

United Nations Forum on Climate Change Mitigation,  
Fuel Efficiency and Sustainable Urban Transport

**Special Event of Asian Mayors on the Signing of the Kyoto Declaration for the  
Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Transport in Cities**

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Opening Remarks by  
H.E. Dr. Louis Alberto Ferraté Felice  
Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala  
Chairman of the eighteenth session of the  
United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18)

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Honorable City Mayors,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great privilege to welcome you once more to the *United Nations Forum on Climate Change Mitigation, Fuel Efficiency and Sustainable Urban Transport*, this time to the *Special Evening Event of Asian Mayors on the Signing of the Kyoto Declaration for the Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Transport in Cities*.

We have all had a very interesting and productive first day of the Forum. We have heard many practical experiences in the promotion of environmentally sustainable urban transport.

I am quite encouraged having heard of so many new initiatives being undertaken with the aim of improving urban air quality, reducing fuel use and fuel costs, and enhancing sustainability and quality of life in urban areas.

I am also pleased to know that UN DESA intends to prepare a user-friendly compendium to facilitate and widen the sharing of information on the various projects and case studies.

With this special session tonight, we want to acknowledge the importance of the role of city administrations and municipalities in the implementation of urban transport policies, projects and programmes.

I warmly welcome the Asian Environmentally Sustainable Transport Initiative of the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD). This initiative is supported by the Ministry of the Environment of the Government of Japan.

The UNCRD initiative is the result of a continuing Asian Mayors' Policy Dialogue. In April 2007, 22 Mayors of Asian cities and their representatives adopted and signed the Kyoto Declaration for the Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Transport in Cities. The group of signatories has continuously grown since.

With the assistance of UNCRD, twelve more Asian Mayors and their representatives have gathered here this evening to also formally sign the same declaration. This will bring the total number of signatories to about sixty.

The Kyoto Declaration is a goodwill declaration. It is not legally binding. However, it is a formal and public commitment to the principles that are enshrined in it.

Taking practical action at the city level can significantly contribute to the promotion of sustainable development. Engaging the various stakeholder groups and their diverse political interest at the local level is by no means an easy task. All of the senior officials present here today are certainly fully aware of these challenges of taking action.

I greatly welcome their resolve and their commitment to enhance environmentally sustainable urban transport projects and opportunities in their constituencies.

I hope that you will join me in giving them a good round of applause.

Thank you.