



UCLG CONGRESS
WORLD SUMMIT OF LOCAL
AND REGIONAL LEADERS



EurAsian-Pacific Position paper #UCLGCongress

Local Action For the People
Assembly Track

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019 ASSEMBLY TRACK ASIA-PACIFIC POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

The UCLG ASPAC Position paper highlights policy matters addressing the challenges of the institution and key issues in the region. UCLG ASPAC strategic direction is guided by the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 Manifesto that identified 5 priority areas: Promote good governance and effective democratic self-governments, improve quality of life of people through equal and adequate basic services, build resilient cities and local governments, sustainable green economy, and put global/regional agendas and national commitment into effective local implementation. Challenges include representation of local governments from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Pacific sub-region, women representation in statutory body and limited enabling environment and capacities of local governments. These are addressed through cooperation with members and international partners, work of UCLG ASPAC Committees and implementation of programmes related to global agenda.

2. Current context and state of challenges

UCLG ASPAC has faced some challenges in implementing the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Participation of members particularly from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in UCLG ASPAC's activities depends mostly on availability of sponsorship. Such dependency has caused uneven geographical distribution of participation. There is also less involvement given the low percentage of members from Pacific sub-region and their participation in UCLG ASPAC's activities.

As for low percentage of women in the membership of statutory body of UCLG ASPAC, there is a need for the organisation to reach more women leaders and councillors. Stigma on traditional/cultural beliefs that put them as incompetent or incapable has to be removed. Strategies to reach them and get them exposed need to be developed and implemented. LGAs, as members of UCLG ASPAC, can help ensure the outreach of women in local governments and conduct the inventory on their existence and set up the women committee in each LGA if required.

There are many external challenges that hinder the local governments to perform well. Limited enabling environment due to different level of decentralization in the countries, lack of capacity of local governments in planning and managing the cities/regions, shortage of resource to implement programmes and projects, are a few to mention. In spite of huge challenges, UCLG ASPAC sees opportunities in development of its members, through peer-to-peer learnings, technological transfer, solidarity in spirit and respect on culture differences that makes Asia and the Pacific a resilient society.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

Regional cooperation on Southeast Asia was set up in 2010. The standing committee has become a driving engine for local governments' collaboration in Southeast Asia. It plays crucial role in the development of the ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF). In 2018, AMF was officially accredited to ASEAN, marking a key milestone in the Standing Committee's advocacy for local governments at the regional level. Furthermore, peer-learning activities have been conducted and the beneficiary cities are those from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Malaysia, and Viet Nam.

Standing Committee of South and Sothwest Asia was established in 2013; the Standing Committee has fostered its engagement and support, also through the South Asian Association for Regional

Cooperation (SAARC). In 2018, UCLG ASPAC Congress endorsed the position paper on SAARC Collaboration with Local Governments in the South Asia. Major events held under the Standing Committee's support include: the International Conference on Local Governments, the 3rd and 4th South Asian Cities Summit. The advocacy and capacity-building activities are as follows: SDGs Localization Training, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop, Women Leadership, and Gender Equality Training. Enhancing support in the region, a plan to set up UCLG ASPAC Office in Islamabad has been developed.

Committee on 21st Century Maritime Cooperation was established in 2017 by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and Fuzhou Municipal People's Government. The Committee aims to promote cooperation on marine economy, marine conservation, waterway security, ports, and disaster prevention. In May 2018, the Committee convened its 1st General Assembly, which entailed a series of discussions and knowledge sharing events. Outcomes of the meeting contributed to the identification of the Committee's future activities, to be supported by UCLG ASPAC. At the 7th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the Committee reported on the implementation of the workplan which include: Seminar on Sister City Relationship and Local Government Cooperation, Forum on Application of Digital Technology in Marine Field, Workshop on Marine Ecology Conservation and Management, and the Launch of the Committee's official website and WeChat official account.

