



GLOBAL TASKFORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS FOR POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA TOWARDS HABITAT III



Friends for
Sustainable Cities

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Sustainable Cities; Key to Sustainability and Development

CONTEXT

During the next few decades, cities will have to accommodate several billion more people at the same time as they contend with unprecedented resource constraints. Eradicating poverty in many cities will therefore pose an even greater challenge. Indeed, the report of the High Level Panel reminded us that 'cities are where the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost.' However, improving the quality of life for more people with less environmental impact and reducing inequalities through the provision of basic services is what cities are uniquely poised to achieve. The twin challenge and opportunity that urbanization represents underscores the need to target sustainable cities within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and its partners firmly believe that a new approach to cities is needed if we are to take advantage of the enormous potential for equity and sustainability that urban life provides.

The Local and Regional Governments organizations gathered under the Global Taskforce, UN Habitat and many other partners are advocating for the possibility of including a stand-alone goal on sustainable urbanization. Other reports have advocated for the treatment of urbanization as a "cross-cutting" issue and spread across separate goals for infrastructure, social services, and environmental sustainability. Such an approach would forfeit

urbanization's central role as a driver of sustainable development fail to mobilize cities and other sub-national governments as essential actors in this process.

Sustainability cannot be achieved without strong, accountable, capable and resourced local governments. Public participation in decision-making processes and a wider concept of public governance are essential components for stronger local institutions. This requires the international community to finally get into terms of recognizing and supporting local governments as the first sphere for achieving sustainable development and eradicating urban poverty, by creating opportunities for improved living conditions for all.

The purpose of this side event on sustainable cities is to inform Member States of the upcoming political discussions in the 7th Open Working Group (OWG7) on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements in January. Mindful of the need to adequately reflect urbanization in the post-2015 agenda, it will carry forward the findings of the 23 September UNGA Special Event on Sustainable Cities, whose report was delivered at the Inaugural Meeting of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). The event will also highlight the urban aspects of the various post-2015 reports, including the Issue Brief on Sustainable Cities (for OWG7). Lastly, the event will provide Member States with the views of experts and Mayors, the ultimate implementers of a goal on sustainable cities.



ORGANIZING PARTNERS

UN-Habitat is the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. It is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. UN-Habitat's programmes are designed to help policy-makers and local communities get to grips with the human settlements and urban issues and find workable, lasting solutions. The organization's mandate is outlined in the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, Habitat Agenda, Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, and Resolution 56/206. UN-Habitat led the drafting of the interagency Issue Brief on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for OWG7.

The Group of Friends for Sustainable Cities is a New York based group of 29 United Nations Permanent Missions co-chaired by Sweden and Singapore who have been leading the global dialogue on the critical role of the cities and the importance of sustainable urban development for achieving sustainable development, while promoting stronger United Nations coordination working with UN-Habitat, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank.

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for the Post-2015 Development Agenda towards Habitat III is a group formed by the main local government associations active internationally. The Global Taskforce was created in Africities, Dakar in December 2012 as a follow up of the group that successfully worked together to include local and territorial governments as important partners for development in the Rio +20 Declaration "The future we want" (art. 42) and at the initiative of the Mayor of Istanbul, Member of the High Level Panel for Post2015 and President of UCLG. Hosted by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the Taskforce also liaises with international partners, UN Agencies, donors and civil society organizations involved in local governance their partners at international level. The Taskforce aims at representing the worldwide municipal movement, which is celebrating its hundred years in 2013 and its membership covers most countries of the world.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

UCLG - World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments and its Thematic Committees

UNACLA - United Nations Advisory Committee for Local Authorities

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

AIMF - International Association of Francophone Mayors

ATO - Arab Towns Organization

CLGF - Commonwealth Local Government Forum

MERCOCIUDADES - Network of cities of Mercosur

Nrg4SD - Network of Regional Governments for Sustainability

FOGAR - Forum of Regions of UCLG

METROPOLIS - Metropolitan Section of UCLG

CEMR-CCRE - Council of European Municipalities and Regions

UCLG-ASPAC - Asia Pacific Section of UCLG

UCLG-Euro-Asia - Euro-Asian Section of UCLG

UCLG-MEWA - Middle East and West African Section of UCLG

UCLG-NORAM - North American Section of UCLG

FLACMA - Latin American Federation of Municipalities and Local Government Associations

UCLGA - UCLG Africa

CUF - Cités Unies France

FMDV - Global fund for cities development

PARTNERS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

UN-Habitat, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNCDF, United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), Cities Alliance, International Labour Organization (ILO), European Commission, Millennium Campaign, One United Nations Secretariat, Members of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, The Development Partners Working Group on Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG), SUEZ, Habitat for Humanity, Slum Dwellers International.

The initiative aims at being inclusive and other partners are welcome to join.