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World Urban Forum Bulletin

A Daily Report of the Third Session of the World Urban Forum

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THIRD WORLD URBAN FORUM HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2006

On Thursday, participants at the third session of the World Urban Forum (WUF3) addressed the theme of urban growth and the environment during the morning plenary, followed by two dialogue sessions. Over 40 networking events were held in the afternoon addressing various aspects of sustainable human settlements development. In the evening, WUF3 participants attended the Global Hip-Hop Mainstage concert featuring international hip-hop and world music artists who raised awareness of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through music and other artistic expressions.



Anna Tibajuka, UN-HABITAT Executive Director, with Curtis Clearsky, UN-HABITAT Messenger of Truth, during the Global Hip Hop Mainstage held on Thursday evening

PLENARY

With a theme of "Urban Grown and Environment," the session was chaired by Chris Leach, President, Canadian Institute of Planners. In his opening address, he discussed planning for sustainable urbanization in Canada, including the need for networks of stakeholders to address sanitation, transportation, "smart" growth, water and environment. He reported on the World Planning Congress held earlier in the week, with 17 members pledging to form a network to address poverty, climate change and natural disasters.

Eveline Herfkens, Executive Coordinator, UN Millennium Campaign, recalled former UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer's statement that poverty is the biggest polluter, and stated that it is essential to attack the roots of poverty in working towards sustainable development. Emphasizing sustainable and participatory pro-poor growth, Herfkens said the MDGs represent a global deal that needs to be implemented at the local level and that the past mistake of the donor community was to view the poor only as clients of development, as opposed to partners. Noting that this was the first generation with the knowledge and resources to put an end to poverty, Herfkens called for keeping the promises made at the highest political level and holding leaders accountable for building a more sustainable world.

Enrique Peñalosa, former mayor of Bogota, Colombia, mentioned that the number of urban inhabitants in developing

countries will grow by more than two billion over the next few years, and that they need to learn from the land-use planning experience of developed countries. He argued that, to achieve sustainability, developing countries must find a different model of growth. Referring to Bogota's experience, where car use had been reduced and greenways, bikeways and bus lanes added, he said this had resulted in major social justice improvements, in addition to providing environmental benefits.

Participants raised comments on cities being at the forefront of the major health and nutrition challenges, and on the fact that Colombian cities are faced with more severe problems such as violence, sanitation, and unemployment. Participants encouraged a focus on the MDG target on slum upgrading.

On the scale of change required to achieve sustainable development, Herfkens urged participants not to be intimidated by the need for revolutionary change. Peñalosa said that while resources were often available, political will was required to implement sustainable policies, and called for small steps that will lead to big changes.

Noting the lacuna in WUF3 to recognize the strong commitments made at the first Habitat Conference, one participant made an impassioned plea to realize historian Barbara Ward's vision that no one would be left without safe drinking water. It was noted that such a visionary future cannot be achieved through incremental change.

The *World Urban Forum Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Xenya Cherny, Leonie Gordon, Sarah Stewart Johnson, William McPherson, Ph.D., Laurel A. Neme, Ph.D., Sabrina Shaw, Peter Wood, and Kunbao Xia. The Photographer is Leila Mead. The Digital Editors are Bo-Alex Fredvik and Diego Noguera. The Editor is Pia M. Kohler, Ph.D. <pia@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by the Globe Foundation of Canada. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the IISD RS Linkages WWW-server at <<http://www.iisd.ca/>>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA. The IISD team at the Third World Urban Forum can be contacted by e-mail at <xenya@iisd.org>.

DIALOGUES

THE SHAPE OF CITIES: Urban planning and

management: This dialogue was facilitated by Steve Bradshaw, Producer of the BBC Panorama programme. Tracing the history of North American urban planning from the 1950s to date, John Friedmann, University of British Columbia, suggested that technocratic planning is now obsolete. He noted the growing urban rich-poor divide and that planning tools have not been able to contain growth in sustainable ways.

