



DECLARATION RIO FOR SUSTAINABILITY

PREAMBLE

The Group of Brazilian Capitals / CB-27 is comprised of 21 representatives of the capitals' Environmental Departments who assembled in Rio de Janeiro between May 15-18 2012 in order to discuss the sustainable development of the cities and the role of the local administrations in the global sustainability governance;

Considering the rapid depletion of the planet's natural resources;

Considering that the concentration of the population in the cities has created new and important challenges regarding sustainability in urban centers, which are simultaneously spaces of crisis, solutions and opportunities;

Highlighting the importance of local governments in managing the territory, in direct interaction with the communities and in the management of action and provision of critical services to achieve sustainability;

Considering the need to contain the territorial sprawl of urban centers, which affects the balance in ecosystems and increases the cost of providing essential public services;

Considering that the cities' shortcomings of infrastructure result in costly economic inefficiency, decreasing their competitiveness, besides impacting the environment and their populations' quality of life;

Considering that two-thirds of Brazil's Gross Domestic Product are generated in the cities and, as the driving force and stimulators of the economy, they will play a leading part in the transition to a green economy;

Remembering the commitments made by the Nations for the development of cities embodied in the "Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium", approved by the United Nations General Assembly and the "Cities Without Slums" initiative, which aims to improve the quality of life of at least one hundred million people until 2020;

Endorsing the work performed by the United Nations Program for Human Settlements/UN-Habitat and its leadership in seeking more sustainable models of urban planning through close and harmonious collaboration with local authorities,

Reinforcing ties with the C-40 and counting on their increased support and technical cooperation with Brazilian cities, considering the growing responsibility of the cities in transitioning into a more sustainable world;

Saluting Brazil's participation in the "Friends of Sustainable Cities" group, comprised of 23 countries to discuss the cities' agenda in negotiations for Rio+20, and also encouraging the country to exercise its leadership of the group of Nations for the construction of a positive agenda for the cities;

Being aware that the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development intends to be an "Implementation Conference" and that the local authorities have a responsibility of making voluntary and tangible commitments in this direction;

Stimulated by multiple success cases presented by Brazilian cities in: reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GGE), solid waste, green areas, water resources, environmental education, among others which demonstrate the proactive role of the local governments and their commitment to building more sustainable communities, and

Highlighting the role of the cities in the process of adaptation to the climatic changes and emphasizing the need for development of this agenda;

DECLARES

It is necessary to advance the integration, on a local level, of the process of a sustainability governance, in an intersectoral way, through the creation and functioning, in a transversal way, of Sustainable Development Councils on different government levels, and through the establishment of a continuous relationship between the global and local spheres in the new institutional structure of the United Nations for global sustainability;

Considering the great scarcity of available resources, it is fundamental to have direct access to them for: strengthening the institutional and operational capacities of local governments, supporting personnel training for the elaboration and implementation of Local Action Plans and Projects, fostering scientific knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable development;

It is important to adopt new parameters for measuring development that can reach beyond the ones currently accepted to form the Gross Domestic Product, since this indicator is insufficient to take into account the social and environmental pillars which support sustainable development, in conjunction with the economic one. It is also pressing the creation of sustainability indexes and of a system of goals, and the production of sustainability reports;

COMMITTS

1. To disseminate and support the adherence to programs of sustainable cities which offer tools for the society to indicate to its leaders the future it desires and to watch the performance of the cities in the quest for sustainability;
2. To make a voluntary commitment to organize a social, environmental and economic technology bank of sustainability in Brazilian cities, collecting in a virtual space the ongoing initiatives that demonstrate, in a specific, measurable and verifiable way, what local governments have done for sustainable development in order to increase visibility of the actions and allow their reproduction;
3. To double efforts so that environmental education is treated as a fundamental element in the construction of a sustainable society, incorporating knowledge to review attitudes and values;
4. To pursue, along with mass communicators, the establishment of a positive pact for sustainability;
5. To encourage green infrastructure projects that aim for a better integration of natural and constructed environment;



6. To formulate the technical studies required by the cities' planning initiatives, such as inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, vulnerability maps and inventory of urban biodiversity;
7. To promote biannual meetings, to be held in a capital previously appointed by the CB-27;

RECOMMENDS

To the United Nations and the domestic governments, on occasion of the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development that:

1. It supports the inclusion, in the Conference's final document, of opportunity windows and implementation instruments for sustainable urbanization;
2. Once the Sustainability Objectives of the Millennium are determined, the Objective of Urban Sustainable Development be included among them;
3. It creates, under the United Nations, open virtual platforms to disseminate information on sustainability integrating international and national communication systems which support the local communication system;
4. It gives the United Nations System a structure of governance for Sustainable Development that balances the environmental pillar with its social and economic structures;

To the Brazilian government that:

1. It establishes a Federal Pact for sustainability that provides for the responsibilities of each federation as well as the necessary resources for its implementation, including the creation of financial funds aided by the taxation of non-sustainable products and services;
2. It encourages public financing that contemplate sustainability criteria in their developments.

Rio de Janeiro, May 17 2012.





SIGNATURES.

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