

# If Mayors Ruled the World

*Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities*

by Benjamin R. Barber

In the face of the most perilous challenges of our time – climate change, terrorism, poverty and trafficking of drugs, guns and people – the nations of the world seem paralysed. The problems are too big, too inter-dependent, too divisive for the nation-state. Is the nation-state, once democracy's best hope, today democratically dysfunctional? Obsolete? The answer, says Benjamin Barber in this highly provocative and original book, is yes. Cities and the mayors who run them can do and are doing a better job.

Barber cites the unique qualities cities worldwide share: pragmatism, civic trust, participation, indifference to borders and sovereignty, and a democratic penchant for networking, creativity, innovation and cooperation. He demonstrates how city mayors, singly and jointly, are responding to transnational problems more effectively than nation-states mired in ideological infighting and sovereign rivalries. Featuring profiles of a dozen mayors around

the world – courageous, eccentric or both at once – *If Mayors Ruled the World* presents a compelling new vision of governance for the coming century. Barber makes a persuasive case that the city is democracy's best hope in a globalising world, and great mayors are already proving that this is so.

**'Mayors around the world tend to be pragmatists and problem-solvers, not partisans. They get things done, often after national governments fall short. Ben Barber provides a provocative look at how cities can and do lead from the front in addressing the most pressing issues of our time.'**

– Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City; founder of Bloomberg LP

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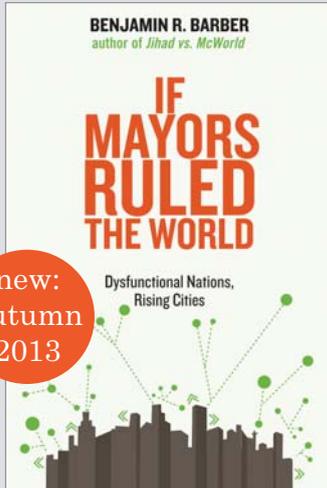
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*author of Jihad vs. McWorld*

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