On linking “green” and “brown” agendas, Ossama Salem, Capacity Building International, Egypt, discussed how global and local environmental issues can be reconciled in the context of a city government. On differences between the environmental agenda in developing and developed countries, Tasneem Essop, Minister of Environment, Planning and Economic Development, Provincial Government of the Western Cape, South Africa, said the poor bear the brunt of the environmental degradation caused by over-consumption of the rich and urged a multi-faceted approach to urban development.

Charles Choguill, Editor, Habitat International, noted planning has not fully incorporated the relatively new concept of sustainability. He highlighted the difficulties in adapting best practices in the North, like compact and “smart” cities, to municipalities in the South.

Herbert Girardet, Environmental Consultant and Senior Adviser to Dontang Eco-city, presented a model of planning in China that places ecology at the center of development. He described plans for the construction of the island city of Dontang, off the coast of Shanghai, which will eventually be home to 500,000 or more people. Dontang will be characterized by 60 percent green space, limited use of automobiles and the utilization of renewable energy. He said the first residents will be drawn from a mixture of socio-economic levels and mentioned plans for additional eco-cities.

Dritan Shutina, Executive Director, Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, discussed the features of sustainability in



Herbert Girardet, Environmental Consultant and Senior Adviser to Dontang Eco-city

transition countries such as Albania, highlighting the tragedy of the commons and the importance of decentralization.

Cliff Hague, President, Commonwealth Association of Planners, noted how development plans often start promisingly and then break down. He elaborated on ten basic sustainability principles, including integrated planning, recognizing diversity, pro-poor strategies and transparency.

David Siegal, President, American Planning Association, praised the role of the WUF in exposing urban planners from the North to the severe poverty and environmental crises triggered by unsustainable development in the South. He closed by underscoring the objectives of a Summary Action Plan developed by the Global Planners Network.

Discussion focused on: the gap between rhetoric and action; problems of over-consumption and the need for lifestyle changes; the need for greater participation of the poor and youth; the need for universities to incorporate new ways of thinking in their curricula; responsibility of the media; and the role of the financial and private sectors.

ENERGY: Local action, global impact: Moderator Kevin Newman, News Anchor, Global National, Canada, opened the dialogue by noting how technology is helping solve the problem of finite resources.

On the most significant energy problems, Vijay Modi, Columbia University, said energy for cooking is insignificant in the global realm but a necessity for the poor, and suggested focusing on proven technologies to address the problem.

Harriette Amissah-Arthur, Director, Kumasi Institute of Technology and Environment, said lack of leadership at every level in Ghana was a major problem, noting the need for long-term planning and government leadership.

Anumita Roychoudhury, Centre for Science and Environment, said technical solutions will not fix environmental problems from traffic and that fiscal policy should support comprehensive planning.



Steve Bradshaw, Producer, BBC-Panorama, UK

Mark Jaccard, Simon Fraser University, said some proposed solutions could create greater future problems and said we must make intelligent decisions to trade off risks. Modi said subsidies should be kept “in the mix” as long as they are targeted to the poor and not captured by wealthier people. Peñalosa described successful cross-subsidization in Colombia. Mary Jane Ortega, Mayor of San Fernando, the Philippines, said local initiatives on transport have broader impact and described how education and advocacy have encouraged city tricycle operators to switch to less polluting models.

Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, noted that current planning practices bias decisions toward vehicles and advocated for correcting market distortions to support “smart” growth. Jaccard stated that we are running out of “easy oil” and proposed using cleaner fossil fuel technology for the near future while developing renewable energy sources. In response to questions, he said these clean fuels can reduce or eliminate pollutants, including carbon dioxide, and disseminate energy to developing countries.

In the ensuing discussion, Peñalosa said taxes should be shifted to infrastructure users and Litman urged changing fixed costs of vehicle ownership into variable costs based on driving frequency, and suggested market reforms that discourage sprawl. Modi said charcoal cooking contributes less than one percent of atmospheric carbon loading. On dissemination of energy to the poor, Peñalosa said structural subsidies for poor, and reduction of use of private cars, will provide more equity.

