

# WORLD URBAN FORUM 4

The World's Premier Conference on Cities  
Nanjing, China 3-6 November 2008





## Broad government, local authority, parliamentary participation

National government delegations engaged in spirited exchanges throughout the World Urban Forum. The opening plenary, ministerial round table, dialogues, and networking events enabled governments to share their respective urban policies and interventions. The peer exchange among governments stimulated each to articulate, with greater clarity, how they planned to achieve sustainable urbanization.

Participating governments included over 50 member States from five continents representing a wide range of portfolios such as housing, finance, environment and land.

Furthermore, representatives of 1,000 cities and 120 local government associations and parliamentarians representing half the world's population gathered in Nanjing for the Forum. For mayors, councillors and city administrators, Nanjing provided them the opportunity to set and adjust their priorities.

Mr. Peter Goetz, a member of the German Bundestag, said that over 100 Members of Parliament from many countries had accepted the invitation to attend the Forum.



**Peter Goetz, President of Global Parliamentarians on Habitat.**  
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He said that Global Parliamentarians on Habitat was an international organization of parliamentarians concerned with sustainable development and urban settlements, founded over thirty years ago in Vancouver at the inaugural Habitat Conference.

Mr. Goetz, who assumed the organization's presidency after Senator Eloy Cantu Segovia of Mexico, cited the collapse of financial markets, terrorism threats, climate change, and the energy crisis as major problems facing the world.

"All three crises are interrelated and interdependent, and all office bearers at all spheres of Government have a responsibility for the future of our children," he said. "Cities already account for 75% of energy consumption and about 80% of carbon emissions. The most important resource in climate change is political determination, but cities on their own cannot win the struggle against climate change – it requires the support of governments and parliaments."

Governments and municipalities agreed that they had to strengthen their cooperation and translate challenges into opportunities. Thus, high on their agenda were the guidelines for decentralization adopted by the UN-HABITAT Governing Council in 2007. Also of high priority were strategies to address capacity gaps at both the elected and administrative levels of local government to deal with rapid urbanization