

STATEMENT BY MRS. ANNA KAJUMULO TIBAIJUKA
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On the occasion of the Third Annual Glocalization Conference, 18 May in Rome

Your worship Walter Veltroni, Mayor of Rome, Your excellency Ambassador David Kimche, Mr. James Wolfenshon , Your worship Mayor Mutisindashyaka of Kigali, Your Excellency Ambassador Uri Savir, founders of the We are the Future Programme,
Your Excellencies, Nobel laureates,
Your Worships Mayors and local leaders,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to be here today at the Third Annual Glocalization Conference. For me, as the head of the UN agency for human settlements, also known as the City Agency, it is indeed very impressive and inspiring for me to see such a powerful gathering of Mayors, representatives of corporations, the World Bank and sister agencies in this eternal city of Rome. Let me take this opportunity on behalf UN-HABITAT to congratulate you all, The Glocal Forum, mayors and local leaders from around the world, on this conference of great relevance to an urbanizing world.

The objectives of the Glocal Forum of peace building and development are indeed cornerstones of sustainable human settlements. Rapid urbanisation over the past 50 years has left the social fabric in cities and towns around the world in tatters. More than ever before the world must adopt an urban culture of inclusion, tolerance and prevention as opposed to one of repression, fear and crisis management. We must also adopt a broader, more holistic multi-sectoral approach to sustainable urban development. In this, we must seek each other out as partners, not competitors.

In 1996, the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements – HABITAT II, or “The City Summit”, adopted the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda. These negotiated political statements underline the importance of developing strategic partnerships between national governments and local authorities. It was widely recognized at Habitat II that local authorities are the closest partners of Governments

in promoting sustainable urban development. Since then, our efforts have focused on strengthening the role and international status of local authorities.

UN-HABITAT has developed extensive relations with mayors and local leaders and their associations during the last ten years. In January 2000, this collaboration gathered momentum with the establishment of the UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA), composed of Mayors and Presidents of local authority associations and in June 2001 with the holding of the Special Session of the General Assembly on Istanbul + 5. And, early this month, we witnessed the creation of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in Paris.

UNACLA has been instrumental in raising the profile of local authorities in the international arena and in defining a positive and innovative vision of the future of the world cities. It has significantly contributed to the definition and implementation of the Global Campaigns on Secure Tenure and Good Urban Governance that have been initiated and co-ordinated by UN-HABITAT.

Your Excellencies,
Your Worships Mayors, Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For more than a decade, UN-HABITAT's cooperation with local authorities has been carried out at various areas levels. At the operational level, UN-HABITAT has developed many activities in towns and cities, mostly in the developing countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia and in countries with economies in transition, addressing the needs of local authorities in terms of capacity-building, urban policy reform, environmental planning, monitoring, water and sanitation, infrastructure, housing and slum upgrading programmes

UN-HABITAT has played a major role in post-conflict urban rehabilitation, including through the re-establishment and training of local authorities in countries such as Somalia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. This understanding of the capacities and needs of local authorities constitutes a solid reference basis and is also a testing ground for UN-HABITAT's normative work and policy guidelines.

In a recent meeting organised by the Kosovo Cadastral Agency and UN-HABITAT the issue of 'Land Administration in Post-conflict Areas' was explored. The

symposium discussed good practises, lessons learned, experience and knowledge on the issue of land administration in post-conflict areas and thus provided a good knowledge base for future operations.

The causes of conflicts and violence are many. For example ethnic envy, nationalistic tendencies, opposing interests, class conflicts, disputed frontiers and acts of expansion of economic interests. During such conflicts people are killed or disappear, buildings and physical infrastructure are destroyed, legal frameworks are set aside, public registers are destroyed, markets cease to function, properties are taken and lands occupied. Once the conflict ends, peace treaties, UN resolutions or national development plans are adopted to restore governance and the rule of law in all its variety (security, health, energy, shelter etc.). I am sure with Nobel laureates being present today, we will be able to get a better insight into the dynamics of the transition from post conflict to development.

Further to our cooperation with local authorities, we have continued to strengthen our links with all Habitat Agenda partners, in particular local leaders and local communities through programmes such as “City-to-city cooperation” and “Best Practices.” Other locally targeted UN-HABITAT programmes are the “Cities Alliance” in partnership with the World Bank, the “Urban Management Programme” in partnership with UNDP, and the “Sustainable Cities Programme” in partnership with UNEP.

Your Excellencies,
Your Worships Mayors,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1996, the Habitat Agenda in paragraph 177 endorsed the principle of subsidiarity. The Governing Council of UN-HABITAT recently referred to it as the underlying rationale for the process of decentralization and noted: “according to this principle, public responsibilities shall be exercised by those authorities which are closest to the citizens”.