Roychowdhury noted that the poor suffer greater health costs from pollution and that in India, taxes often penalize public transit and cycling. Peñalosa said instead of traffic congestion, the focus should be on the creation of parks and other public spaces. Ortega noted that Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels has led an effort by 300 US mayors to meet the targets of the Kyoto Protocol, demonstrating that local governments can take on



Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute

issues not addressed by the national government. On the World Youth Forum’s proposal to make cities pedestrian-friendly, Roychowdhury mentioned the Indian government’s efforts to build overpasses and sidewalks to accommodate walkers.

In response to a question of regional and national governments overruling local governments, Ortega noted that UN-HABITAT supports the principle of decentralization and local autonomy. Regarding high-density neighborhoods for families, Litman said there is a need for older city neighborhoods to absorb new suburbs, and to make mixed land use more attractive to families.

NETWORKING EVENTS

HABITAT JAM: This session included the inaugural screening of the Habitat JAM film. Moderator Charles Kelly, WUF3 Commissioner General, explained that the Habitat JAM was a WUF3 outreach programme, supported by IBM technology, in which 39,000 participants from 158 countries came together for a three-day Internet networking session to share ideas on how to solve some of the world’s most critical urban issues.

Noting emergent WUF3 themes of stakeholder inclusion and actionable ideas, Chris Gibbon, Vice President, Global Social Services and Social Security, IBM, shared examples of how technology can support these, including the IBM World Community Grid, which redistributes unused power from over 300,000 individual and business computers to power research on HIV/AIDS and other global problems.

Highlighting the digital divide, Jockin Apurtham, President, National Slum Dwellers Federation, pointed out that he and many slum dwellers are computer illiterate but acknowledged that the JAM had given the urban poor a voice.

In a video message, Lars Reuterswärd, UN-HABITAT, explained that Habitat JAM aims to reach new target groups through informal media such as blogs to inform them about the Habitat Agenda.

Mike Wing, Vice President of Strategic Communications, IBM, was introduced as the “father of jamming.” Explaining that jams emerged from IBM intranet technology, he welcomed the use of the technology for something truly consequential.

Jan Peterson, Founder and Chair of the Secretariat of the Huairou Commission, lauded Canada’s commitment to democracy



Hayette Amissah-Arthur, Kumassi Institute of Technology and Environment



Charles Kelly, Commissioner General WUF3, describing Habitat JAM

evident in the Habitat JAM initiative and urged its continued inclusion in WUF4.

Robert Neuwirth, author of “Shadow Cities” and Habitat JAM moderator, stated that solutions are found in the street, not online, and noted technical problems he had experienced in participating in the JAM. In response, Wing emphasized the experimental nature of the software and method. Neuwirth stressed the value of including a Habitat JAM in WUF4 as a means of democratizing the censored online world in China.

Kevina Power, World Urban Cafés Manager, Nairobi, Kenya, said the Habitat JAM and associated World Urban Cafés were an example of mainstreaming youth voices into UN-HABITAT.

Vasudevan Suresh, CEO, Aerens Goldsouk, and Habitat JAM moderator, emphasized the democratic nature of the JAM, called for it to be an annual or bi-annual event with focused topics and target groups, and suggested that it could eventually progress to a global video conferencing event.

Delegates highlighted financial support for community JAM participation and provided numerous suggestions for ensuring the initiative’s sustainability, noting the challenge was to find the means to connect the words of the urban poor expressed during the JAM to the actions of decision-makers. On holding a Habitat JAM for WUF4, Kelly said preliminary discussions are underway and the Canadian Government and others are considering providing assistance.

CULTIVATING INCLUSIVE CITIES: This networking event explored the topic of urban agriculture through the presentation of four case studies.

