



GLOBAL TASKFORCE

OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

FOR POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

TOWARDS HABITAT III

New York Communiqué, May 2014

Towards achieving Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements and localizing the Post-2015 Agenda

The members of the Global Taskforce gathered at the UN Headquarters on the occasion of the Integration Segment of ECOSOC 2014

Local and regional government organizations, representing sub-national governmental stakeholders, and collaborating in the Global Taskforce for Post-2015 Development Agenda and Towards Habitat III, we welcome the mandate given to the Economic and Social Council to promote the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and its decision to dedicate its first Integration Segment to Sustainable Urbanization. This is a strong acknowledgement of the important role that local urban and territorial governance will have in the sustainability agenda.

Members of the Global Taskforce confirm their willingness to contribute to the definition, implementation and monitoring of the global Post-2015 agenda and of local SDG targets, as well as to shape societies from the bottom up, and to make them resilient and ready to tackle the challenges of our time.

Local and regional leaders the world round, together with key partners of civil society, the private sector and the international community, are convinced that by giving specific attention to sustainable urbanization in the new agenda we will be triggering the type of transformation that will create the basis to integrate economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions to address inequalities, prosperity, and sustainability. Our campaign advocating for a stand-alone goal on urbanization has mobilized thousands around the world and it is raising awareness of our membership of the post-2015 process.

Moreover, the Members of the Global Taskforce confirm their belief that a new partnership must be erected based on a common understanding of our shared humanity, based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. The challenges faced are universal and need to be addressed together by all countries, including small island developing states (SIDS).

Sound local governance as the basis for sustainability

Urban strategic planning and resilient basic infrastructures for inclusive cities

Local and sub-national authorities need to be deeply involved in the development agenda if we are to respond to the needs of communities. Urban planning and resilient basic infrastructures are key instruments to promote less segmented, more inclusive cities, with universal quality basic services, capable of mitigating and adapting to climate change and disasters and capable to widen the freedoms of their inhabitants. Urban management and governance will need to be a core focus to meet the challenges of growing numbers of urban dwellers and improving the conditions of slum dwellers.

Multilevel governance and subsidiarity for more cohesive cities and territories

Multi-level and multi-partnership governance will be needed to develop and implement such policies. Ensuring that citizens are involved in decisions that will affect their future by, among other solutions, empowering the level of government closest to them, will be instrumental in the Post-2015 agenda. Furthermore strong partnerships with civil society and private sector will also be instrumental.

Subsidiarity must be promoted as a vehicle to strengthen democracy and territorial cohesion. An “enabling environment”, that is, adequate institutional frameworks, reinforced management capacities and, above all, sub-national resources must be ensured for local authorities to be able to take on their responsibilities.

Accountability and participation: putting people first

Bridging the distance between the citizens and their governments, building dialogue that will lead to tolerance, understanding and sustainable peace, and constructing societies based on equality and accountability from the bottom up, will be crucial milestones for any development agenda.

The future we want should enable individuals "to live and be what they choose", mindful of all the common goods of our planet, including cultural diversity and the environment. The role of women in this will be crucial. Particular attention should be devoted to the participation of women and vulnerable groups in local institutions, both through traditional forms of public representation and consultation and innovative forms of participation.

The members of the Global Taskforce would like to further stress that only with democratic, inclusive, accountable and well-resourced institutions that develop policies with the people and in the interest of the communities will we be able to achieve the goals for 2015 and beyond.

Peer to peer learning and decentralised cooperation

As said, to address the challenges that the SDGs will contemplate cities and regions will be key. Even as the national governments have an important role to play in ensuring an adequate level of autonomy, capacity development and financial resources, the collaboration and cooperation between local and regional authorities themselves, is key in this process and to promote human rights, democracy, rule of law, equal opportunities and equal and sustainable growth.

Decentralised cooperation, peer to peer learning, municipal international cooperation and other similar means have been helping to enhance and build capacity of local governments in the global south. These must evolve into a more structured and systematic approach to support counterparts from all over the world to build resilient cities, fight climate change, reduce poverty, support democracy and local governance, and provide basic service delivery to the people.

A STRONG PARTNERSHIP AND A ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE

A new, real global partnership for development including all stakeholders is a prerequisite to the implementation of the future development agenda.

The special role of local and sub-national governments, already acknowledged in the Rio outcome document, should be further strengthened in the Post-2015 Agenda and specific arrangements should be made to include this constituency in relevant decision-making mechanisms.

We call on the development partners to support local and regional governments to obtain the capacity and strategic support needed to face the challenges of the new shared agenda.

We acknowledge the efforts made by ECOSOC to be an inclusive platform and we encourage the Council to continue to increase participation of a diverse range of stakeholders, notably of local and regional governments. We also recognize the Council's central role in promoting accountability for the commitments made by all stakeholders and in the implementation of the post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Habitat III Conference and the Conference on Financing for Development should be given prominent roles in the coming years as key instruments to implement and further develop the sustainable development agenda.

Local and Regional Governments shall continue to organize the constituency, to share experiences and to provide support to the above processes with the aim of improving the well-being and resilience of communities around the world in a responsible and sustainable manner.