Cooperation on Belt Road Local Committee is led by Hangzhou City. The Committee was formed in 2017 to support the Belt and Road Initiative implementation, through its support for collaboration at the local level. Two major events were conducted in 2018 namely: E-Commerce Training Workshop and the BRLC Overseas Chinese New Media Forum. Also in 2018, the Committee organized a Computing Conference Observation. Under the theme "Empower Digital China," the conference brought together world's leading experts to discuss the latest trends on digital technology and how it can enhance the cities and quality of life.

Committee on Culture was established in 2015 by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province. The Committee has been active in promoting culture as one of the pillars of sustainable development. Several activities have been conducted to foster cultural networks and exchanges, with a particular focus on youth. Major events conducted under the Committee's auspices are: 1st Collaborative Culture in Local Planning (2016), 2nd UCLG Culture Summit (2017), and UCLG Global Youth Culture Forum (2018). Related with culture and heritage as tangible action, public space is one of important aspect for the people. Several milestones have been achieved in terms of public space. A key element is the use of participatory approach in the design process to allow the community to take ownership of the public space. In collaboration with UN-Habitat, UCLG ASPAC has assisted cities to be inclusive through the establishment and/or revitalisation of public spaces within Asia-Pacific sub-region, to, among many, promote income, investment and wealth creation, enhance environmental sustainability, promote equity and social inclusion, generate citizen involvement, and tools for gender and age-friendly cities. The Gedung Wayang Orang Sriwedari (Traditional Javanese Opera Building) in Surakarta was revitalized in 2017. "Cak Markeso" Community Culture Center in Surabaya was launched in July 2018.

Standing Committee of Women in Local Government was established with the aim of strengthening women participation and representation in local governments. The Standing Committee has been advocating for gender equality, while conducting activities to promote the integration of gender perspectives in local development. During the 6th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the Standing Committee called on local governments to establish a unit specifically focusing women and gender issues. During the 7th UCLG ASPAC Congress, the outcomes of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Training, conducted by the All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIIILSG) with UCLG ASPAC's support, were presented. During the Executive Bureau Meeting in Yiwu, China in May 2019, Guangzhou City Government has proposed to lead the programme on building a reliable maternal and child care system, child stunting and death rate in

Asia Pacific. The proposed programme will be part of Committee and it focuses on prenatal health care: including intrauterine growth retardation caused by malnutrition during pregnancy, inadequate implementation of regular maternity examinations during pregnancy, the management of child health system: including congenital diseases, such as congenital thyroid insufficiency at birth.

Strengthening the foundations of Resilience in Asia Pacific, UCLG ASPAC has prioritised resilience and continuously fostered collaboration with various stakeholders. Post 2015 and localising the global agenda 2030, UCLG ASPAC partnered with UNISDR (now DRR) to promote Disaster Risk Reduction and the Making Cities Resilient Campaign in 50 Asian cities from five most prone disaster countries. Achieving Target e is being pursued.

In partnership with various institutions, UCLG ASPAC has been implementing programmes and projects that have made significant contributions to the improvement of the environment and governance of cities and local governments across the region. These are the pro-poor and sustainable solid waste management project, Municipal Sanitation Policy Advocacy Project, Global Covenant of Mayors on Energy and Climate Change in which UCLG ASPAC serves as its Secretariat for SEA Countries.

Converting organic waste into energy is now possible through the Intermediate Resource Recovery Center launched in Jambi in January 2018 and in Malang on April 2018. The facilities were developed under the Pro-Poor and Sustainable Solid Waste Management Project in partnership with UNESCAP. The Municipal Sanitation Policy Advocacy Project is being implemented to strengthen and capacitate local government associations. To date, 10 pilot municipalities have already been selected. This project is in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Local governments are now taking voluntary actions to combat climate change through the Global Covenant of Mayors on Energy and Climate Change (GCoM). Cities are provided with training and technical assistance as well as platform for common reporting framework on the greenhouse gases (GHG) inventory and development of Climate Action Plan. Training on "Setting Emission Reduction Target and Development of Climate Action Plan" has been implemented in 5 cities (Kuala Lumpur, Gwangju, Jakarta, Surabaya, Hanoi) within 2018.