Moderator Dinesh Mehta, UN-HABITAT, noted the potential for urban poor to attain food security through agriculture. Henk de Zeeuw, Director, Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Forestry (RUAF), delivered a message on behalf of Sybilla Dekker, Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment of the Netherlands, cautioning against viewing rural and urban as separate entities, and urging a participatory approach to encourage adoption of political plans.

De Zeeuw then presented the RUAF programme, noting that urban agriculture is an integral yet unrecognized part of cities, adding that it produces 15-20 percent of the world’s food. He said some cities resist the introduction of urban agriculture due

to perceived health risks, and competition for land and other resources.

George Matovu, Municipal Partnership for East and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA), Zimbabwe, described the evolution of urban agriculture in his country, noting that although no law explicitly prohibits it, rigid regulatory frameworks and competition for land pose obstacles. He described how support for urban agriculture was achieved from the local government by positioning it as an integral part of the urban economy, instead of as a marginal activity.

Raquel Barriga Velasco, Councilor, Villa Maria del Triunfo, Peru, described successes achieved through the introduction of urban agriculture to her impoverished municipality, including food security and greening of the city. She emphasized information dissemination and having urban agriculture institutionalized within the municipal government.

Gayathri Devi, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), described the benefits of using wastewater in urban agriculture, including improved nutrition, drought resistance, and avoidance of agro-chemicals. She noted that there are ways of minimizing health and environmental risks associated with this practice, which include diarrhea and intestinal worm infections, and soil and groundwater contamination.

El Hadji Oumar Sissokho, Provania, described Provania’s efforts to develop urban agriculture in Dakar, Senegal, noting constraints such as water access and land use rights, and benefits such as training, composting, and a strengthened farmers’ organization. He identified the need for increased public engagement, capacity building, and inclusion of women in decision-making processes.

Participants discussed: strategies to attain legal recognition of urban agriculture; benefits associated with decreased fossil fuel and pesticide use, and increased diet diversity; gardening on rooftops; bio-filtration of wastewater prior to use for agriculture; the loss of agricultural land to urban sprawl; and the logistics of urban subsistence food production.



Henk de Zeeuw, Director, Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Forestry (RUAF)



Alexandre Monarque, Natural Resources Canada, described an online tool to identify potential renewable energy projects and assess their viability at the RETScreen networking event

EMPOWERING CLEANER ENERGY DECISIONS

IN 213 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE: At this interactive networking event, Alexandre Monarque, Natural Resources, Canada, described RETScreen, a renewable energy technology (RET) tool to help cities better fulfill future energy demands and implement renewable and energy-efficient projects. He noted that over 80,000 people in 213 countries use this tool.

He noted that RETScreen reduces the costs of pre-feasibility studies and provides a common platform for discussions between policy makers and regulators, planners, funders, developers and product suppliers. Monarque described how, because it is available in over 20 languages, RETScreen can facilitate dialogue across countries.

Monarque demonstrated the RETScreen software and showed how it identifies and assesses the viability of potential projects. He noted many factors that affect project viability, including: availability of energy resource at the project site; equipment performance; initial project costs; “base case” credits, such as diesel generators for remote sites; on-going and periodic project costs, such as cleaning wind turbine blades; avoided energy costs; financing terms; equipment and income taxes; environmental credits and subsidies, such as greenhouse gas credits; and decision-makers’ definitions of cost-effectiveness. He closed by highlighting significant user savings and said RETScreen is available free of charge online.

LAUNCHING THE GLOBAL CITIES COMPETITION “SMART URBAN FABRICS BEYOND OIL”: Märten Lilja, Secretary of State, Ministry for Sustainable Development (MSD) of Sweden, said climate change is the greatest challenge facing the planet, and suggested that new solutions be developed to achieve sustainable city goals. He announced Sweden’s initiative to launch a competition to redesign urban fabrics to find energy solutions compatible with sustainable economic growth.

Reuterswärd said energy, especially household energy use, is high on UN-HABITAT’s agenda and, together with Inga Klevby, UN-HABITAT Deputy Executive Director, expressed support for the competition.

