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RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO MEETS WITH MAYOR OF FLORENCE DARIO NARDELLA

Mayor de Blasio: Okay, are we good? Yep, okay.

It is a great pleasure to welcome Mayor Dario Nardella of Florence, who – I can tell already – we share a lot of the same views of the world, and a lot of the same issues that are the focus of our work. I particularly appreciate that the mayor is a proud Florentine with a great city in history that's had such an impact, but his origins are in the region of Naples, the same region my family comes from, so I feel a special bond.

I want to thank all my colleagues from the Mayor's Office of International Affairs, and all of the mayor's team, and the team from the Italian Consulate we work with so often. We share a broad sense of the importance of creating – the importance of creating an inclusive city. We're dealing with the same set of issues – affordable housing, and how to improve mass transit – and it strikes that there's such great commonality among so many of the mayors of the world. But I have particularly found, with the leading mayors of Italy, a particular sense of urgency about creating an inclusive society, and about addressing the physical challenges of a modern society in a creative manner. It does not surprise me that Italians are particularly creative. That is something I think marks the hundreds and hundreds of years of Italian history, and you are following in that proud tradition.

Un momento in Italiano –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Italian]

With that, *benvenuto*. Welcome, Mayor Nardella.

Mayor Dario Nardella: *Grazie*.

Mayor: Please.

Mayor Nardella: Thank you. I would like to speak English, as –

Mayor: We occasionally – we occasionally speak English here. We will allow it. [Laughs]

Mayor Nardella: I hope, but my English not – it's not perfect.

Mayor: It's very good. It's very good.

Mayor Nardella: Anyway, I try to speak in your language. And I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for this opportunity, that you offered me, of meeting you in your city. And at same time, I want to tell you thanks for the great hospitality from many several New York institutions here during this three-days visit. I met many peoples, and I remember especially good meeting with New York University.

Mayor: Yes.

Mayor Nardella: Because we have, as I told you, we have in Florence many – more than 14 American universities, and the NYU is one of the best, more active, with many projects also linked to the Florentine and Italian community. And we decided to come here in New York to promote the culture and the economic opportunity investment for our city, but I believe in a new friendship between New York and Florence, based on the history, and on culture. I remember, to you and to our friends, [inaudible] Verrazano, who is a big Florentine geographer, first person from Europe who discovered the day of New York several years ago, and we have these two bridges named Verrazano in New York and Florence, as a symbol of our link and friendship. And we have, I think, many different fields for this collaboration – first of all, culture, but I think also industry, because we have in Florence many American industries, also from New York, and at the same time, we have many Italian industries very active in your – in your area. And also, of course, in social and multicultural activities, because our challenge is to – as a mayors – to offer to the world a new vision on new social model for the people. My former mayor from Florence used to say "Kingdom pass, but city remain." And I think we can improve these big networks between the free people as a mayor – mayors of city. And who – no, I'm sorry. And I think that New York and Florence could be play crucial roles in this challenge, because New York is the largest – the biggest global city, more than Florence – is the smallest global city in the world, and we have the same vision of the world. And so, thank you so much, *grazie molte*, for your very kind hospitality. And I believe in your collaboration, and your passion, and power, to improve this network between mayors in the world, and I'm waiting you on November in Florence, when we have this important meeting with mayors – I think four days before the visit of Pope Francesco in Florence.

Mayor: Ah, wonderful.

Mayor Nardella: And yeah, [inaudible] that pope could spend several minutes on the cities' challenges. I hope.

Mayor: Yes.

Mayor Nardella: So thank you again.

Mayor: Thank you.

Mayor Nardella: And *andiamo* [inaudible].

Mayor: *Andiamo. Grazie.*

Mayor Nardella: Grazie.

Mayor: [inaudible] Thank you. Thank you everyone. All right. [inaudible].

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