Localise SDGs in Indonesia and Pakistan aims to strengthen LGs and LGAs capacities in localising the SDGs. To date, in Indonesia, 13 local trainings on SDGs have been conducted where 524 local government officers and local stakeholders benefitted. Localising SDGs is being implemented in collaboration with several institutions namely Bappenas, Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), Public Administration Institute (Lembaga Administrasi Negara), GIZ, SMERU Research Institute, Center for Indonesia's Strategic Development Initiatives (CISDI), and Philantrophy Indonesia. Localise SDGs is funded by the European Union (EU).

UCLG ASPAC, in partnership with Association for Development of Local Governments (ADLG) and Local Council Associations (LCA) of Balochistan and Sindh and support from European Union (EU), is implementing the LEAD for SDGs Localization in Pakistan Program (2019-23). LEAD for SDGs builds on the commitment of the Government of Pakistan through the SDGs National Framework. It aims to contribute to achievement of SDGs through local governance in the Provinces of Balochistan and Sindh. The program shall closely work with the government institutions at all levels and LCAs to plan, implement and monitor SDGs at the local level.

The programme's overall objective is to contribute to the achievement of SDGs through effective local governance in Pakistan. This will be achieved through fostering an enabling environment for mainstreaming SDGs in local development processes through effective leadership and policy advocacy, supported by evidence-based research, capacity building and improved coordination, and piloting innovative approaches for SDGs localization.

4. Policy strategies and tools

UCLG ASPAC has been exploring the possibility to hold a statutory meeting in the Pacific sub-region. This will support the efforts to increase the presence of LGs and LGAs from this sub-region within the UCLG ASPAC membership. Support for members of LDCs currently rely on voluntary sponsorships provided by members of developed countries facilitated by and small funding available in UCLG ASPAC.

The Standing Committee of Women in Local Government developed its charter to revitalise its efforts to increase women representation in the statutory body and strengthen its governance structure within UCLG ASPAC. More programmes and tangible results are expected with the new leadership.

As Secretariat of the Asia-Pacific Local Government Coordinating Body (APLG) set up with the facilitation of UNESCAP, UCLG ASPAC is able to have a wider reach that extends beyond its own membership by cooperating with development partners in the region such as CityNet, ICLEI, C40, IGES, and UN bodies. Consultation with LGs and LGAs and their representation in regional forums are facilitated through the APLG.

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms

ASEAN

UCLG ASPAC hosts the ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF) secretariat. AMF has received accreditation from ASEAN as the first local governments network affiliated entity in 2018. It was originally conceived in 2011 when visionary mayors in Southeast Asia met for the first time in Surabaya, Indonesia, to demonstrate the importance of local contributions to ASEAN's regional integration. The Forum has gained prominence since 2015, with successive AMF meetings to discuss the ASEAN Community building and how mayors can help accelerate its progress and benefits for citizens. The role of local governments has been enhanced due to the wide recognition that at least 60 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be achieved without actions at the local level.

ASEAN is intensifying its collective efforts to promote sustainable development and address the urban challenges. In 2017, a report on Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Framework for Action, was published in partnership with UN ESCAP. The report was among the first initiatives to enhance complementarities between regional and global efforts to achieve the SDGs. It identifies five priority areas for ASEAN's actions: 1) poverty eradication; 2) infrastructure and connectivity; 3) sustainable management of natural resources; 4) sustainable production and consumption, and 5) resilience.

SAARC

The UCLG ASPAC - SSW sub-Region office was established in 2017. One of the main objectives behind constituting the SSW Standing Committee was to establish close collaboration among the members and ensure collaboration with SAARC secretariat to muster political and programme support for the Local Governments in the SAR. In one of the SSW Standing Committees on 16 August 2017 in Kathmandu, Nepal, the committee members invited a representative of SAARC Secretariat and discussed SAARC's mandate and linking it with the local governments at country and regional level, and taking up the local government sector as a priority area of interest of SAARC. The committee members outlined the action plan, and roles of local governments and local government associations with their respective country's governments to accelerating SAARC cooperation and support to put the local governments' issues on priority in the SAARC mandate.

