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NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor Buol Participating in Paris Climate Talks

DUBUQUE, Iowa – Dubuque Mayor Roy D. Buol will be in Paris Dec. 3 – 10 to attend the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) as well as the Climate Summit for Local Leaders.

COP21, also known as the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, will bring nearly 200 nations together to reach an agreement on climate change. The conference is expected to attract close to 50,000 participants including 25,000 official delegates from government, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, and communities around the world.

As announced in September, Buol and St. Paul, Minn., Mayor Chris Coleman will lead a four-member delegation of mayors representing the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI) at the COP21 meeting.

“I am proud to participate in this historic event and represent Dubuque, our region, other Mississippi River communities, and our nation,” said Buol. “The implications of climate change for our river, our nation, and our world are too significant to stand by and watch -- and hope -- others will be a voice. It’s critical that we are a part of these international conversations.”

Buol said two of the greatest threats to the world from climate change are a dramatic alteration to our food supply and the decrease of freshwater. Of the food-producing river basins around the planet, the Mississippi ranks first. He said he looks forward to meeting with representatives from food-producing river basins to assemble the beginning of what could eventually become an international river sustainability agreement among food-producing basins that works to protect both the water and food security of the world.

In addition to Buol and Coleman, the MRCTI delegation includes Mayor Dave Kleis of St. Cloud, Minn., and Mayor Larry Brown of Natchez, Miss. As an MRCTI delegate, all of Buol’s travel costs are being covered by MRCTI.

The MRCTI delegation will host talks over two sessions: one to determine the challenges of implementing integrated water management and sustainable agricultural practices and the second to develop solutions on how food and drinking water security may be achieved at an international level.

The results of the talks will be shared on Tues., Dec. 8, at 10:45 a.m. CST in the United States Center in Paris which can be viewed at www.state.gov/uscenter.

While in Paris, Buol will also attend the Climate Summit for Local Leaders as part of the Compact of Mayors, a global coalition of city leaders dedicated to taking climate action. Buol will meet with other cities and mayors to demonstrate their commitment to making communities more resilient to climate change, reducing their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and regularly reporting their progress publicly.

Hosted by Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of the City of Paris, and Michael R. Bloomberg, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change—in partnership with the global networks of cities and local governments—the Climate Summit for Local Leaders will be the largest global convening of mayors, governors, and local leaders focused on climate change.

“This event, which coincides with COP21, will help ensure that local leaders are heard, and city efforts, like ours in Dubuque, are recognized,” said Buol. “As a Compact of Mayors city, our participation will be highlighted and we will share with our counterparts from around the world initiatives like Dubuque’s community goal of reducing greenhouse gases 50 percent by 2030.”

As one of the key initiatives launched at the UN Climate Summit in September of 2014 by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change Michael R. Bloomberg, the Compact of Mayors is the world’s largest collective effort to date by cities to tackle climate change, proactively prepare for its impacts, and regularly track and report progress. The Compact was activated under the leadership of the global city networks—C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40), ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) and the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)—and with support from UN-Habitat, the UN’s lead agency on urban issues. Dubuque committed to the Compact in October.

Recent research shows that if every local government in the world took action in accordance with the Compact of Mayors—particularly by targeting their building energy, transportation, and waste sectors—they could reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of cutting the world’s annual coal use by more than half.

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About the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative

The MRCTI was created to be a new, influential, and independent voice for the Mississippi River, dramatically increasing demand for effective river protection, restoration and management. The MRCTI addresses matters of concern, including: river water quality and habitat restoration; state coordination around river management and improvement; more impactful water conservation measures; sustainable economies; and celebration of the river culture and history. For more information, visit www.mrcti.org.

About the Compact of Mayors

The Compact of Mayors is a global coalition of mayors and city officials pledging to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions, enhance resilience to climate change, and to track their progress transparently. The Compact was launched in September of 2014 by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change, Michael R. Bloomberg. The Compact was activated under the leadership of the global city networks—C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40), ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) and the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)—and with support from UN-Habitat, the UN’s lead agency on urban issues. In the lead-up to the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, the unity and ambition among cities through the Compact of Mayors will inspire world leaders to follow suit and forge a global climate deal in Paris. Visit www.compactofmayors.org to learn more about the Compact of Mayors.