42. We reaffirm the key role of all levels of government and legislative bodies in promoting sustainable development. We further acknowledge efforts and progress made at the local and subnational levels, and recognize the important role that such authorities and communities can play in implementing sustainable development.

Opening of Section C - Engaging major groups and other stakeholders

Rio+20 Declaration “The future we want”

The international municipalism movement has celebrated this year its 100 anniversary. In 1913, the Union International des Villes was created in Ghent, Belgium. Since then, local governments have increasingly taken part in the international movement that concluded with the creation, in 2004, of United Cities and Local Governments-UCGL, the biggest world association of cities which regroups almost all the national federations of municipalities worldwide, the association of Metropolis, the World Association of Regions and the different regional sections for Asia-Pacific, Latin American and Caribbean, Europe, Middle East, North America and Africa.

UCGL has been a natural partner for UN-Habitat in their common effort to recognize the importance that local government have to ensure the sustainability of development. Some lessons can be learn from the experience of the MDGs, that, while galvanizing efforts and helping to focus international aid, were often not translated into localized and integrated actions in the field\(^1\). Experience has proven that without functioning and capable municipalities, most of the MDGs cannot be achieved, as most of them depend directly or indirectly on the provision of infrastructure and services- health, education, water, sanitation or waste management-depend to a certain degree of local governments being able to do their job\(^2\).

Local government associations started getting involved in international development in the early nineties, many donors have consider them as important stakeholders in the implementation of projects in support of local governance and the decentralized co-operation, both for providing expertise and small scale funding, has grown in importance over the years. Local governments are today, an increasingly important actor for international development. The Rio+20 Declaration mentions 30 times the world “local” while recognizing the importance of the local, regional and national dimensions of development.

\(^1\) Local Development and MDGs: What Role for Local Governments?, United Nations Capital Development Fund

\(^2\) Getting the engagement of local institutions in the UN Development Agenda 2015. International Institute for environment and development.
Local government associations were convened in New York by UCLG in April 2012 in order to present their joint messages to the UN before the Rio Summit. In cooperation with UN-Habitat the delegation met the Secretary General, Ambassadors and other UN agencies, The outcomes of this meeting were of great significance for the following negotiations towards the Rio+20 Summit.

Following this important event, the Mayor of Istanbul and Chair of United Cities and Local Government was appointed to the HLP Post2015 and at his initiative the Global Taskforce of local and regional governments for post-2015 development agenda and towards Habitat III @GTF2016 was created as a consultation tool among the full constituency of local government associations.

http://www.gtf2016.org/

The GTF2016 met in New York in May 2013 to bring the message of local governments to the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

During the last meeting in the UCLG World Congress of local and regional leaders in Rabat, October 2013, the GTF2016 approved a series of common efforts, calendar and themes to be included in the parallel agendas versus 2015 and its first implementing Conference, Habitat III.

Local governments see post 2015 closely intertwined with Habitat III, for them, this is the moment of recognition of their role in development and is their aspiration to be provided with the necessary capacities and resources to “do their job”. The Global Taskforce represents an effort to work in an integrated manner with the member states and the United Nations System, bringing the complementary vision of local implementation of global priorities.
The Global Taskforce is hosted by UCLG and composed by the following organizations:

**Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United Cities and local governments</th>
<th>UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities</th>
<th>International Council Environmental Initiatives</th>
<th>International Association of French speaking Mayors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab Town Organisation</td>
<td>clgf</td>
<td>nrg4SD</td>
<td>Regions United</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metropolis</td>
<td>Council of European Municipalities and Regions</td>
<td>UCLG Asia - Pacific</td>
<td>UCLG Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCLG Middle East and Western Asia</td>
<td>Federation of Latin America and Caribbean Municipal Associations</td>
<td>UCLG Eurasia</td>
<td>UCLG North America</td>
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<td>cités unies france</td>
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**Partners**


**Friends of Sustainable Cities**

UN-Habitat and the Global Taskforce have been working closely with the NY “Group of Friends of Sustainable Cities”, a group of Permanent Representatives to the UN in New York that have been supporting the inclusion of cities and urban in the process of design of the Rio + 20 and follow up agenda. The group is actually constituted by the following member states:
Co-Chairs - Singapore and Sweden

Members at 1st November 2013 – Australia, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, France, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates.

**Calendar of upcoming activities**

1) Consultation of the Open Working Group on SDGs with Major Groups, New York, 24th November

2) Ibero-American, Caribbean and The Americas meeting on sustainable cities, New York, 11 – 12th December 2013

Organized by UN-Habitat, it will gather Mayors, Governors and Ministers with responsibilities over sustainable cities to provide inputs for the upcoming debate at the General Assembly. The meeting will also be the first regional preparatory event for Habitat III. UN-Habitat hopes to be able to gather support for the organization of similar events for all the regions before the First PrepCom for Habitat III that will take place in September 2014.

3) Global Side event on sustainable cities, New York, 13th December 2013

Co-organized by the Group of Friends of sustainable cities, the Global Taskforce and UN-Habitat. The event will bring Mayors and Governors to provide concrete solutions and inputs to the Issues Brief that will be debated by the GA on 6th January 2014.

**First set of priorities of the local and regional governments for the post 2015 agenda**

As approved at the GTF2016 Meeting in Istanbul, March 2013

“The following key areas will be included in the Local and Regional Governments Development Agenda which aims at contributing and becoming an integral part of the Global Agenda.

1. Democratic self-governing, participative, efficient, accountable and resourced Local & Regional Government. All within the framework of a better intergovernmental coordination, harmonization processes and effective decentralization
2. Food Security and Nutrition as basis for poverty eradication.
3. Quality Universal Basic Service Provision geared towards reducing inequalities and improving the lives of slum dwellers, including a sensitive gender approach. These services should foster inclusive societies that are mindful of providing opportunities for youth.
4. Local Economic Development, with a focus on pro - poor policies and decent job creation in a green urban economy which promotes sustainable consumption and production.
5. Sustainable Urbanization as source of development: well -planned designed and governed cities can generate economic growth and means of livelihood. It will include a territorial approach and cohesion, with special attention to climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and safe cities.
6. Culture as driver and enabler of development and people - centered societies.
7. Protection and sustainable management of the environment biodiversity and natural resources...
8. Local Government Development Cooperation (Decentralized Cooperation) as instrument to promote solidarity and peer learning

First set of priorities of local and regional governments for Habitat III

As approved at the GTF2016 meeting in Rabat, October 2013.

1. Establish new multi-level and multi-partnership governance tools
2. Develop legal and financial mechanisms to support local and territorial governments and enable them to appropriately harness their potential
3. Promoting equal access to quality and sustainable basic services
4. Eliminating inequalities and poverty as universal agenda
5. Foster territorial cohesion among territories
6. Urban planning as a tool
7. Promote culture, diversity and creativity as a core element to build sustainable cities.

This list is not definitive, but it will constitute a first draft for the Upcoming UCLG Global Report on Decentralization and Local Democracy (GOLD) that local governments will bring as their thematic contribution to the Habitat III process. www.cities-localgovernments.org/gold/gold_report.asp

UN-Habitat welcomes the support of the GTF2016 to the stand-alone SDG on urban and invites member states to work together with their national local government associations towards Habitat III, by inviting them to participate in the National Habitat Committee, to support data collection and to gather ideas, fresh views, solutions and suggestions to the international table of negotiations for the New Urban Agenda of the XXI century.

For more information please contact Diana.lopez@unhabitat.org
Local government and decentralization Unit
Urban Legislation, Land and Governance Branch