Therefore, to achieve this strategic objective, the members of UCLG ASPAC in South Asia region agreed to adopt the following positions:

- a. To support UCLG ASPAC advocacy program within the region through formulation of new activities in the field of localizing global development agenda, and to enhance the existing activities and cooperation.
- b. To support UCLG ASPAC Secretariat in identify ways and methods toward the establishment of regional local government association as an SAARC recognised bodies.
- c. To encourage UCLG ASPAC Secretariat to be more actively involved in SAARC activities in order to highlight the importance role of local government in the SAR.

Note: One of the eight (8) members of SAARC is Afganistan. Although the Country is outside the geographical coverage of ASPAC, UCLG ASPAC will find its way to engage them in the Committee. Discussion has been made with UCLG MEWA on having Afganistan's participation in the SAARC's related activities.

6. Key recommendations and actions by the international local and regional governments movement

- a. Accelerate localisation of SDGs and promotion of multi-stakeholder partnership including the development of VLR in committed cities and local governments.
- b. Support the achievement of target E of Sendai Framework for DRR and increase the number of cities joining the Making Cities Resilient Campaign.
- c. Influence GCoM members to have policy changes in terms of climate resilience, urban governance, disaster risk management and inclusiveness, by embedding dialogue within the policy-making activities, and the local governments; and promote a common reporting framework on cities emission inventory.
- d. Strengthen the advocacy's strategies and activities through APLG and continually promote the importance of good enabling environment for cities and local governments in the region.

Related to making tangible impact in the ground:

- e. Influence national and local governments in Nepal and Bangladesh to make a National Sanitation Policy and Local Strategies, to establish a Task Committee at the national level, and Local Task Forces in committed LG pilot municipalities. LG's sanitation strategy programmes will be formed to provide the proper framework for implementation and enforcement.
- f. Replicate the waste to energy pilot programme in Indonesia and beyond to have innovative solution not only for the sanitation and for environmental aspect but also reducing local government budget for solid waste treatment and transportation.
- g. Promote public space and its expansion in the region.

UCLG WORLD CONGRESS 2019

ASSEMBLY TRACK

EURASIAN POSITION PAPER

1. Key messages

The efficient implementation of citizens' rights underlies UCLG-Eurasia's goals. Being close to people, local governments are most adapted to the use of resources to meet needs of the population.

The key issues in the Eurasian region are as follows:

- To shape a common vision of Eurasian local governments and protect interests of local self-government in the Eurasian region at the international level;
- To ensure efficient political representation of Eurasian local governments at the international level and at the global table;
- To cooperate with national governments for the purpose of decentralization, multilevel governance, engagement of local governments and localization of the SDGs;
- To develop policies, programs and initiatives within the framework of UCLG's goals, search for appropriate means of their achievement;
- To expand the membership of the organization in order to strengthen the political impact of UCLG and its financial independence;
- To ensure gender and national equality, combating all forms of unlawful discrimination in accordance with the international law;
- To promote preservation of culture and heritage in the Eurasian region. To continue cooperating with the Organization of World Heritage Cities;
- To enhance the cities' international activity by conducting the Research on Cities' International Activity, disseminating the Handbook of International Terms, and organizing learning workshops, etc.;
- To contribute to the localization of the SDGs by organizing learning workshops and awareness raising campaigns;
- To be a learning network;
- To enhance the capacity of UCLG for implementation of projects useful for cities by receiving financing from business;
- To establish partnerships with economic platforms of the Eurasian region and to represent UCLG at economic sites;
- To advocate gender equality, peace, city diplomacy, preservation of culture, right to the city, inclusion, financial decentralization and prevention of risks.
- To identify and disseminate best practices of local governments in the main languages of regional sections;
- To facilitate an understanding of the lexis of the international municipal movement by disseminating adapted information in the main languages of regional sections;
- To foster unity and strengthening of the UCLG World Organization by means of collaboration of sections and implementation of joint projects;
- To contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other international agreements and programs in cities of the Eurasia section.