Presenting the initiative, Rolf Lindell, Director, MSD, said cities throughout the world face the challenge of adapting to demands of sustainable development beyond oil. He added that fundamental to this challenge is the need to establish sustainable energy solutions for urban development, noting that the objective of the competition is to discuss innovative ideas for how cities can meet this challenge. Focal issues include transportation and other energy-consuming activities as well as questions concerning overall urban lifestyle.

Ola Gölransson, MSD, gave an overview of the competition and said participants should produce and present a development proposal for a city beyond oil, giving consideration to urban form, transportation, infrastructure and urban lifestyle. Winners will be announced at WUF4 in Nanjing, China in 2008.

Per Hultén, the Royal Institute of Technology, and Hague commented on the competition proposal and said each proposal would be judged on how well it describes the transition from the current situation to a better future between 2030-2050.

During the discussion, some participants suggested that the competition should include students, professionals, NGOs and the private sector. Others proposed that the topic should not be limited to envisioning the urban fabric beyond oil, but also beyond natural gas. Lilja supported these suggestions.

URBAN POLICIES AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY: TOWARDS GOOD GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY:

This networking event was organized by UNESCO and UN-HABITAT and moderated by Raquel Rolnik, Secretary, Brazil’s National Secretariat of Urban Programmes.

Pierre Sané, UNESCO Assistant Director-General, outlined international and national initiatives in the development of the right to the city concept, and Wataru Iwamoto, UNESCO, urged a transition from a needs-based to a rights-based approach in urban development and planning.

Noting increased exclusion and alienation in cities, Paul Taylor, UN-HABITAT, defined the “right to the city” as the right for all city dwellers to fully enjoy urban life with all its services and advantages. He also pointed out that this right has taken both legally-binding and voluntary forms.



Panel on launching the global cities competition. L-R: Per Hultén, Swedish Royal Institute of Technology, Märten Lilja, Ola Gölransson, and Rolf Lindell, Swedish Ministry for Sustainable Development

Rolnik presented Brazil's experience in implementing the "right to the city" concept through legal and governance reforms, and land regularization programmes.

Gérald Tremblay, Mayor of Montreal, presented the Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, which entered into force in January 2006, stressing the public's involvement in its development and the equal importance for citizens to both acquire rights and assume responsibilities with regard to urban life.

Henrique Ortiz, Habitat International Coalition, presented the draft World Charter on the Right to the City. Zenaida Moya, Mayor of Belize City, highlighted the Aberdeen Agenda adopted at the Commonwealth Local Governments Forum in 2005, which promotes the right to the city concept, noting that it helps localize the MDGs.

Maria Fides Bagasao, Huairou Commission, delivered the grassroots women's statement, urging empowerment of, and financial resources for, grassroots women to implement the right to the city agenda.

Fransesc Rovira, Inter-religious Centre Barcelona, addressed religious cohesion in cities, stressing the need for affirmative policies on religious issues by local authorities, and noting the role of local inter-religious councils in conflict resolution.

Ivan Vlachos, Colorado State University, addressed the underlying causes of urban water conflicts, emphasizing that it is essential to properly manage, value and share water, and calling for empowerment, envisioning and enactment.

Marcello Balbo, University of Venice, highlighted effects of international migration dynamics on the social and economic development of cities, noting that migration will be an issue in the coming years and calling for migrants' participation in urban governance.

During the discussion, participants highlighted: rights and integration of urban indigenous communities; bridging the gap between declared rights and reality, operationalizing Charter



Raquel Rolnik, Brazil's National Secretariat of Urban Programmes, presented her country's experience in implementing the "right to the city" concept



Gérald Tremblay, Mayor of Montreal, presented the Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities

provisions by municipalities; the need for greater policy and advocacy focus; and the role of civil society in mobilizing awareness.

