

**Closing remarks by Ms. Maria Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-
General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN DESA**

Fourth High level Local and Regional Governments Forum

Tuesday, 13 July 2021, 10:00AM

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Mayors, Governors,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

[Introduction]

I am pleased to deliver a few closing remarks at this fourth high level Local and Regional Governments Forum, one of the Special Events that we, at UN DESA, are pleased to support in connection with the UN High-level political forum on sustainable development.

Let me, first, express our gratitude to all the distinguished Mayors, Governors, national government representatives, and high-level experts from all around the world who joined us during the past two days. Your experience, commitment, insights, and inspiration will reverberate and support our common goal of achieving the SDGs for all, at all levels.

I also want to sincerely thank and acknowledge our partners from the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF), UN-Habitat, UNDP and the

Local 2030 Coalition – every year we continue to further consolidate our partnership and collaboration and this is reflected on the excellent outcomes of this event.

To all participants connecting from around the world – we hope you were inspired and further motivated to continue supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

[COVID-19, role local and regional governments]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Throughout this Special Event, we have heard from speakers how the SDGs are now more relevant than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged years of progress and advancements on sustainable development. At the same time, it has further demonstrated how we need strong collaboration between national governments and stakeholders, including local and regional governments, as we address the crisis and design recovery strategies that make our societies and communities stronger, more resilient and more sustainable.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This year's event has touched upon very critical issues, including the unique role of local and regional governments in ensuring the provision of basic public services, the importance of guaranteeing social inclusion and prosperity for all as well as the transformation of work, and evolving production and consumption models. You also discussed the importance of multi-level governance and the need for strong, inclusive institutions at sub-national level as key elements for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

You discussed the complex challenges and specific needs of local and regional governments – including those related to financing, access to local data and capacity building. You also shared concrete examples policies and programmes and initiatives that demonstrate how partnerships and inclusive environments can be strategic to address gaps, maximize resources and achieve common goals.

[SDG Acceleration Actions]

I would like to invite you to visit the UN DESA SDG Acceleration Actions database and register and share information about your own ambitious commitments in support to the 2030 Agenda. This is a unique platform that shines the spotlight on efforts by all stakeholders, and at all levels, that can bring about change and inspire others.

[Closing]

Ladies and gentlemen,

We live in an extraordinary challenging time. In his *State of the Planet address*, the UN Secretary-General reminded us that the global commons and global well-being are interlinked. This means we must act more broadly, more holistically, across many fronts, to secure the health of our planet on which all life depends.

We are now in the Decade of Action for Delivery of the SDGs. To be successful, we need the driving force and creative energy of local and regional governments, working in close partnership with national governments and of all stakeholders. Please, do count on UNDESA on our continued support to your endeavors.

Thank you.
