bloomberg Philanthropies. “The Partnership for Healthy Cities unites mayors who are committed to action. With the Partnership’s expansion to 70 cities, collectively we are preventing millions of needless deaths from NCDs and injuries and protecting the health of generations to come.”

A recent study indicated that prevalence of tobacco use in adults is 68.4% in rural Kathmandu and 37.0% in urban Kathmandu. Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya has committed to creating a smoke-free Kathmandu by December 2020.

NCDs and injuries are responsible for eight in 10 deaths globally. The additional cost per person to implement key NCD policies in low- and lower-middle-income cities between now and 2030 is just \$1.27, while road traffic injuries already cost most countries 3% of their gross domestic product. Through this Partnership, cities commit to one of 14 interventions

that address the risk factors that cause NCDs and injuries, such as implementing smoke-free laws that protect residents from secondhand smoke, restricting sugary drink and junk food advertising or creating safe urban cycling routes.

The Partnership for Healthy Cities is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and Vital Strategies. It recognizes the critical role cities play in effectively implementing evidence-based interventions to prevent NCDs and injuries. Partnership cities have made important strides to build healthier and safer environments. For example, Quito, Ecuador replaced junk food with healthy options for 50% of public schools students—expanding to 100% next year. In Accra, Ghana, a series of infrastructure changes at a major highway crossing with the highest rate of road crashes and fatalities in the city led to a nearly 35% reduction in serious injuries at the site.

“Around the world, cities are growing rapidly, and this presents significant new opportunities for action,” said Dr. Naoko Yamamoto, Assistant Director General of Universal Health Coverage/Healthier Populations at WHO. “The Partnership for Healthy Cities is showing how cities can play a key role in championing ways to tackle NCDs and injuries.”

José Luis Castro, President and CEO of Vital Strategies, said, “We are honored to implement this flagship urban public health initiative alongside Bloomberg Philanthropies and the World Health Organization. Our team is actively collaborating with the Partnership cities and providing the necessary assistance to support progress in policies to combat NCDs and injuries. We view this work as core to our vision of strengthening health systems around the globe.”