

**LOCAL AUTHORITIES STATEMENT**  
**CSD-18, United Nations, New York**  
**13 May 2010**

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Thank you, Chair. I am pleased and grateful for the opportunity to address this distinguished Commission. Martha Delgado, Minister of the Environment of Mexico City, and Vice-President of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability was unable to attend as planned. I am speaking here on her behalf and for Local Authorities.

In the spirit of interactiveness, I would like to begin by thanking all delegations who have supported Local Authorities throughout this CSD session, and in particular the distinguished representative of Ireland for his remarks a few minutes ago.

Where are we 18 years after Rio and 8 years after Johannesburg? We find ourselves at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This century will be a century of cities. Over half of the world's population already lives in urban areas and this percentage will continue to increase. Currently, two people per second move to cities and towns.

Local authorities have the potential to make a difference with regard to waste, transport and sustainable procurement. Many cities are successfully doing so already in different parts of the world.

To give only one example, allow me to mention our host city, New York. On Earth Day 2007, New York City released PlaNYC, its far-reaching sustainability plan. In three years, New York has made remarkable progress. On your next cab ride, maybe you will be in one of the 25% of the yellow taxi fleet, which has been converted to hybrid vehicles.

While there are some such success stories, many local governments could do much more. I encourage all of you here to enable local authorities to do so. Distinguished delegates, I ask you to return to your home countries and work together with the local

communities there. Ladies and gentleman, I urge all of you to consider local governments in all CSD decisions and international institutional frameworks.

Cities create a part of the problems we face. It is estimated that cities emit 75% of greenhouse gases, for example. At the same time, local governments are an essential part of the solutions we need.

On the road to UNFCCC COP 16, Mexico City in association with local government associations is hosting the Mexico City Mayors Climate Summit 2010. Local governments will commit to reduce greenhouse gases and to carry out adaptation measures. Thereby millions of people in cities and towns worldwide will become part of the solution to climate change and of a sustainable future.

Sustainable development globally is about the big picture. This big picture is composed of many smaller, local ones. Only if we address sustainable development locally can we begin to make a difference on sustainable development globally.

Let us work together to make the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the century of cities, also the century where humanity became sustainable. It will not be easy. But it is possible.

Thank you for your attention, ladies and gentleman. Thank you, Mister Chairman.