

Statement at the Ninth World Urban Forum

World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments

Kuala Lumpur, 8 February 2018

We, local and regional governments from across the globe, representing the populations of metropolises, peripheral cities, intermediary cities, regions, rural areas, and small municipalities, are gathered at the ***World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments***, convened by the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments and our local government associations, at the Ninth World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur,

1. **Reaffirm** the positioning of local governments as guardians of the Habitat III legacy together with civil society. In this regard we would like to recall the important joint commitments agreed upon in the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito and in particular:
 - a) The landmark inclusion of a reference to the **Right to the City** as part of a shared vision of “cities for all”, as well as the inclusion of many of its core components in the Quito document;
 - b) The commitment of Member States to ensure appropriate fiscal, political and administrative **decentralization** based on the principle of **subsidiarity**;
 - c) The commitment of Member States to **strengthen** effective **multi-level governance**, ensuring the involvement of subnational and local governments in decision-making and providing them with the necessary authority and resources to manage critical urban, metropolitan and territorial concerns;
 - d) The commitment of Member States to promote participatory policy and planning approaches rooted in new forms of **direct partnership** between civil society and governments at all levels;
 - e) The commitment of Member States to “take measures to **promote women’s full and effective participation and equal rights** in all fields and in leadership at all levels of decision-making, including in local governments”;
 - f) The recognition of the importance of planning and “an **integrated urban and territorial approach**” to encourage urban-rural interactions and connectivity;
 - g) The recognition of **culture and heritage** as an important dimension in achieving the goals of the agenda, notably in the context of citizens’ empowerment, access to urban services and ownership of regeneration and social cohesion strategies;
 - h) The commitment of Member States to **expand decentralized and city-to-city cooperation** to contribute to sustainable urban development.
 - i) The acknowledgement of the valuable inputs by all stakeholders and constituencies towards Habitat III and their key role in the implementation, monitoring and follow up of the agenda.

2. **Enhance** the political commitment for the implementation and effective achievement of the New Urban Agenda, fostering the commitment of Member-States in the above matters, as well as the commitments made by local and regional authorities to lead local action for global sustainability.

3. **Define** more clear and effective mechanisms and modalities to ensure local and regional governments full involvement in the monitoring and reporting process of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, through the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments as mentioned in article 169 of the Quito Declaration and the recognition of the importance of continuing to engage in the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda with sub-national and local governments associations.

In this light we recall the commitment of Member States of a 2-years process (October 2016-September 2018) that mandated the UN Secretary General and UN General Assembly to conduct consultations, dialogues and analysis and agree on the institutional framework of the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda.

4. **Reaffirm** the need to:
 - a) **Link up and integrate**, as much as possible, the **implementation of all global sustainability agendas** at global, national and local levels, including the SDGs, the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.
 - b) **Build a strong local governance** anchored on a new social contract putting the inhabitants at the core of decision making within the framework of a multi-level governance which is inclusive and complementary. This will only be possible if we agree to provide adequate competences and capacities to local and regional governments to respond in an accountable and transparent manner to an organized and participative civil society.
 - c) **Develop shared visions and strategies** regarding our cities and territories involving all stakeholders, including the private sector and going beyond the timeframe of political mandates, and the enhancement of the partnership with all stakeholders particularly through the Global Assembly of Partners.
 - d) **Improve**, dramatically, **municipal infrastructure finance** by creating an enabling environment at global and national levels with new public and private financing instruments, including a global fund for infrastructures, basic services and housing, city-responsive development banks, direct access for subnational governments to climate finance, increased powers for cities to control finance, and vertical alignment policy-planning among levels of government.
 - e) **Embark** on a new era of partnership in global governance and renew the relationship between local and regional governments and the UN to include structural consultations of our constituency, within the context of a UN reform and taking note of the UN General Assembly Resolution 71/256 and building on the existing instruments such as UNACLA and the Global Taskforce.
5. Finally, **we commit to continue contributing to and consolidating the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments** as the representative mechanism through which the local and regional governments' constituency provides political recommendations to the global agendas building on the technical expertise of all the local and regional government networks.

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