

SIXTH MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVES

19 - 23 FEBRUARY 2023

NAIROBI, KENYA

OPENING STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY: DR. MAGASH NAIDOO (ICLEI - LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR  
SUSTAINABILITY) AS CO-FOCAL POINT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND MAJOR  
GROUP

Dear Chairperson, your Excellencies,

My name is Magash Naidoo, from ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability, speaking on behalf of the Local Authorities Major Group. Thank you for enabling me to be here today and deliver this statement. This is a vital mechanism that you have and continue to enable, that of the participation of local and subnational governments, amongst the other important major groups. The inclusive approach and opportunities provided to allow us to provide input is deeply appreciated but must be seen as a first step. The reason we say a first step, is that there are still many aspects that are missing or that can be enhanced. This is not a complaint, it is merely an effort to highlight the areas where we perceive there to be room for enhancing efficiency and efficacy.

We are all aware of the importance of the major groups, but at times this is not carried into various UNEA related processes, this is potentially dangerous as it can dilute the working being undertaken to support UNEA processes. Two examples of this are: The plastics treaty, resolution 5/14 - Major groups were not officially acknowledged, but have to fight for space to

have a voice, which takes valuable time and resources that could be directed to substantive work. We must thank the INC Secretariat for a great job thus far. The second, the mere fact of having Major groups, implies that these stakeholders are important. Why is it that we are constantly having to advocate for references in various resolutions, treaties and instruments? Shouldn't this be part of the normal process, where relevant. This again results in the local authorities major group, and we are certain the other major groups too, spending enormous amounts of effort to merely be acknowledged as important for implementation, as opposed to spending time and resources to help the members in more substantive ways. Again, we reiterate, it is not a complaint, but a highlight of where we can improve. Constant improvement is responsible for building and maintaining civilization.

Lastly, there will be a Cities and Regions Summit hosted on the 23rd of February from 10h00 to 18h00, this is hosted by UNEP, UN-Habitat, ICLEI and other partners. This 3rd edition of the Summit will showcase concrete examples of cities and regions supporting their national governments in achieving the SDGs and the MEAs' goals. This Summit will focus on two key questions regarding the cities and regions' engagement: (1) strengthening the multi-level governance (MLG) for achieving the SDGs and the MEAs goals; and (2) Funding and financing to accelerate the local climate and environmental actions. We extend a warm invitation to all present.

Thank you.