ALL SDGs ARE LOCAL: TOWARDS AN ACTION AGENDA IN HABITAT III
NEW YORK 27 SEPTEMBER 2015

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT NETWORKS GATHERED AROUND THE GLOBAL TASKFORCE
We, Mayors of regional governments and representatives of our associations gathered in New York, celebrate the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the acknowledgement of the role that cities and sub-national governments need to play in all its dimensions, particularly Goal 11 and Goal 16.

We want to share with you, the citizens we serve, the international community, our partners and our governments, the following commitments and convictions:

Territories are where livelihoods are guaranteed
We emphasize that cities and territories are where women and men, girls and boys, live, where they work to create their livelihoods and where dreams are made. They are where poverty and inequalities are tackled, where health and education services are provided, where ecosystems are protected, and human rights must be guaranteed.

The achievement of all SDGs requires local action
We, local and regional leaders the world round, are convinced that, by giving specific attention to the localization of all goals, particularly to sustainable urbanization in SDG 11 and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions under SDG 16, the new agenda is triggering the type of transformation in our joint action that will lead to the world we want.

All the SDGs have a local dimension that is essential to their achievement. We, as political leaders, with a direct mandate from citizens, have a responsibility to contribute to the achievement of all of the SDGs.

The 2030 Agenda is a product of unprecedented global consultation and dialogue, in which local and regional governments have actively participated. Acknowledging the vital role of local and regional governments in the achievement of the Agenda will enable us to mobilize local stakeholders and to create new partnerships, based on a common understanding of our shared humanity.

Local governments and their associations need to be strengthened to engage in the implementation process, both in the definition and implementation. All local governments need to have the means and the capacity to improve administration, anticipate demands, plan and implement solutions. Peer-to-peer review among local governments has proven to be a very effective way of achieving strengthened local governments. The challenges faced are universal and need to be addressed together by all territories big and small and in all countries, including small island developing states (SIDS).

Citizens in the driver’s seat
We will need to ensure that citizens are involved in the decisions that affect their future. “Effective, accountable and transparent institutions” and “responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels” require a clear institutional framework, reinforced management and planning capacities, participatory mechanisms and regular financial negotiations between all levels of government and local communities to define priorities and move to action. Subsidiarity must be promoted as a vehicle to strengthen democracy and territorial cohesion in strong partnership with civil society and other stakeholders, including the private sector.

No success without a fairer distribution of resources and investment
We know that massive public and private investments will be necessary to improve resilient infrastructures and access to basic services in cities and territories, address inequalities, support local economies, promote culture as driver of development, cope with the impact of climate change, and build the cities that will host 2.5 billion new urban residents over the next three decades, mostly in developing countries. The “city must be able to better finance the city” through the mobilization of endogenous resources and improved access to financing.

This includes the need for all residents, including local and international businesses paying their fair share of national and local taxes. This includes also access for local governments to new financing mechanisms, in partnership with private sector and local communities. However, public financing will continue to play a critical...
Solidarity, dignity and peace

We believe the 2030 Agenda should enable individuals to live and be what they choose, and encourage them to be mindful of the consequences of their actions and their responsibility towards the commons. This will only be possible if we bridge the distance between citizens and their governments, building trust between people and government, through a dialogue that leads to tolerance, understanding and sustainable peace.

From goals to actions; localizing the agenda

We need to transform the 2030 Agendas into policies and concrete actions at local level. We will tirelessly work to improve the management of our territories, and we will continue innovating and learning from one another. This will also be critical in the follow-up and review process to the 2030 Agenda, and the envisaged review of progress at sub-national level. We will bring the lessons we have learned to the Climate Negotiations in COP 21 and to the Habitat III Conference in Quito, through the Second World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments.

Local and regional government leaders gathered in New York today, are fully committed to the success of the 2030 Agenda and, call for a new Global Governance Architecture under a renewed United Nations System with enhanced participation of stakeholders in general, and the recognition of local and regional governments as governmental stakeholders in particular.