



Speech Carlos Martínez

Mayor of Soria, UCLG Envoy for the New Urban Agenda

Speech at the gathering of UNACLA

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(Translation from Spanish)

Dear UNACLA President and Mayor of Kazan, dear Vice-Presidents, Your Excellency, Deputy Secretary-General of UN-Habitat, dear mayors:

It is a pleasure for me to address you today. It gives us strength and it gives us hope, despite the situation we are living in, despite the risk of recentralization in the process of local governments, listening to you gives us hope. Allow me to thank Maimunah Mohd. Sharif, our Co-chair, for sharing with us her personal conviction, an accurate message.

I would like to start by welcoming the creation of the Working Group on the Future of Cities, which builds on the idea of networked and inclusive multilateralism that the UN will present under the umbrella of the Common Agenda.

We also welcome the fact that this Working Group is co-chaired by UN-Habitat as a guarantee that reaffirms the commitment to the importance of the urban future for the United Nations.

UN-Habitat's work on behalf of our constituency, and to put us at the centre of the discussions, is beyond question. I am convinced that the relationship between local and regional governments and the UN intergovernmental processes will be stronger than ever.

As we always say, the New Urban Agenda is a key accelerator of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this urban era, when we are rethinking the recovery of cities and territories, as UCLG's Special Envoy for the New Urban Agenda, it is clear to me that the value of this agenda is indispensable.

Dear colleagues, we are at a key moment to accelerate its implementation through a structured strategy that will reposition local and regional governments in the international system, with a view to truly transforming governance systems and the future of our cities, our territories and, of course, our communities.

Dear friends, we are government, we are State. This is why we are asking for a figure that recognizes us as representatives of a sphere of government and with representation that is differentiated from NGOs.



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Beyond the
differentiated



figure for us, as local and regional governments, it is time to continue working to be granted, as a collective, observer status in the General Assembly.

On the road to the UN High Level Meeting, the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, explicitly recognized in the Quito Outcome Document, will play a fundamental role in giving a voice to our collective in this process. The milestones set by the SG

We are aware that the NUA is the accelerator for how the SDGs will be achieved, from the smallest to the largest cities. It is this challenge that we have to try to meet, in the fulfilment of the SDGs. We have a responsibility to do so.

That is why I bring you 3 axes of work:

- 1. From UCLG we propose to work with all constituencies and the General Assembly of Partners to make an assessment of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda of the Territories. We will do this, in full articulation with the Global Taskforce of local and regional governments.**
- 2. On the other hand, we commit to promote local government inputs to the UN Habitat Platform.**
- 3. Finally, considering the vital work of UNACLA as a link between local and regional governments and the United Nations system, we propose that UNACLA can co-construct the key components of the Conference.**

We need to increase our voice and support UN-Habitat from here.

Now, five years after the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, at a time when we are re-evaluating how we are able to protect and breathe life into our governance systems to take care of our citizens, is when our voices must be heard the loudest.