SLUM DIARIES: This networking event, co-chaired by Brenda Kelly, Executive Producer, Television for the Environment, and Susan Nosov, Head of Marketing, National Film Board of Canada (NFB), brought together slum dwellers, filmmakers, potential funders and broadcasters in a discussion about the role of participatory media in social change. The session's presentations included many short documentary screenings.

Tom Perlmutter, NFB, called for delegates "to use art as a hammer." Shelia Patel, Slum Dwellers International, underscored the importance of transforming the self-image of people living in informal settlements. George Ndiritu, Mathare Youth Sport Association Children's Project, Kenya, discussed his experiences with the media growing up in a slum in Nairobi's Eastlands. He said the perspectives of slum dwellers, especially the youth, are rarely depicted and stressed that, "unless the lions learn how to write, the hunters will always write their stories."

Namrata Bali, Self Employed Women's Association, discussed Videosaver, a cooperative society of illiterate and semi-literate women who produce documentaries in India. She elaborated on the value of filmmaking in creating a sense of self-identity and self-recognition for inhabitants of informal settlements. Nettie Wild and Fiona Gold of the Street Nurse Program, Vancouver, discussed how their new DVD is preparing nurses to interact respectfully with drug users. Daniel Cross, Homeless Nature, and Peggy Holter, Al Jazeera International, drew attention to the importance of pulling seldom-heard voices into the mainstream media and noted the growing role of websites.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates: conversed about advocacy and historical documentation through film; emphasized the importance of demonstrating real-world impacts of multimedia

projects to funders; called for the creation of internship opportunities; and queried how documentaries by slum dwellers could be made available in a global archive, perhaps using the Internet as a forum and potentially providing a source of revenue for grassroots NGOs. Wild called for future meetings of filmmakers on this topic.

HOUSING AND HIV/AIDS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES: After a welcoming prayer to guide participants, Moderator Barry Pinsky, Executive Director, Rooftops Canada, opened this networking event by noting the session's goal of better understanding the impact of HIV/AIDS on housing and vice versa. He noted the event's format was based on training methods to help community groups think about HIV/AIDS implications and would thus "train trainers."

Ken Clement, Executive Director, Healing Our Spirit, began with a moment of silence to remember those who have died from HIV/AIDS. He explained how fragmentation of communities, lack of resources and prioritization, alarming infection rates and other issues affect Canada's aboriginal people.

Barbara Kohlo, Executive Director, Housing People of Zimbabwe, said it was difficult for housing cooperatives to manage the impact of HIV/AIDS and explained the importance of raising awareness, taking a holistic approach, and creating networks to help cooperatives face tough issues like inheritance and inability to provide home-based HIV/AIDS healthcare to the homeless.

Participants broke into small groups and reported back on the impacts of HIV/AIDS on their organizations and potential responses. On addressing emotional and financial impacts, participants recommended: developing a strategy to deal with basic needs at all levels of government; ensuring cultural and spiritual support; establishing property rights; providing blended housing; and educating the public about HIV/AIDS.

On addressing physical needs, participants recommended providing: stable and secure housing; food and social networks; and counseling for patients and caregivers. Delegates also recommended developing housing policy that includes HIV/AIDS



Small groups learn training methods to help community groups think about the implications of HIV/AIDS



João Avamileno, Mayor of Santo André, and Executive Secretary, Mercosur Network, Brazil

and establishing links to organizations with appropriate expertise. They noted the importance of spiritual and extended family support and reducing isolation, and said UN-HABITAT should do more to acknowledge the direct link between HIV/AIDS and housing.

CITY NETWORKS: Engines of Urban Sustainability: João Avamileno, Mayor of Santo André, and Executive Secretary, Mercosur Network, Brazil, described the Network's cooperation with local officials on the social and economic development of their cities.

Alberto Kleiman, Special Advisor for International Cooperation to the Brazilian Presidency, said the Mercosur Network is shifting its focus from economic integration to political and social cooperation, especially cross-border cooperation.