UN-HABITAT’s efforts to support and strengthen the role of local authorities have focused on promoting decentralization in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Resolution 18/11 of the Commission on Human Settlements, requested UNHABITAT to intensify dialogue among governments at all levels on effective decentralization and to strengthen local authorities. During the nineteenth session of the Governing

Council, resolution 19/12 of the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT, requested UN-HABITAT to establish a high-level Advisory Group of Experts on Decentralization (AGRED) to guide the international dialogue on decentralization and to provide further advice on strengthening the status and role of local authorities.

UN-HABITAT is committed to intensifying efforts of collaboration with local authorities and their associations. In this connection, in order to strengthen our monitoring mechanisms, I am most pleased to inform you of the plans for the creation of a Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization (GOLD) as a monitor of good urban governance and decentralization.

GOLD will be officially launched at the World Urban Forum II in Barcelona on 17 September 2004 during a dialogue session jointly organized by UCLG and UN-HABITAT. I sincerely hope that many of you here will be able to attend the World Urban Forum which is being held within the context of the Universal Forum of Cultures. Once established, GOLD will contribute to the Campaign on Urban Governance.

Your Excellencies,
Your Worships Mayors and local leaders,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our work at UN-HABITAT is focused on reducing urban poverty through collaboration with Governments and local authorities. This strategy is based on the commitments made by Governments at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. As you are aware, the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals require national and international efforts to create a living environment which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty. Indeed, the Millennium Development Goals will only be achieved through concerted efforts by societies, institutions, and governments at all levels pulling together in the same direction. However, the main challenge remains to focus on local situations and conditions. Success in the implementation of the millennium development goals will depend on their ownership at the city level.

Cities, metropolitan-regions and other human settlements are our greatest potential. They possess immense capacities as partners in development to alleviate poverty and improve the quality of life for citizens. Realizing this potential, however, requires a

new understanding of partnership that promotes efficiency, resourcefulness, and creativity.

Indeed, the MDGs have become the ‘organizing framework’ for many multi and bilateral development programmes and agencies. No matter which approach is privileged in the implementation of the MDGs, at UN-HABITAT we believe that this framework for development must always recognize the local dimension. The achievement of the MDGs may be difficult if local authorities do not begin now to take determined and concerted action to articulate and address the needs of the urban poor and other disadvantaged groups. UN-HABITAT has mainstreamed the concerns of women and youth in its programmes. In a world where the number of young people has become the largest in history relative to the adult population, the need to take ever more innovative approaches to the problems facing the youth is urgent. At the 19th session of UN-HABITAT's Governing Council in May 2003, Governments formally asked UN-HABITAT to strengthen and advance our work in the engagement of youth in urban governance, address the problems of youth at risk, and to develop strategies for capacity-building and poverty alleviation among our youth. In particular, UN-HABITAT was asked to join the Secretary General's initiative on youth employment within the framework of the Millennium Development goal of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020.

Let me also brief you on UN-HABITAT’s strategy for the achievement of some of the MDG targets:

Related to Target 10, “halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water”, and Target 11: “achieve, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers”, our approach rests upon 3 major pillars. The first of these pillars is Monitoring and evaluation to generate and manage information and knowledge. This includes our two flagship reports on cities and human settlements (flagship reports). The second pillar is made up of the Global Campaigns on Secure Tenure and Urban Governance that carry out advocacy actions and provide policy guidance. The third pillar is Technical cooperation to provide advisory services and capacity building, primarily at the local level. UN-HABITAT has been supporting a number of cities through two regional programmes: Water for African Cities and Water for Asian cities. As a founding partner in the

Cities Alliance initiative (with the World Bank), we have also designed and are implementing a number of large-scale slum upgrading projects.

UN-HABITAT and UNDP are preparing a programme called “Urban Millennium Partnership – Localizing MDGs”. This programme will support local authorities in the implementation of the MDGs and in the empowerment of local governance systems.

As you will note, our approach to the MDGs involves constructive collaboration with key international institutions. I would hereby like to invite the Glocal Forum to become our partner in this collaboration.

The Glocal Forum would be an ideal partner for us. Your aim to bring people and resources together in the pursuit of peaceful development through the promotion of inter-city relationships, peace-building initiatives, youth empowerment, and information and communication technology resonates with our mission. With the city as the foundation, the Glocal Forum builds an innovative international network block by block. UN-HABITAT as the United Nations city agency and an agency working for sustainable urbanization is pleased to endorse your approach.

Our collaboration with Glocal Forum will not only be important, but essential in the years to come.

I wish you success in your conference.