

**Local Authority statement on Objectives during the Rio2012
PrepCom II**

**Delivered by Susanne Salz, ICLEI – Local Governments for
Sustainability, on 7 March 2011**

Thank you, Chair.

While renewed political commitment is first of all needed from the UN member states, others actors do have a role to play in that respect as well. As the level of government closest to the citizens, local authorities can help to link the people to the global processes. This can help to secure renewed political commitment.

We need to assess the progress to date on a global level. The global situation is made up of countless local circumstances. The 1992 Earth Summit adopted Local Agenda 21, which led to tangible improvements in local sustainability in cities and towns around the world. To contribute to a global assessment 20 years on, a study is being done of Local Agenda 21 and other local sustainability processes, to establish what has worked and what has not in order to draw lessons for the future.

There are several new and emerging issues the world faces. One of them of particular relevance to Local Authorities is urbanization. By 2050, it is estimated that over 6 billion people will live in urban areas, which means almost twice as many people as today. This poses huge challenges as well as opportunities. While some aspects are unique to

each city, there are also some commonalities to the trends of urbanization. Recognition of urbanization as one key emerging issue the world needs to address would help to turn the challenges of urbanization into opportunities.