2. Current context and state of challenges

A serious challenge for us is **the high centralization** in such countries as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Azerbaijan. Mayors cannot decide on participation in activities of international organizations or events. They need to obtain permission from the national government.

Another problem is **incomprehension of the necessity to develop international relations and participate in global initiatives**. “*How can I spend my time and budget money on participation in international events whereas I do not know how to find money for road or buildings restoration?*”. So, **lack of finances** is also a significant problem that poses obstacles for participation in events or hosting them.

We have problems with **collecting membership fees** as well. Not all members pay these fees conscientiously. Many small cities simply do not have money in the city budget for this type of expenditure, and, at the same time, these cities do not seek to leave the organization, and their representatives actively participate in UCLG-Eurasia’s activities.

Also, as a disadvantage in the whole UCLG’s work, we see that there is **plenty of ‘water’** in documents and speeches. Many of speakers say many beautiful words about ‘the importance of important things’, but they say nothing useful. It is too difficult to listen to long boring and similar to each other speeches. Participants come to get new information on the ways of addressing issues, but they are told only about the importance of solving these problems, nothing concrete. There are also difficulties with understanding of documents. Sometimes we read long documents, but, after reading, the questions remain: ‘What has exactly been done?’, ‘What benefits can it bring to my city?’, ‘What should I do to contribute to this action?’

There are some **problems with communications**. The first problem ‘**lack of English versions of websites and lack of visible contacts in English**’ causes difficulties in establishing cooperation and searching for information. For example, we cannot monitor news of the city of Ulaanbaatar as its website is in the Mongolian language only. This problem is also typical for Asia–Pacific. Often we are not able to find information on websites of China, India, Indonesia, etc.

Absence of departments responsible for international relations in many cities causes difficulties with communication, as every time we send some information and wait for a response, we have to find to whom it was entrusted.

And, of course, it should be noted that often participation of Eurasian representatives is difficult because of the language. Most of local leaders **do not speak English or are not fluent in it**. UCLG-Eurasia is not able to organize translation during all events of UCLG and its partners. So, often we send invitations only to those mayors, who speak English. Moreover, UCLG-Eurasia also faces the problem of translation of the large volume of texts into Russian. Documents related to statutory events of the World Organization are sent to sections one week prior to an event. Not always translation can be made in full and timely.

An important challenge for us **is to attract sponsors** for UCLG-Eurasia’s activities and implementation of urban projects.

3. Key policy priorities in the following areas

Our priorities in this field within the framework of UCLG’s activities are as follows:

- To provide local and regional leaders with the opportunity to be elected to the UCLG’s consultation mechanisms: **Policy councils and committees**;

- To ensure participation of officials of local and regional governments in UCLG's consultation mechanisms: working groups, communities of practice and fora.

I. Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy: Keys to Sustainable Development and Peace.

UCLG-Eurasia has the following key priorities in this area:

- 1) Preservation of culture and heritage.** In this sphere UCLG-Eurasia has been closely cooperating with the Organization of World Heritage Cities since 2004. We have organized 9 joint regional conferences within this period.

We pay great attention to **raising children in the spirit of cultural heritage preservation**. For this purpose, we organized children's drawing competitions (in 2017 and 2019) and a video competition (in 2018) dedicated to the theme 'Heritage of My City'. All drawings were presented during the international conferences of Eurasia World Heritage Cities in different years.

The next children's drawing competition will start in January 2020 and will be dedicated to the theme of the national costume. We successfully organized the **carnival of national costumes** in 2008 in Indonesia. We plan to repeat this experience in Yakutsk in June 2020. All participants of X International Conference of Eurasia World Heritage Cities should put on their national dress.

