

**MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE**  
**CSD-14**  
**Thursday, May 11, 2006**

# **LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for allowing me the honour of speaking on behalf of local governments worldwide.

Cities, now home to more than half of the world's population, are implementing policies, programs and projects that integrate social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability.

In fact, municipal leaders have the extraordinary ability to CHANGE the current trend of climate change, through local policies and actions that will meet or exceed targets set by sub-national and national governments.

Many local governments own and operate power plants and make decisions on energy sources. Local governments own and operate buildings, vehicles and facilities such as street lighting, waste management systems, and water supply and treatment. They also make decisions on transportation and transit systems. All of these responsibilities influence energy use, industrial development, air quality and climate change action, and public procurement.

Local governments, however, face the challenge of providing essential services, improving and extending service delivery to meet growing needs, while eradicating poverty and inequitable access to basic services.

Local governments are therefore key stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

### (Commitments)

Many local governments have committed to reducing water consumption and improving local water quality through a milestone process that includes specific targets for water conservation and water quality. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability will be reporting on these water targets in 2008, when CSD will be reviewing progress on water issues.

Many local governments have committed to a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. They will meet these commitments together, by improving and advancing the exchange of data monitoring, skills, technologies, tools, publications and experience.

They have further committed to minimizing the dependence on fossil fuel energy through sustainable land use that encourages public transit, reduces automobile reliance, and improves energy efficiency.

(To Meet these Commitments)

To meet these commitments, local governments need to partner with national and sub-national governments to enhance the technical, human and financial capacity of local governments, and their legislative authority.

To meet these commitments, local governments need to be fully engaged when strategic decisions on sustainable development and climate change policies are made.

To meet these commitments, local governments need to be engaged in the reform of global trade regimes, credits and banking reserve rules to advance debt relief and incentives for technologies and actions that allow for sustainable growth.

To meet these commitments, local governments need to be recognized and supported for utilizing and promoting renewable energy sources, ensuring sound development, and promoting clean air practices.

Collective global action and agreement is needed to make existing cities and emerging cities of the future more sustainable, less reliant on the depletion of the world's dwindling natural resources, and better able to accommodate the needs of all its local communities without deepening the current levels of poverty and inequality.

Honourable delegates, local governments **NEED** to be fully engaged in all strategies that will achieve sustainable growth.

Thank you.