The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda will achieve nothing if we fail to strengthen local democracy

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On the eve of Habitat III, local and regional governments highlight the role of transparency and accountability in sustainable development and commit to go further in fostering local democracy.

The success of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda will depend on effective, accountable and transparent institutions. That’s why local democracy must be the foundation of both agendas. Because it is at local level, where government is closest to the people, that citizens engage with their institutions every day.

Local and regional governments across the world are working to become more transparent and accountable than ever before. We’re making budget, procurement and policy-making decisions public. We’re implementing new codes of ethics for elected and appointed officials. We’re introducing oversight to tackle corruption. We’re allowing citizens to access and re-use public information by harnessing the power of open data. We’re also exchanging experiences at national and international level so that we can learn from one another’s successes.

Strong institutions are open, democratic institutions, capable of listening to citizens and responding to local concerns and priorities.

We’ll discuss these challenges at the UCLG Congress in Bogotá in a Policy Dialogue on “Stronger, More Accountable Local and Regional Governments” on 12 October. Confirmed panelists so far include Mayor of Dakar, Khalifa Sall, Mayor of Diyarbakir, Gülta Küşanak, and Director of the UN Millennium Campaign, Mitchell Toomey.

Of course, effective local governance is impossible without appropriate powers and resources. That’s why UCLG and the Global Taskforce are calling for Habitat III to strengthen local and regional governments through decentralization, capacity building, and investment and financing.
If you agree that that world needs **stronger, more accountable local and regional governments**, join our social media campaign using the hashtags #UCLGCongress, #Habitat3 and #SDG16

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**Resources:**

- Policy Dialogue: Stronger, More Accountable Local and Regional Governments
- Global Taskforce recommendations for Habitat III
- SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions
- The SDGs: What Local Governments Need to Know
- International Observatory on Participatory Democracy
- **Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization**

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