We have a joint **project** with OWHC-Eurasia called '**Heritage of Eurasia**'. The main idea is that one city paints on front facades of a city building the image of the heritage of another city. Within the framework of the Heritage of Eurasia project the world heritage of the city of Derbent– Citadel Naryn-Kala- was painted on one of the buildings of Safranbolu (Turkey), and the historical center of Safranbolu was depicted on the walls of Derbent. In April 2019, the images of the heritage of Kazan and Bolgar appeared in the city of Denpasar, the capital of the island of Bali (Indonesia). The heritage of Bali was depicted on the walls of Bolgar. This project **has contributed to the development of international relations, intermunicipal cooperation and city diplomacy**.

- 2) UCLG-Eurasia pays great attention to city diplomacy.** Especially it is relevant in view of political conflicts between Russia and Georgia, Russia and Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan. **Our priority is to promote peace between countries by establishing a dialogue and friendship between cities.**

As facilitator of peace policy, UCLG-Eurasia works equally with each country in the region. Mayors in the countries that are in conflict sit at the same table and communicate peacefully in the frames of our events. Ilсур Metshin, President of UCLG-Eurasia, calls for bottom-up peace policy and city cooperation regardless of the state policy in his speeches. Our priority is to facilitate peace between countries by establishing a dialogue and friendship between cities.

Advocating city diplomacy, we organize the International Forum of Civil Diplomacy. It is held every year on 31 October (World Cities Day) in the city of Volgograd. Traditionally, the forum is dedicated to the World Cities Day (October 31). The venue of the event is the hero city of Volgograd, which together with British Coventry in 1944 became the founder of the international movement of twin cities. To date, 5 forums have been organized, and the 6th one will be held on 31 October 2019. Delegates from Eurasia, Europe, Africa, North America will gather to discuss how cities can contribute to strengthening peace, as well as to determine prospects for international relations.

UCLG-Eurasia supports the International Peace Forum in Novosibirsk dedicated to public democracy, engagement of the youth, international cooperation and intercultural dialogue. The 4th forum has been organized this year.

UCLG-Eurasia promotes sister-city cooperation as well. Thanks to UCLG-Eurasia, such cities as Safranbolu and Yelabuga, Bavly and Comrat, Volgograd and Izmir, Bolgar and Safranbolu, Aktau and Samsun, Kazan and Guangzhou, Lijiang, Harrare, Ankara, Paris have agreed on cooperation.

We support the UCLG Peace Prize and advocate this initiative in the Eurasian region. Friendship and cooperation with regional sections of UCLG is also our priority. We have signed agreements on cooperation with all regional sections of UCLG. We cooperate closely with MEWA, ASPAC and FLACMA.

II. Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing

One of the areas of UCLG-Eurasia's activities is to establish partnerships with economic platforms of the Eurasian region and to represent UCLG at economic sites, as well as to seek business partners that can finance projects on sustainable development in Eurasian cities.

We are working on establishing cooperation with national governments in order to convey them an understanding of necessity of cities' participation in international discussions and empowerment of local governments. The aim of discussions with national governments is to establish multilevel governance and financial decentralization.

III. Right to the City and Inclusive Territories

Identification of best practices in this field and their dissemination among members of the section is a UCLG-Eurasia's priority.

UCLG-Eurasia contributes to the Right to the City by organizing conferences:

On the initiative of Aisen Nikolaev, Vice-President of UCLG, Yakutsk Municipality together with UCLG-Eurasia organizes the biennial International Conference 'Cities and People'. The conference is held with active engagement of local governments, civil society and the youth. It aims to involve people in the decision making process on sustainable development.

We pay attention to the involvement of the youth in municipal governing. For this purpose, we promote the Day of an Understudy project of Astrakhan Municipality. Within the framework of this project, students take part in city managing for a day. They visit official meetings and take part in different committees. In such a way, the city administration provides young people with an opportunity to have an internship in local government.

Meetings with citizens and city's leadership are held in the city of Nizhnekamsk in the format of open talk. Citizens make suggestions for improving life in neighborhoods and in the city as a whole.

