

Successful Velo-city2011 concludes with the signing of the Charter of Seville

**From Spain to Leipzig to Vancouver – the message
'Cycling makes Sense' goes global**

Seville, March 29th - With an energetic stroke of the pen dignitaries and participants of the Velo-city 2011 conference signed the "Charter of Seville". An important document and the closing act of the 17th successful international conference on cycling and cycling policies.

In May the "Charter of Seville" aspires to convince all Ministers of Transport that attend the International Transport Forum (ITF) in Leipzig of the fact that cycling simply makes sense. This year the representatives of 53 countries attending the ITF will focus on: "Transport and Society". In light of this theme, the "Charter of Seville" asks these Ministers of Transport to recognize and acknowledge the



documented advantages and benefits of cycling as a daily alternative mode of transportation. The constructive and lively debate in Seville - between the delegates and representatives of 47 countries in various round table discussions, workshops and plenary sessions – ultimately, led to a concise 15-point list of advantages and benefits of cycling.

Manfred Neun, President of ECF, (European Cyclists' Federation), Antonio Rodrigo Torrijos, the first deputy Mayor of Seville, Manel Villalante, the General Director of the Inland Transport Ministry of Development, Bob Paddon, President of Translink and Maria Vassilakou, Vice-Mayor and Vice-Governor Vienna, took the lead in signing this groundbreaking document. Manfred Neun invited all the participants of the 17th Velo-city conference to join him in signing the "Charter of Seville".

He underlined that: "After all, it contains the direct results of all our gathered ideas and experiences. Together we need to keep up the good work and let a loud call go out from all cycling enthusiasts to fight for a better and sustainable future for all, most importantly, for our children and grandchildren".

Bernhard Ensink, Velo-city Series Director and Secretary General of ECF, highlighted that: "It may not be an innovative concept, but it definitely is the first time that cycling as a mode of transportation is on the agenda of the ITF. What's more, it is the very first time that the ITF will take a closer look at the social aspects of transportations policies and focus less on the technical aspects alone."

Host city Seville was the perfect backdrop for Velo-city 2011 as it clearly shows the importance of integrating cycling into sustainable mobility policies. While the world continues to debate the need for the development of sustainable infrastructures and the need to find new sources of energy, cycling savvy Seville managed to single-handedly increase the daily cycle usage from 6.000 to 60.000 trips a day within a mere three years. The "Charter of Seville" includes and names many beneficial aspects of cycling. Environmentally, socially, and economically speaking, Cycling simply makes sense!

Ensink further added that "Cycling needs engagement and investments from all of us. The larger bicycle associations, companies, scientists, consultants, politicians, regional and national authorities and international institutions, we all need to join hands to successfully promote cycling as a way forward towards a sustainable future."

Largely overwhelmed by the conference's success, an enthusiastic master of ceremonies, Guillermo (Gil) Peñalosa, stated: "I have learned so many things, we already have achieved so much and we have to continue. Cycling means happiness, cycling is community building and as everyone can have a bicycle, cycling is democracy. We can be an example for the whole world. So let us all live like examples."

Since 1983, all previous Velo-city conferences have shown the enormous potential and the benefits of cycling; the Velo-city conference of Seville was no different.

120 themes were presented and discussed throughout plenary sessions, workshops and round table discussions. The more than 900 participants representing 47 countries, predominantly from Spain, the Benelux and Germanic countries, Scandinavia and North America, included cyclist associations, cities, architects, urban planners, politicians, NGO's and representatives from the bicycle industry. Together they discussed how bicycle policy can be integrated in urban transport planning and how cycling can be promoted for various target groups.



Manfred Neun officially closed the 17th Velo-city conference in Seville as he symbolically passed the Velo-city bike to the representatives of the next hosting city, Mike Anderson and Bob Paddon. Velo-city 2012 takes place June 26-29 in Vancouver, Canada. Addressing Hans-Juergen Becker, Director of Velo-city 2012 Neun concluded with the words: "Vancouver is a melting pot of different cultures. So it is the perfect place to share cycling know-how with the world. Good luck to you in Vancouver and may Velo-city continue to grow!"



As a public finale on Sunday, the fifth Ciclovida saw Sevillians, together with the organizers and participants of Velo-city 2011 celebrating this energizing and inspiring event. People of all ages enjoyed the freedom and fun to roam one of the city's largest avenues cleared of any motorized traffic! The Ciclovida culminated in a bicycle parade throughout the city that coincided with the metropolitan bicycle day with an estimated 6.000 people participating.

823 words, 5393 characters

For more information on the Charter of Seville please go to:

http://www.ecf.com/4218_1

Delegates after signing the "Charter of Seville":

FLTR: Bernhard Ensink, Velo-city Series Director and Secretary General of ECF; Manel Villalante, General Director Inland Transport Ministry of Development; Antonio Rodrigo Torrijos, first deputy Mayor of Seville; Manfred Neun, President of ECF; Maria Vassilakou, Vice-Mayor and Vice-Governor Vienna; Bob Paddon, President of Translink.



About Velo-city

The Velo-city conference series is the premier international cycling planning conference series in the world, organized by the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and select host cities.

Velo-city conferences serve as a global communications and information platform and target to influence decision makers, and improve the planning and provision of infrastructure for the daily use of the bicycle in an urban environment.

The conferences traditionally involve experts, representatives of associations, institutions, policy-makers and social agents, universities and companies.

For more information: www.ecf.com

Velo-city 2011 Seville – The Cycle of Life

The city of Seville, which was awarded a UN-Habitat Best Practice Award, has been chosen to host the 2011 edition of Velo-city as a result of its successful establishment of a complete system of cycling infrastructures.

Velo-city 2011 welcomed more than 900 visitors from all over the world who – during the three-day conference – discussed cycling as a means of urban sustainable transport. The conference looked into a breadth of subjects on Health, Education, Efficiency of public investment, Economic impact and employment.

Out of the more than 250 submissions that were received from 27 countries, 120 entries were selected, to be presented and discussed in plenary and sub-plenary sessions, workshops and round table sessions. An exhibition related to urban cycling complimented the conference.

The conference slogan, “The Cycle of Life”, refers to the bicycle as a part of everyday life and a source of health for people of any age, contributing to more inhabitable cities and urban regions.

This year's Velo-city Conference took place in Seville from March 23–25, 2011.

The official languages during the conference were Spanish and English.

For more information: www.velo-city2011.com

For a selection of images and logos go to

http://www.velo-city2011.com/eng/informacion_interes.php or

<http://sevillacyclechic.blogspot.com/>

Feel free to contact us for further information or images.

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