

Outcome Document of the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments Durban Formal Session, 15 November 2019

The constituency of local and regional government considers the next decade as the most critical decade for collective implementation of global goals and development agendas. The World Assembly provides a unique opportunity to renew the shared commitments and vision to “leave no one and no place behind,” accelerate actions to achieve sustainability, and strengthen partnerships within our constituency and with all other stakeholders, including civil society.

The WALRG, convened by the Global Taskforce, is acknowledged in article 169 of the New Urban Agenda as **the mechanism to review its implementation**. It brings together the constituency of local and regional governments, and offers the space for structural dialogue with civil society and other spheres of government to co-create the transformation that societies and communities around the world are calling for.

We celebrate our joint advocacy that was instrumental in shaping our contributions to the New Urban Agenda, and Habitat III process, and the three Rio Conventions and their associated processes, and we celebrate the local-global movement that has been growing to deepen **localization and implementation at other levels of government**. We further celebrate the recognizable shift towards concrete action on the ground and the increasing ecological transition necessary in order to face both the climate and biodiversity crises.

A World Assembly that builds from its diversity

We take pride in our capacity to articulate our diverse voices, as **we unite, ready to move beyond just the amplification of voices and into the space of joint policymaking**. Mindful of our diversity and the specific purposes of each of our networks, **we stand together as one before the international community, while celebrating our unique and complementary contributions** to shaping our sustainable and resilient future.

We will establish and **strengthen our institutional and governance arrangements in our quest to formalise the relationship between the LGR and the international community** in order to prepare for and implement the Urban Decade.

We welcome and confirm the role of GTF founding member ICLEI to use and resource its focal point status within the three Rio Conventions (Climate Change, Biodiversity and Desertification) and related global processes, and in doing so, providing the GTF and World Assembly with appropriate and well-coordinated entry points. We welcome and invite other members of the GTF to take and resource similar roles on behalf of the GTF and World Assembly in areas such as migration, culture, gender, “safe and inclusive cities”, housing and other areas.

In this spirit, we **commit to build our future policies in a way that reflects our collective insights, strengths, and learnings, in conjunction with the valued contributions of Civil Society and other key actors**. These policies will constitute the bases of our

transformative action in each of the organizations, and inform our collective position in steering our actions during, and beyond the implementation decade.

As we are entering the implementation decade in which the future of humanity is at stake, this meeting of the World Assembly that has gathered today in Durban represents **an opportunity to accelerate our actions to achieve sustainability, protect our natural world, and to rethink partnerships** among all stakeholders holding this shared vision.

Our natural world and humanity are at a crossroads and as a constituency of local and subnational governments, we must **come together and take transformative action in achieving not only the global agendas but also in ensuring the future of all life on earth.**

The World Assembly **has a unique opportunity, , to consolidate the voice and actions of our constituency, and put forward principles of solidarity, to enable the urgent transformation that societies and communities around the world are calling for.**

Bringing these engagement processes together in a coordinated way requires the strengthening of the governance and institutional processes of the GTF and the World Assembly. To this end we propose the establishment of a leadership based on the relevant work areas of the Global Taskforce.

Building on this, we commit to explore the best mechanisms of interaction and coordination with the UN Secretary General Office to ensure that our constituency, through the World Assembly, supported by the GTF, is best positioned and heard within the international arena in the context of the New Urban Era.

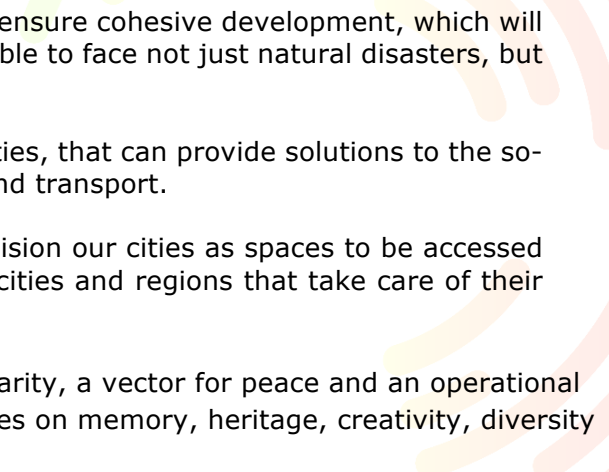
Where do we need to go?

The Civil Society has called on us to:

- Put the people and the planet at the forefront of our actions through multi-stakeholder partnerships and joint policy making processes.
- Commit to the principle of leaving “no one and no place behind” by promoting accessible and inclusive policies.
- Promote and mainstream gender equality through men, women, and he/she-led initiatives.
- Recognize everyone’s right to the city, which is indispensable in providing access to opportunities for all, and to address informality by treating it not as a problem, but as an opportunity for innovation and solutions.

Members within the constituency of local and regional governments have called on the World Assembly to support policies for localization, by:

- Carrying out full decentralization to empower local and regional governments.
- Securing dialogues among spheres of government, and enhancing capacities and access to finance for local and regional governments, to ensure the renewal of the multilateral system.
- Considering that the territorial approach to development is essential to develop life systems, and that development does not occur in a vacuum.

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- Addressing the rural and urban linkages that ensure cohesive development, which will result in more resilient cities that are better able to face not just natural disasters, but also man-made crises.
 - Developing a rights-based approach to the cities, that can provide solutions to the so-called “triple informality” of work, housing, and transport.
 - Carrying out participatory processes that envision our cities as spaces to be accessed equally is essential to guarantee a future of cities and regions that take care of their communities
 - Developing culture as a strand of global solidarity, a vector for peace and an operational component of localisation with relevant policies on memory, heritage, creativity, diversity and transmission of knowledge.

Thematic Priorities for the Global Task Force and the World Assembly

In terms of thematic priorities, the following areas are endorsed and implemented as shared priorities of the GTF and the World Assembly:

- All urban development must be based on a low emissions pathway with the aim to achieve climate neutrality in the LRG’s own infrastructure and operations before 2050.
- To make resilience a core part of the LRG’s planning strategies and prepare for new risks and impacts, taking into account the rights and needs of vulnerable sections of the society.
- To prioritise nature-based solutions and the mainstreaming of nature in cities and regions, recognising the value of nature as fundamental to our collective economic and social wellbeing, within the context of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and Earth’s planetary boundaries.
- To pursue secure and safe access to food water, energy, sanitation for all, culture and education as well as clean air and soil.
- To enable the creation and sustainability of people centred, safe and culturally vibrant communities.

The challenges that are upon us are daunting, but we have also been granted a final window of opportunity over the next ten years to bend the curve of the current trajectory. Localizing the Universal Development Agendas is the only way in which we will find and implement innovative solutions to solve these daunting and interconnected challenges, in pursuit of a more sustainable and equal world. Taking collective ownership, along with other actors, of the global sustainable development goals, we commit to position and enable the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments as a platform through which this local-global movement can effectively contribute to the future wellbeing of humanity and all life on earth.