Patricia Durán de Jager, Executive Director, Federation of Municipalities of the Central America Isthmus in Guatemala, described the vulnerability of Latin America to natural disasters and the need for risk management through city networks. She said International Development Research Centre projects help Central American cities integrate their social and environmental policies through technical cooperation.

Gilberto Toro, President of the Colombian Federation of Municipalities, described technical assistance through workshops and capacity building projects, particularly in the area of risk management.

During the discussion, participants asked about the mechanics of forming networks, particularly among youth and indigenous people, and their possible role in standardizing municipalities' policies and regulations. Some questioned the role of networks and trade agreements in sustainable development. Durán de Jager responded that networking is a tool but must be equitable in terms of mutual respect, and that networks and trade agreements will only succeed if used for common development.

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE IN CONFLICT AREAS: This networking session presented findings on why some post-conflict states break down while others manage to emerge resilient.



L-R: Daneil E. Esser, Jason Sumich, and Jo Beall, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

Jo Beall, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), outlined the case of Durban, South Africa, stating that while most post-conflict cities experience a degree of conflict and dynamic contestation, the levels of violence differ. She said cities in which conflict was prevalent had shared constraints, including: weak local administration; budget constraints; over-determination of capitals; high unemployment; and factional politics.

Recalling experiences from Freetown, Sierra Leone and Kabul, Afghanistan, Daniel Esser, LSE, noted that local cooperation around security issues was successful when it was issue-based and focused on one aspect of human security. Esser noted that cities were enabling environments to overcome ethnic fault lines and to encourage greater collaboration. On increasing local cooperation in post-conflict cities, Esser outlined the need to link urban and rural areas and confront institutional multiplicity through interaction not competition.

Jason Sumich outlined the case of Maputo, Mozambique and noted that the post-conflict transition had been achieved at a high social cost.

Participants commented on what works and does not work with respect to multi-sector cooperation in post-conflict cities. The similarities and differences in Luanda, Angola and Maputo were compared. One participant noted that post-conflict Luanda had experienced conflicts around land tenure and access, and the criminalization of poverty.

Reference was made to the seminal work of Jane Jacobs, which emphasized the social and human consequences of urban growth. One participant commented on how the architectural “built form” affects institution building and democracy in cities and noted the value of art in forging cooperation in post-conflict cities.

Laura Petrella, UN-HABITAT, announced the launch of a new programme in cooperation with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to develop an approach to urban safety in Asia.

IMPLEMENTING MDG 7/11 IN ASIAN COUNTRIES:

Noli de Castro, Vice-President, the Philippines, presented his government’s Northrail relocation programme, highlighting it as a contribution to the achievement of MDG Target 11 on slum upgrading. During the meeting, some participants from the Philippines voiced opposition to the methods of relocation and submitted a letter to the President of the Philippines appealing to halt the relocation.

Alison Barrett, Office of Local Partnerships for Urban Poverty Alleviation Project, introduced a project implemented since 2001 jointly by UNDP, UN-HABITAT and the Government of Bangladesh, involving 11 cities and towns. She said the project’s purpose is to empower poor urban communities at local and national levels through government efforts, and to alleviate poverty and improve lives.

Noer Soetrisno, Indonesia’s Ministry of Housing, addressed the role of microcredit in housing the urban poor in his country. He said microfinance institutions support poverty reduction and local economic development that in turn lead to promoting housing development. He also briefed participants on: 2005-2009 National Housing Development Plan; local capacity building; policies for housing development; strengthening municipal government support for social housing upgrading projects for the poor; promoting the allocation of corporate social responsibility funds for social housing programmes by private and state-owned companies; and encouraging microfinance institutions to provide housing loans as an integral part of their business.

Michael Lindfield, Asian Development Bank, briefed participants on the Bank’s poverty reduction and housing development projects in Asian cities.



Renowned environmentalist David Suzuki made an appearance at WUF3

WUF3 SUMMARY

The IISD summary of the Third World Urban Forum will be available on Monday, 26 June 2006, online at <http://www.iisd.ca/ywb/wuf3/>