IV. Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis.

The UCLG-Eurasia's priorities in this field are the following:

- To study and disseminate best practices;
- To call for local governments to provide assistance for cities suffering from disasters and crisis;
- To promote implementation of the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement and other programs and agreements contributing to cities' resilience in the region;
- To engage Eurasian cities in the work of the Policy Council 'Safer, Resilient and Sustainable Cities Capable of Facing Crisis'.

In April 2019, IX International Conference on 'Resilient Heritage and Tourism' was organized by UCLG-Eurasia in the capital of Bali Denpasar city. During the conference the following issues were discussed: how to protect the world heritage from climate problems, how to save tourist attractiveness of the cities with extreme weather conditions, and what contribution local leaders can make into implementing SDG #13 'Climate Actions'.

4. Policy strategies and tools

The strategy of UCLG-Eurasia includes the following directions:

- Cooperation with local and regional governments;
- Cooperation with national associations;
- Cooperation with UCLG and its sections;
- Cooperation with international organizations;
- Cooperation with business;
- Cooperation with national governments.

We are working on establishing **cooperation with central governments to influence high centralization**. It is important that cities could gain national governments' confidence concerning UCLG's activities. This is necessary in order to explain the key role of local governments in SDGs implementation to national governments. We have started from Russia: we have reached agreement with the Russian Government on UCLG-Eurasia's participation in preparing of the Voluntary National Review for 2020. IIsur Metshin, President of UCLG-Eurasia, and Rasikh Sagitov, Secretary General, are members of working groups on SDG5, SDG9, SDG11, SDG13, and SDG17.

As for other countries in the region, we plan to start a series of meetings with national governments in 2020. Its objective is to receive support (including financial) of national and regional governments concerning participation of Eurasian cities in UCLG's activities, as well as in UCLG world congresses, the World Urban Forum, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the COP Climate Conferences and other global events.

The main areas in the frames of **cooperation with national associations** are the following:

- To organize trainings on SDGs during meetings of national associations of local governments;
- To receive results of the work, projects and recommendations from national associations;
- To develop joint projects for the benefit of cities and apply for grants to implement them.

Cooperation with the United Nations, European Commission and the Eurasian Economic Union for sustainable development of Eurasian local authorities is an important area of our activities.

The main activity of UCLG-Eurasia is cooperation with other sections. Agreements on cooperation have been signed with ASPAC, MEWA, FLACMA, Africa and Europe. The key priority of the Eurasia section aimed at fostering unity and strengthening of UCLG consists in participation in events of other sections and implementation of joint projects.

The UCLG-Eurasia's strategy includes such important item as shaping of the common vision of Eurasian local governments, that contains needs and opinion of citizens and representatives of local governments in the region, as well as informing political representatives of the region about it.

To solve the problem of incomprehension of the necessity to develop international relations and participate in global initiatives we have designed the Handbook of International Terms. It aims to explain the meaning of different international commitments, agreements, events, names of organizations and others.

The Research on Cities International Activities also aims to analyze local governments' work towards development of international relations. This will allow to define the most widespread methods of increasing international awareness. It is important that on the basis of the received data the Rating of Cities' International Activity is compiled. Its objective is to stimulate cities to develop international relations and to define best practice in this sphere. The experience of the leader of the rating will be analyzed and presented as a successful practice. Such groups of criteria as business activity of cities, international activity of the population, international organizations and institutions, international events, and infrastructure are analyzed in the research. Each group of criteria consists of indicators that most fully reflect the content of the criterion. Results of the current research will be presented during the UCLG Congress in Durban

Moreover, we plan to organize the **UCLG-Eurasia Retreat in March 2020**, where we will explain benefits of participation in the international agenda and SDGs implementation. We have an idea to invite representatives of city press offices to the Retreat as well. We plan to train them in SDGs, so that they could classify news on municipal websites by different SDGs. This will contribute to awareness-raising of SDGs among citizens, as well as to understanding what municipalities do for SDGs implementation. The second part of the training for press offices will be dedicated to municipal websites, especially their English versions. This will contribute to addressing the issue of **'lack of English versions of websites and lack of visible contacts in English'**.

