

## **LAMG statement for OWG 10- feedback on the focus areas document- March 2014**

Dear Co-Chairs, Member States, Major Groups and colleagues,

**It is very encouraging to see that many of the concerns and issues raised by the Major Groups were taken on board in the last version of the focus areas document.**

**Let us raise again our satisfaction to have a dedicated focus area sustainable cities and human settlements (focus area 13) which addresses** many of our concerns: slum conditions, access to basic services, urban planning, environmentally sustainable cities, the urban-rural link, peace, security, and culture.

We also celebrate the vital role acknowledged to **governance** in the development agenda under focus area 19, and are convinced that ensuring stronger local governments will foster accountability and inclusion, facilitating a stronger rule of law "at all levels".

We celebrate the references to **Culture** under different focus areas in its different meaning – proving its transversal dimension in the sustainable development agenda.

We would further like to highlight some key elements of an efficient post-2015 sustainable development, namely: provision of public services for all; provision of property, use and access rights.

We will also need to address very soon, the need to localize the agenda linking it to the realities on the ground and using disaggregated data to measure progress made.

We cannot conceive a future agenda without local governments' roles properly taken into account in areas such as poverty eradication, equality, water and sanitation, consumption and production. This requires a clear provision on the implementation mechanism for SDGs, notably ensuring that local governments are able to help set, implement and monitor local SDG targets on a cross-cutting basis.

### **Next steps**

We hope that in the remaining sessions, some further elements will be included in the text to ensure efficient policies for **poverty reduction and equality in urban areas**: adequate and affordable housing, infrastructure and basic services should be a target not only for slums but all urban areas. In the same way, **culture** should not only be seen as a material heritage but also as a living and changing component of the cities, where populations from many different social, economic and cultural backgrounds are mixed and need to live together.

**Furthermore, the economic potential of urban areas and 'cities as engines of growth' are not sufficiently acknowledged.**

**An urban goal should build on socially inclusive economic growth:** supporting local economic development as a process that brings together partners to harness local resources for sustainable and equitable economic development; expanding urban employment, particularly for young people and female heads of households, encouraging higher productivity by integrating the informal sector and marginalized urban areas; ensuring access to the urban services that support employment generation (i.e. transport, housing and electricity) and investing in the urban green economy, urban regeneration, culture and heritage.

**We also feel the focus area on cities should directly address the challenges of urban management and specific urban governance. This would allow us to look at**

**multilevel governance issues. Integrated Territorial approach to development and addressing some of the most challenging processes related to metropolization and regionalization of our territories.**

The focus area should call for strong, accountable, capable and adequately resourced local governments and citizen participation as essential component of strong institutions.

Local and subnational government cooperation and peer-to-peer exchanges among all levels of governments should be used as tools to develop stronger institutions.

Finally, we would like to express our concern about the clusters approach that we feel might limit the integrated territorial approach which is inherent to community action and subnational management. Urbanization and local governments will be at the core of most of the cultural, social and economic transformation in the coming years, impacting not only cities but also urban-rural, rural and natural areas providing unprecedented opportunities for better living conditions if managed adequately.

We look forward to working with you in the inclusion of the urban challenge in the agenda as well as ensuring that the goals and targets are achievable and applicable at all levels.

Thank you for your attention.