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**MESSAGE TO MEETING OF THE GLOBAL TASK FORCE
OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS
FOR THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
New York, 28 May 2013**

*Delivered by Mr. Shamshad Akhtar,
Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs*

I send warm greetings to all those gathered for the meeting of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

It is often said that, like all politics, all development is ultimately local. As the world strives for a more sustainable path in the years ahead, particularly beyond 2015, local voices and local action will be crucial elements in our quest.

That is why I welcome the creation of the Global task force of local and regional governments. The task force will provide important inputs for post-2015 development planning and for efforts to articulate a set of goals for sustainable development. It will also help us prepare for the 3rd UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III, scheduled to take place in 2016.

As these processes unfold, it is crucial to preserve and nurture political spaces where local authorities can have an impact on decision-making at the global level.

Local authorities have significantly increased their engagement in global processes. The inputs of local leaders and municipal planners have never been more critical to guiding Member States toward embracing policies that achieve green, sustainable and inclusive cities. Local authorities are a critical group of stakeholders in sustainable development, as demonstrated at last year's Rio+20 Conference.

I also wish to emphasize the importance of partnerships and cooperation: among cities and communities, the public and private sectors and civil society, and within the United Nations system.

The post-2015 process is an opportunity to usher in a new era in international development – one that will eradicate extreme poverty and lead us to a world of prosperity, sustainability and dignity for all. I look forward to working with you in that effort even as we accelerate our work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

I wish you a successful meeting.