

# **Contribution by Italy**

## **“The Contribution of Local Government to the Millennium Development Goals”**

### **MDGs Global Call to Action**

**New York, September 24, 2008**

**United Nations Headquarters  
Conference Room no. 8**

**1:15 – 2:30 PM**

The event is promoted and organized by the Italian Government, the City of Milan and Expo Milano 2015, under the patronage of the UN Millennium Campaign and in partnership with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Its aim is to raise awareness of the strengths and potential of local governments as key actors in the field of international development, joining efforts at all levels to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This event will launch a follow-up initiative that will take place in Milan, where representatives of international institutions, mayors and civil society organizations will be invited to work together to showcase concrete actions that local governments can undertake to promote the MDGs. Access to basic services such as water, healthcare, education and public housing, environmental sustainability, women’s empowerment and access to political and economic opportunities, are all critical components at the core of the MDGs.

The New York event will give local governments the opportunity to share their day-to-day experiences as they strive to achieve the MDGs, creating links between the MDGs and a number of core themes on the international agenda, such as Climate Change, Aid Effectiveness and Accountability, Food Safety and Security. Specific attention will be devoted to food quality as it relates to hunger, drought, infant mortality and malnutrition. Another vital issue that will be discussed is sustainable development and energy efficiency, in particular, the use of renewable resources. The Expo Milano 2015 theme, “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”, addresses all of the above issues.

The event also seeks to develop a partnership between national authorities and the UN Agencies aimed at building greater awareness of and support for the role of local governments in their efforts to achieve the MDGs.

An action plan will ultimately be developed, drawing from the best practices of both formal and informal networks of local authorities committed to the MDGs.

A potential third line of action is the institution of complementary commitments between national governments, local authorities and the private sector.

All cities and regions in the world, regardless of their level of economic and social development or international influence are working to strengthen and improve the quality of life of their citizens and broaden access to resources, especially for the more vulnerable and marginalized. Milan will draw on its strengths - its culture, entrepreneurial spirit and political will - to give resonance to this message in the MDG’s Global Call to Action during Expo Milano 2015 and the run-up to the event and serve as the focal point of a permanent forum for an exchange of practices.

Local authorities are the most effective agents for dealing with local problems because of their greater familiarity with and direct approach to them.

The event will also address political and financial decentralization – including its pertinence to the Aid Effectiveness agenda – which is vital to the achievement of the MDGs. There will also be a discussion of the partnerships needed to empower national and local governments to achieve the MDGs jointly and effectively.

The 2015 target date for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals coincides with Milan's Universal Exhibition. For Expo Milano 2015 this date is not a mere coincidence, but rather an opportunity to fully align itself with the themes of the MDGs.