



LOCAL AUTHORITIES MAJOR GROUP

4TH UN ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY (UNEA4) STATEMENT

Delivered by;

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Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished delegations,

My name is Yunus Arikan, from ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and I am delivering this statement in my capacity as the co-facilitator of Local Authorities Major Group.

At the outset, I would like to recall that local and regional governments and their networks unite their voices to mourn all the lives lost in the tragic plane crash ahead of UNEA4.

The 4th UN Environment Assembly is gathering at a critical moment in time: Science calls for ambitious and accelerated action to meet 1.5oC goal of the Paris Agreement; Heads of States are prepared to review progress towards the last decade for 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a new deal for nature is just starting to be drafted.

At the same time, from the streets of metropolises to forests of Amazons, new and innovative models of resistance and collaboration are evolving, across borders and generations, to defend livelihoods and develop a human civilization of sustainable lifestyles respecting planetary boundaries.

Throughout UNEP Governing Councils and 6 years ago at the first UN Environment Assembly in 2013, local and regional governments urged for more active engagement with Ministers of Environment to seize the potential of the Urban World in addressing challenges of sustainability.

After all these years and efforts, I am delighted to announce that, at these same hours of today, the first ever Cities Summit of the UN Environment Assembly is taking place with the engagement of Ministers, Mayors, Governors, senior staff and stakeholders across the world, thanks to the collaboration of ICLEI, nrg4sd, UCLG, Global Task Force, UN Environment, UN Habitat and Cities Alliance.

We are also encouraged to observe growing number of resolutions in the UNEA agenda that address urban issues.

We would like to reiterate that, local and regional governments and their networks, are eager to offer their expertise and collaboration to UN Environment and UNEA delegations in order to connect sustainable, integrated, urban and territorial development into the environment agenda.

We therefore encourage this vision to be reflected into the future Programme of Work of the UN Environment in order to fully seize this potential of the Urban World.

We also welcome the two passionate women leaders leading the UN institutions on environment and habitat, and Nairobi as the excellent host of the two unique UN Assemblies alongside the UN General Assembly.

We are confident, this holistic and multilevel collaboration will give confidence and hope to the citizens across nations, that sustainable cities and regions are the custodians for wellbeing of all humans and the Planet Earth.

I thank you.