Once a quarter, UCLG-Eurasia publishes **The Eurasia Local Governments magazine for local and regional leaders**. It is an important element of sharing experience. Since 2019 it has included not only news and best practices of cities, but information on the SDGs as well. Each magazine is dedicated to one of the SDGs and includes explanation of the concrete SDG, as well as the best municipal practice in this field.

We translate all UCLG's documents into Russian and organize simultaneous translation during main meetings of UCLG. It will be great if the UCLG website has the Russian version. We have already translated main parts of the uclg.org, and we are ready to make regular translation of news.

5. Links with global agendas and continental mechanisms

To promote achievement of the SDGs, implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Addis-Ababa Action Agenda in cities of the Eurasia section;

To provide heads of local governments with the opportunity to be elected to the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA);

To ensure the possibility for political representatives of UCLG-Eurasia to deliver a speech during the World Urban Forum (WUF).

To ensure political representation of local governments of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine **at the global table** and to demonstrate their active involvement in the international municipal development and democracy development processes;

UCLG-Eurasia attaches great importance to the **Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**. UCLG-Eurasia continues to actively participate in preparing of the Voluntary National Review of the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which is being prepared in Russia by 2020. Ilсур Metshin, the President of UCLG-Eurasia, and Rasikh Sagitov, Secretary General of UCLG-Eurasia, work on the Report as members of the thematic working groups on SDG5, SDG9, SDG11, SDG13, SDG17.

UCLG-Eurasia has initiated Partnership for SDGs localization that involves conducting of **short two-hour seminars on the SDGs during the meetings of associations of local governments**. The goal of the project is to give local leaders a practical understanding of the SDGs and teach them how to align daily work of local authorities with the SDGs. Awareness of the SDGs will be a base for more local actions and will facilitate their systematization. To date, negotiations with partners are ongoing, and a calendar of seminars is being formed. The first seminar will be held on 31 October 2019 in Yekaterinburg (Russia) during the World Cities Day that is organized by UN-Habitat. We plan to organize 10 seminars and provide training for about 200-300 local leaders in 2020.

It is important that these seminars do not require significant financial and organizational resources, as they will be arranged on the basis of already organized events of partners. So, we do not need

to invite participants and to pay for a venue, accommodation, meals, etc. We just include our seminar to the program of a partner.

It is planned to conduct the **Campaign 'My City Implements the SDGs'**. During 2020 all participants of the campaign should post a banner on their websites and mark news with information to which SDG this business contributes.

Many Eurasian cities have integrated the SDGs into their city development strategies. Our priorities are the following:

- To receive relevant information on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals from heads of local and regional governments of Eurasia, systematize it and present at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- To organize participation of political representatives of the Eurasian region in discussions within the framework of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York.
- To ensure participation of heads of local governments of the Eurasian region in the activities of the Global Taskforce and meetings of the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments.

6. Key recommendations and actions by the international local and regional governments movement

Recommendations on improving UCLG's work:

- 1) To strengthen work in countries with the high level of centralization;
- 2) When developing programs and documents, as well as during organization of events, to use all UN languages;
- 3) To develop concrete practical recommendations on each of the SDGs: What can a city do? What projects can it implement on his own in order to make his contribution to the SDGs? It should be in the form of a clear step-by-step instruction.
- 4) To cooperate with business to reinforce financial independence and implement projects for the benefit of cities;
- 5) To identify clear criteria for speakers' addresses so that they contain only specific information without 'the importance of important things';
- 6) To cooperate with civic organizations for efficient solution of problems of urban activities;
- 7) To act in the interests of cities and their people regardless political relations between countries;

To establish the system of distant learning for local and regional leaders (available in all languages of UCLG member countries). The program should include such areas as development of international relations, solution of global problems and localization of the SDGs, best practice in addressing daily urban issues.

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