

Local government major group
Closing statement to the thirteenth session of the CSD
Friday 22 April 2005

Honorable ministers and delegates,

I am speaking today on behalf of local governments, as represented by the United Cities and Local Government world organization inaugurated in Paris in May 2004, and the local government major group coordinating body ICLEI 'local governments for sustainability' an international network promoting sustainable development at the local level.

We, as local government, hope that the governments and international institutions participating at this meeting will fulfill the commitments they have made – to ensure that this meeting is not simply about a set of agreed words but one that has made real commitments to deepen action on the sustainable delivery of clean water, sanitation and human settlements.

At Johannesburg it was recognized that national government alone cannot achieve sustainable development – local governments and other partners should be mobilized. We should be recognized as key partners in the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the commitments made here these last two weeks.

As has been recognized by the UN and many governments, enabling decentralization to the lowest appropriate level – more commonly known as the principle of 'subsidiarity' - is a key means to establish good democratic governance and therefore it is crucial to attaining implementation of sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals. We need you to help establish supportive national and international frameworks to enable us to do our work, including through the provision of sufficient powers, resources and capacity building.

We urge you not to betray the commitments made at Rio, Johannesburg, the Millennium Summit and here at the CSD. We, as local government, offer ourselves as partners in this process. We look forward to working with you in achieving these commitments and in contributing to the forthcoming CSD cycle addressing climate change, energy, atmospheric pollution and industrial development.